



ACHE - SouthEastTexasChapter

*An Independent Chapter of the American College of Healthcare Executives*

**ACHE - SETC  
Executive Mentorship  
Program  
2017**

**Protégé Information**



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2017**

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**2017 ACHE – SouthEastTexasChapter  
Executive Mentorship Program**

**Program Description**

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the Executive Mentorship Program (Program) is to assist students and early healthcare careerists in their growth and development. In addition, the intention of the Program is to motivate students and healthcare careerists to be active members of ACHE at the national and local level throughout their career.

The mentoring relationship will last six to twelve months, at the discretion of each mentor/protégé team.

**Administration:**

The Mentorship Program Committee will administer the program, with assistance from the membership and graduate student contacts of the Houston universities that conduct a healthcare administration program. The program will be administered as follows:

1. Throughout the year, the Committee will solicit mentors through mail outs and attendance at Chapter events. Criteria for mentor participation:
  - Membership in ACHE national, therefore automatically a member of ACHE-SouthEastTexasChapter;
  - A position as Vice-President, Sr. Executive, or Director/Supervisor in his/her organization OR a minimum of five years of healthcare management experience and be a Fellow, Diplomate, or an affiliate in ACHE; and
  - Willingness to help develop students or early healthcare careerists.
  
2. Throughout the year, the Committee will solicit protégés through mail outs and attendance at Chapter events. Criteria for protégé participation:
  - Student Associate membership or affiliate membership in the ACHE Greater Houston Chapter;
  - Less than five years of healthcare management experience;
  - Willingness to develop professionally; and
  - If applicable, Faculty advisor signature encouraging participation in the program.
  
3. Each year student contacts will be selected from each participating graduate program. These student contacts will be chosen based on their position in their school's ACHE program. Each student leader will:
  - Inform the Chairs of any protégé concerns; and
  - Be open to solving issues and concerns with the Chairs.



4. The Executive Mentorship Program Committee will match mentors and protégés based on responses to the Mentor/Protégé Questionnaires received.

### **Mentor/Protégé Responsibilities**

By electing to participate in the program, the **mentor** agrees to:

- Meet face to face with the protégé at least once per month;
- Be accessible to the protégé (phone, e-mail etc.);
- Support and encourage the protégé's advancement in ACHE and in their professional growth;
- Serve as a resource person for updating and refining the protégé's managerial knowledge and skills;
- Offer input and guidance for career opportunities; and
- Inform the Chairs of any concerns or questions.

By electing to participate in the Program, the **protégé** agrees to:

- Initiate monthly face-to-face meetings;
- Be accessible and flexible in scheduling face-to-face meetings with their mentor;
- Be professional and prompt;
- Be open to advice; and
- Inform the Chairs or the student representatives of issues or concerns.



For questions regarding the Program, please contact the Chair of the Mentorship Program Committee:

**ACHE Executive Mentorship Program Committee 2017 Chair:**

Ashley McClellan, FACHE

Chief Executive Officer

The Woman's Hospital of Texas

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*Advisor:*

Don Gibson, FACHE, Executive Director of Operations,  
ACHE - SETC

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*Note: For Members in the College who are working towards advancement to Fellow, the Program can be tailored to meet the requirements of a Mentor's Fellowship Project. If interested in tailoring the program to meet such requirements, please contact one of the individuals listed above.*



## What is a Mentor/Advisor?

Mentoring or advising is perhaps the truest form of dynamic learning. It involves two people with a commitment to assisting each other in furthering their professional careers. One constant in discussions held with successful individuals is that, almost without exception, they had an advisor or a mentor. Making the decision to mentor another individual is a conscious decision to return to your profession some of the expert advice that you may have been given (or wished you had been given) in the pursuit of your personal career objectives. One method of distributing this advice is through the establishment of a mentor/protégé relationship with an early healthcare careerist.

