

ETHICAL EXPECTATIONS OF MENTORS*

While a mentoring relationship is reciprocal, the mentor is the more experienced individual who acts as a sponsor, role model, and guide for the mentee, a less experienced (and often younger) professional or student. The mentor is tasked with providing counsel, advice, support, information, and resources to the mentee as they become a more independent and well-rounded member of their field. As such, mentors have an obligation to their mentees to conduct themselves in a manner which is not only effective, but also ethical (Forehand, 2008; Johnson, 2003 cited in Johnson, 2017).

Below are Nine Ethical Principles for the practice of mentoring.

1. Beneficence

Mentors strive to facilitate the professional, academic, and/or personal growth of their mentee(s), acting to understand their unique needs and demonstrating diligence in providing wisdom, support, and feedback.

2. Nonmaleficence

Mentors intentionally work to avoid harming, exploiting, neglecting, or otherwise disrespecting their mentee(s).

3. Autonomy

Mentors endeavor to bolster mentees' knowledge, independence, self-sufficiency, and maturity, facilitating the autonomy and creativity of their mentees.

4. Fidelity

Mentors keep promises and remain loyal to those they mentor in terms of attention, support, and honest evaluation. If the relationship requires renegotiation on the mentor's part, the mentor will initiate that conversation.

5. Justice

Mentors treat all mentees (and potential mentees) equitably regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, age, or other identities.

6. Transparency

Mentors provide mentees the information necessary to make an informed decision about entering into a mentoring relationship and encourage good communication about mutual expectations moving forward.

7. Boundaries and Multiple Relationship

Mentors honor the professional boundaries of the mentoring relationship and seek to protect the integrity of this bond.

8. Privacy

Mentors keep private information shared in confidence by the mentee(s); however, there are circumstances where your mentor is mandated to report information you shared with them. Although mentoring relationships are not under privileged legal protection, mentors avoid sharing sensitive information about the mentee without informed consent, unless a disclosure is necessary under University of Iowa policy.

9. Competence

Mentors continually work to evaluate and expand their competence in the mentor role, participating in activities such as training, formal educational opportunities, and consultation with colleagues. If the mentor is experiencing problems of competence, then the mentoring relationship is renegotiated or terminated.

→ [MENTOR.UIOWA.EDU](https://mentor.uiowa.edu)

*Adapted from Johnson 2017 in Mentoring Processes in Higher Education