

Best Practices for Matrix Mentoring

List compiled by returning LEAD Mentors

- Focus in the beginning more on building relationships and trust rather than just the development goals. The level of openness and honest communication with your mentees is directly linked to the level of trust.
- Best practice— schedule dinner or breakfast meetings in conjunction with monthly LEAD sessions.
- Probe and listen to get to the “real issues” that they are facing as leaders, beyond their LEAD Roadmap goals. These “real time” conversations create a rich and satisfying mentoring relationship.
- Let mentees drive the process, AND reach out to them in the beginning as well to make sure they feel comfortable and welcome!
- Encourage some amount of structure to meetings. Ask the mentees to come up with a specific topic(s) - particularly for team meetings.
- Mentees tend to be nervous about calling mentors, particularly at first. They can be intimidated. Be very clear in the first meeting about setting your expectations for engagement. It helps if they know that you expect to hear from them, and how to best reach/connect with you.
- Make sure your administrator knows your team, and supports your mentees in getting on your calendar!
- Expect that you’re going to connect more strongly with 1-2 of your mentees. Don’t worry if you don’t connect equally with all of them. (Check in with your Co-mentor to see if they are having similar or different engagement with the team.)
- Mentees benefit from the diversity of you and your Co-mentor’s experiences. You don’t have to agree with each other. Your different perspectives and styles help to show the mentees different models of effective leadership. (That said, it’s also important to have mutual respect, and handle your different viewpoints in a positive way!)
- Share not only your career successes, but your past failures. It is a great way to break down barriers and let your mentees feel safe to open-up and trust that they can be completely honest with you.