In today's highly competitive environment a protégé is expected to be proactive in seeking a mentor and in having set objectives and goals for the relationship. While a mentor offers the gifts of knowledge and experience, the protégé has the responsibility for taking full advantage of that knowledge by internalizing it, putting it into action, and ultimately for passing it on. There is only one way to pay back the debt owed as a result of a successful mentoring relationship, and that is by mentoring others.

The mentor/protégé relationship is open-ended, but not static. As career paths change and professionals move on, the relationship will transition to another level and hopefully result in an enduring friendship. By definition a mentorship relationship is one that fosters growth in both parties so is a relationship that is destined to end, at least in the formal mentoring sense.

A mentor is a person who is, or has been where you want to go, a person who is willing to assist you in meeting the challenges of reaching your next goal. It is important, as you establish your relationship with your mentor, that you understand what expectations are reasonable, and what expectations would be nice if they were fulfilled, and what expectations are not realistic.

A mentor is:

- A person who is willing to share their assessments, viewpoints, and life experiences with you, to help you succeed.
- A person you can “bounce ideas” off of, before you take the risk of going public with them.
- A person that you can assist by sharing your areas of expertise.

A mentor is **not**:

- A person who is going to get you a job.
- A person who is going to give you all of the answers you need to be successful.



- Your mother, father, or fairy-god person.
- A personal counselor to deal with areas of your personal life outside of your career.

A mentor/protégé relationship is not life long. As you move on in your career, and as your mentor moves on, there will be a day that even the best relationship will end, and hopefully become a warm and enduring friendship. Because by its definition an advising relationship is one that fosters growth in both parties, it is also a relationship that is destined to end, at least in the mentor/protégé format.

### **Role of a Protégé:**

1. Accept responsibility for own growth and development
2. Be realistic as to expectations, current competence and potential
3. Initiate and direct the mentoring process
4. Define current skill level, identify “gaps”, and target key skills/knowledge for development through mentoring
5. Co-develop the mentor/protégé agreement
6. Monitor and track own progress and keep the mentor apprised
7. Ask questions about mentor’s career and experiences
8. Be proactive and energetic
9. Seek out exposure to different ideas and approach and evaluate the value of each
10. Respect confidentiality of information
11. Be open, honest and direct with the mentor
12. Accept feedback in a non-defensive manner
13. Respect the time of the mentor and always be prepared
14. Recognize style differences and adapt accordingly
15. Take responsibility for “health” of the relationship



16. Constructively challenge the norm
17. Develop personal vision
18. Ensure clear, open, two-way communication with mentor

**Potential Benefits:**

1. Accelerated transfer of attitudinal, technical and behavioral skills that are extremely difficult to acquire on one's own
2. Opportunity to direct one's development
3. Increased motivation and satisfaction in one's work
4. Focused development plans with less risk of failure and high probability for success
5. Greater, broader knowledge base
6. Ease of access to resources and networking opportunities
7. Exposure to decision making and leadership styles of more senior managers
8. Greater self-confidence and self-esteem
9. Increased productivity and effectiveness

**Potential Pitfalls:**

1. Aspects of core job may be neglected
2. Unrealistic expectations may cause frustration and disappointment
3. Breach of trust or bad advice
4. Not having a manager who supports the mentoring process
5. Having a mentor who is not committed to the your development or lacks time
6. Having a mentor who is too controlling or possessive
7. Having a mentor whose style is incompatible or who lacks key skills for coaching, feedback and/or knowledge transfer
8. Over-reliance





**Characteristics of a successful protégé:**

- Genuine concern for his/her own development
- Willingness to learn
- Open (non-defensive) attitude toward the mentor's comments, suggestions and feedback
- Arranging sufficient time to adequately participate in the relationship
- Easy to reach and make contact
- Ability to keep commitments
- Agreement to keep the contents of discussions confidential
- Desire to grow and plan a long-term career
- Competent in his/her present position



### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

#### **How often do I have to meet with my mentor/protégé?**

Frequency of meetings is up to the individual mentors and protégés. However, it is recommended that matches meet every three to five weeks in the form of a face-to-face, e-mail, or phone meeting.

