



## **“Rules of the Road” for the Mentoring Process**

### **What is mentoring?**

Mentoring is a process by which a mentee (protégé) strives to set and achieve professional goals under the guidance of another person with special expertise (the mentor).

### **What is a mentee?**

The mentee (or protégé) is someone who proactively seeks a relationship with a more experienced person, or a person with special expertise, in order to strengthen skills and build on current knowledge for professional growth.

### **What is a mentor?**

A mentor is an individual committed to serving as a role model or teacher for a mentee. They are committed to the confidentiality of the relationship and can provide support in many areas, including specific job responsibilities and career direction.

### **Who are the mentors in ABSA’s program?**

The mentors are ABSA members who are experienced biosafety professionals and who have volunteered to share their experience and insights with less experienced ABSA members.

### **Who are the mentees in ABSA’s program?**

A mentee can be any ABSA member who wants to learn new skills and have a friendly, non-judgmental, non-work related relationship with another biosafety professional. It may also be an experienced person who wants to learn a new area of expertise from someone with experience in that area.

### **How does the process work?**

The mentor list is in place – various areas of expertise are associated with each volunteer. ABSA members who are not yet mentors can be added to the list by completing the “Become a Mentor” form at [my.absa.org](http://my.absa.org). Mentees complete the mentor request, including areas of interest, using the “Request a Mentor” form at [my.absa.org](http://my.absa.org). The ABSA office and Mentoring Committee will suggest a match based on areas of mutual interest – both parties will be contacted to determine their availability, willingness, etc. Either party can decline the match, with no questions asked. Another match will be suggested at that point, until a match is made. The mentor and mentee will sign the Confidentiality Form and return it to the ABSA office. From that point on, they are free to develop their relationship – see suggestions below. After 6 months in a relationship, the “Mentoring Evaluation” should be completed by both parties and returned to the ABSA office.

## **Rules of the Road:**

- Involvement in the Mentoring Program is voluntary. Either party can terminate the relationship if the goals are not being met.
- Aim for realistic, focused goals – establish expectations of each other in the initial contacts.
- Discuss and agree upon means of communication (telephone, e-mail, site visits) and frequency of contact.
- Complete “Progress Report” to provide feedback on the mentoring process (and documentation for possible recertification points).

## **Suggested responsibilities**

### **Mentee**

- Directs the relationship by proactively setting up interaction sessions and creating an agenda or questions to be covered.
- Communicates developmental needs and goals (written goals suggested, e.g., answer the question, “What do I hope to gain from this relationship?”)
- Maintains confidentiality and integrity in the partnership.
- Seeks and responds positively to the mentor’s feedback.

### **Mentor**

- Commits to and takes an active role in the relationship. Keeps appointments with the mentee.
- Shares insights, experience and expertise with the mentee.
- Fosters an environment where the mentee is free to share concerns.
- Asks good questions and provides straightforward feedback to mentee.