



ALUMNI & FRIENDS
ASSOCIATION

Mentoring Guide

State and Local
Alumni
Coordinators

“A mentor is more than an advisor. A mentor provides you with wisdom, technical knowledge, assistance, support, empathy and respect throughout, and often beyond ...”

— University of Washington Mentor Guide

- **What is a mentor?**
- **Why is mentoring important?**
- **Who is a good candidate for mentoring?**
- **How to use your SkillsUSA journey to help guide others**
- **What roles can students take to prepare for success after you're gone?**
- **How to ensure the process stays in place after you leave, to keep the organization thriving**

What is a Mentor?

A mentor is defined as a person or friend who guides a less experienced person by building trust and modeling positive behaviors. An effective mentor understands that his or her role is to be dependable, engaged, authentic and attuned with the needs of the student.

Why is Mentoring Important?

Mentoring helps develop skilled talent to become the future of your industry. America is in the middle of a skills gap, which makes alumni-to-student mentoring that much more important. Remember, you are the ambassador to the next generation.

Who is a Good Candidate for Mentoring?

A good student for mentoring should have the following qualities:

- Ability to define and evaluate personal strengths and weaknesses
- Eagerness and desire to learn and grow as an individual
- Being serious about investing time in the mentor and student relationship
- Willingness to take the initiative in the relationship, and be politely insistent about the desire for a mentor
- Flexibility and an understanding of the mentor's demanding schedule
- Demonstrates responsibility for scheduling and keeping the mentoring appointments
- Promptness for all mentoring appointments
- Requests feedback, even when not prompted by the mentor
- Shows interest in mentors' personal and professional lives in an effort to get to know them as a whole person. Mentors and students both have a life outside of the institution, and sharing something about it can help each communicate better
- Shows respect and never forgets the time and effort this person is taking to offer a smoother path on the way to success. The mentor is there to help the student in his or her career by pointing out the stepping stones, not being one

How to Use Your SkillsUSA Journey To Help Guide Others

Although everyone will have his or her own unique SkillsUSA journey, mentors are great resources. You can prepare students to chair SkillsUSA contests, run for office and take charge of fundraising projects. Use your past successes and failures to help steer students in the right direction during their SkillsUSA experience. Remember, their experience will never be exactly the same as yours, so don't try to make it a carbon copy of your experience.

What Roles Can Students Take To Prepare for Success After You're Gone?

It is important to guide students in roles within the association that will prepare them for a future executive board position. Committee positions, including chairing committees, are great starter positions to help groom a potential successor. It is also recommended to delegate some tasks that would normally be handled by an executive board member to a student. Mentored students can also shadow an executive board member in his or her duties, or sit in on executive board meetings. These tasks will not only help prepare your students for an executive board role, but give them an opportunity to find out which role suits them best. Remember, we learn best by learning and then modeling what we have learned in real-life scenarios.

How to Ensure the Process Stays in Place After You Leave, to Keep the Organization Thriving

Mentoring is a great tool to keep an organization successful and on track for the long term. With each new group, mentors can share their successes and failures, and as time progresses, a list of best practices can be developed and passed down from mentors to students each year. This will help solidify your organization for years to come, strengthening it as time progresses.



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