#### **Where do I meet with my mentor/protégé?**

Mentors and protégés are invited to meet wherever it is convenient and comfortable.

#### **What types of issues or topics are discussed when mentors and protégés meet?**

Some suggested discussion areas include: skill development, career planning advice, giving and receiving feedback on performance, how to deal with problems in an ethical way, action planning, and balancing personal, professional, and academic life. It is to be noted that the mentor is not responsible for finding the protégé an internship or job.

#### **We are both so busy with work, school, and our lives, how will we fit this in?**

It is important to remember that it is not the frequency of the meetings that is important, but the quality of the interaction. It is understandable that with the pressure and responsibilities of our day-to-day lives it is often hard to fit one more thing in. Record your meetings with your mentor or protégé in your calendar and view them as a part of your regular routine. Interaction between a mentor/protégé does not always have to be a lengthy face-to-face meeting. It can happen in short, frequent intervals such as a quick e-mail or phone call.

#### **What if my protégé asks my opinion on matters that are of a personal nature?**

It is recommended that at the start of the mentoring relationship, both parties identify what is and is not appropriate to talk about. Some matches may be comfortable talking about personal issues as they may relate to job performance and others may want to stay clear of personal matters all together. Each mentor/protégé pair should determine the boundaries of their mentoring relationship.

#### **What if we just don't get along?**

It is important to note that either participant has the option to close the match. We highly encourage you to give the relationship a few months to develop.



## MENTORING RELATIONSHIP CYCLE

### Early Development Stage

- A. Anxiety/Uncertainty
- B. Honeymoon
- C. Testing of Limits

During the Early Development phase three phenomena may occur:

**A. Anxiety and Uncertainty** - Both parties are observing and assessing each other. Anxiety and uncertainty are present. It is especially important during this stage to keep the lines of communication open and acknowledge feelings. Give it time. TAKE IT SLOW!

**B. Honeymoon** - Participants are excited about their new roles and feel that nothing could deflate the relationship. The converse may occur. Everything is great but it is not. Remember problems arise in all relationships. After all we are human and need to accept people as they are.

**C. Testing of Limits** - Remember both participants in a mentoring match are usually new and in the process of exploring this type of relationship. During this stage, participants may be trying to “test” how loyal their mentoring partner is before confiding information.

### Growth Stage

- A. Reciprocal Relationship
- B. Building Trust
- C. Guilt Feelings

During the growth stage relationships may experience the following:

**A. Reciprocal Relationship** - The comfort level with one another has improved. The participants find it easier to share their likes and dislikes. Decision making is mutual.

**B. Building Trust** - Openness, honesty, and consistency play a big part in building a trusting relationship. Talking begins to reflect trust when you start self disclosure.

**C. Guilt Feelings** - In the growth stage guilt feelings are normal. Everyone has times when they are unable to follow through with plans. Letting one another know when this occurs can alleviate some of these feelings.



### Maturity Stage

- A. Flexibility without Guilt
- B. Tolerance of Negative Feedback

**A. Flexibility Without Guilt** - As the relationship matures, both parties accept flexibility without guilt. The trust that has developed allows acceptance of changes and other commitments in both your lives.

**B. Tolerance of Negative Feedback** - As your relationship matures, you find it easier to accept negative feedback. This feedback may be in the form of negative behavior or constructive criticism.

### Closure Stage

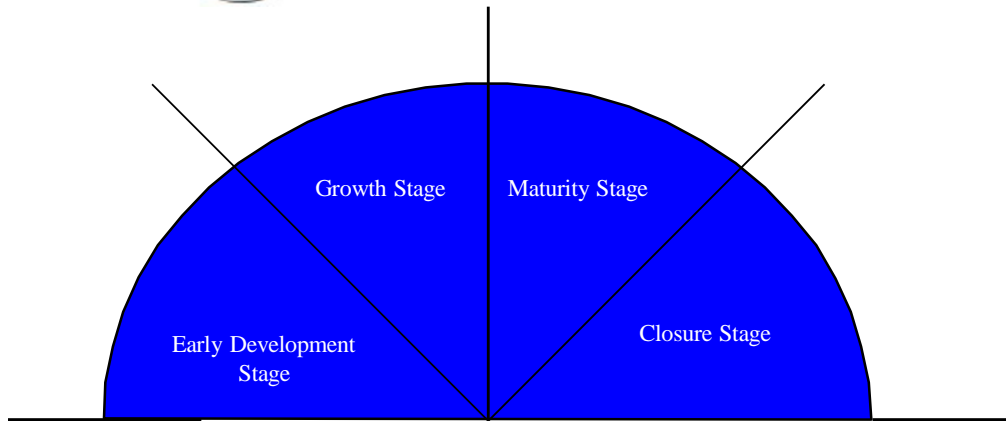
- A. Withdrawal
- B. Avoidant Behavior
- C. Denial

**A. Withdrawal** - Letting go can occur at anytime. Be aware of this possibility if you start experiencing emotional distance from each other. You may feel you have nothing in common anymore. There may be resistance in sharing thoughts or feelings. Communication lines are breaking down.

**B. Avoidant Behavior** - You may find excuses for not spending time together. When you are together you find physical distance is more comfortable. Goals you have set on your mentoring agreement begin to be ignored.

**C. Denial** - It might be easier to say everything is great when it is not. Instead of denying the situation, face up to the problem and deal with it. In dealing with it you may return to the early development stages, growth stage, the maturity stage, or you may need to terminate.

Mentoring closures are endings to personal relationships. Make sure they are handled positively in a mature manner and with sensitivity.



Early Development Stage

Anxiety and Uncertainty  
Honeymoon  
Testing of Limits

Growth Stage

Reciprocal Relationship  
Building Trust  
Guilt Feelings

Maturity Stage

Flexibility Without Guilt  
Tolerance of Negative Feedback

Closure Stage

Withdrawal  
Avoidant Behavior  
Denial



## **ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS**

Active listening is a fundamental communication skill. It tells one that you are interested. It involves listening carefully to the words and feelings expressed and repeating these facts in such a way that the speaker knows he or she has been understood. Active listening takes energy. This means listening to, rather than just hearing. Concentration is vital. The listener suspends judgment and prejudice and focuses on the feeling of the underlying message. By responding this way, you show you care about the person with whom you are listening.

### **Active Listening Includes the Following Techniques:**

**Paraphrasing** – The listener states an understanding of what has been heard and asks the speaker to verify or correct this interpretation. Paraphrases may employ such words as, "Do I hear you saying...?" or "I believe you mean...right?"

**Door Opening and Probing** - The listener invites the speaker to elaborate. Examples include: "Give me an example," or "Please tell me more about it."

**Perception Checking** - The listener pays attention to what is not being said, to reach new insights and hunches, then checks the accuracy of these with the speaker. Body language eye contact and unmentioned feelings that lie behind the words, are some of the things worth noticing. "Every time you mentioned that, you've clenched your fist and gritted your teeth. I sense a lot of anger. Is something wrong?"

**"I" Statements** - "You" messages are belittling and blaming. They put the responsibility for your feelings on the other person. It is more effective to use "I" messages. They are helpful in expressing feelings without blaming. "You make me so mad" is best phrased "I feel frustrated when you."

**Open Ended Questions** - Asking questions demonstrates you care about the other person. To enhance communication avoid questions which require a simple yes or no answer. Example: "Did you have a good day?" is best phrased, "What did you do today?"

### **Communication with your Mentor can be enhanced by using the following techniques:**

- Be open and honest.
- Share personal experiences with one another. This will encourage familiarity, helping one another feel more comfortable and communicative.
- Provide positive feedback to one another.
- Make eye contact. Be on eye level when talking.
- Slow thinking speed.
- Control the urge to respond too quickly.
- Keep an open mind.
- Avoid jumping to conclusions.
- Make mental summaries.
- Give positive feedback - verbal and nonverbal.



## TEN STEPS TO BECOMING A BETTER LISTENER

1. **Clear your mind.** Start with a clean slate. If you can't break away from other pressing thoughts, you shouldn't be in the conversation now. Focus.
2. **Close your mouth. Don't talk.** In order to open your ears, you must first close your mouth. You can only hear what the other person has to say if you give him/her a chance to talk. Program in the good tape that says, "the good things happen when they're talking."
3. **Show the other person respect.** You must have, and sincerely show, a real concern for what the other person has to say. Don't be a victim of your own preconceived ideas that can keep you from being open to what you can learn from him/her.
4. **Listen for the truth.** Evaluate what is being said – not who is saying it.
5. **Don't interrupt. (Unless you should, then the rule is ... interrupt.)** Some people have a difficult time getting to the point. Patience can be rewarding. Some people need help getting to the point. You need to know the difference.
6. **Don't speak for more than 30-45 seconds without asking for comments.** Studies show that the attention span of people engaged in conversation is only about 30 seconds or so. To keep the other person's mind from wandering while you speak, keep your thoughts short and ask for comments or feedback regularly.
7. **Don't talk to yourself while the other person is talking.** When you are talking to yourself, guess who you're listening to?
8. **Reflect back the other person's comment before you respond.** Be like a flat mirror, reflecting the message without distortion. For more in-depth reflection, include all aspects of the message (physiology, tonality and verbal).
9. **Get validation.** If you really want to get down to the real deal, it may take some work. Don't take intellectual smoke screens or wishy washy words. This is where you get "recognize and acknowledge."
10. **Do the real gut-check ... which is more important: who is right or what is right?** And does it really matter who says it? You know it does ... it's much more important if they say it.



## **What is the Mentor/Protégé Relationship Agreement?**

Past mentoring efforts reveal it is not enough to simply match mentors and protégés and send them off to start a relationship. The natural chemistry of spontaneously formed relationships may be lacking. Having a matched mentoring pair work toward specific objectives will put mentors and protégés at ease and allow relationships to develop more naturally. When you are matching participants, an agreement between the partners needs to be established.

The mentoring agreement is a critical element of the mentoring relationship. A mentor/protégé agreement is a written agreement, which details mutually agreed upon objectives for the match. It is the “road map” the match will follow to ensure the experience is successful and rewarding. The number one reason mentoring relationships are not successful is the lack of a clear, concrete action plan.

Depending on the participants and the type of mentoring program, the mentoring agreement can range from the simple to the complex. At minimum, the agreement should include listing of key objectives and strategies for attaining those objectives through the mentoring relationship. A more complex agreement may include: roles and responsibilities of each participant; duration of mentorship agreement; meeting dates and times; key skills to be developed; and measures of relationship success.

A sample agreement is attached that includes all of the above elements and is meant to be adapted to meet the mentor/protégé’s relationship style.





**Mentor/Protégé Relationship Agreement**

The following agreement outlines the mentoring partnership between

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

This agreement will begin \_\_\_\_\_ and end \_\_\_\_\_

Identify key skills to be developed:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

The primary role of the mentor is to:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The primary role of the protégé is to:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Indicate how and when progress will be reviewed and evaluated:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Indicate the frequency, nature, location and duration of the meetings:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Indicate the date and time of the first meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate your expectations with respect to confidentiality of information shared:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

At the conclusion of the agreement, how you will know the mentoring relationship was successful?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We agree to abide by this relationship, the policies and procedures of the mentoring initiative and the organization. We also agree to a no-fault conclusion of this relationship if, for any reason it seems appropriate.

Mentor Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Protégé Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_