



HARBOR DENTAL SOCIETY'S MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Please take a minute to think back on your first year or two in practice...it's a good chance they were probably exciting and interesting years!

The new dentists graduating from school today are not only faced with the same challenges but staggering financial burdens as well.

To help our New Dentist members, Harbor Dental Society has setup a **Mentor Program**. This program is designed to welcome you, as a valued member, to connect you with Harbor's highly successful and diverse component society and friendly, inclusive culture.

Mentors

Mentors assist new members to become an active, participating member, and are available to answer questions about organized dentistry and its benefits. To help us continue with these efforts, we are asking you for your assistance. We invite you to join the Harbor Dental Society Mentorship Program to guide a colleague on a successful path.

Mentees

If you are looking for a mentor, please feel free to fill out the mentorship form, or contact the Harbor office and we will help you get matched up with a colleague to best serve your needs.

Harbor Dental Society

Call Harbor's office 562.595.6303
or email: kristin@harbordentalsociety.org

Harbor Dental Society Mentorship Program

On Being a Mentor

What are my responsibilities as a Mentor?

- Share your professional experiences with your mentee. You are not there necessarily to tell them what to do and what not to do.
- Be a colleague and friend. Communication is the basis for a successful transaction.
- Have an “open door” policy with your mentee. You may wish to invite him/her to your office to observe how your dental practice operates.
- Schedule regular meetings with your mentee. Informality can be a good thing, however, setting some goals and schedule helps to foster a sense of progress, achievement and, ultimately, value.
- If you and your mentee wish, you may extend your relationship. However, it is often useful to set some endpoint.
- Upon completion, encourage and assist your mentee in becoming a member of organized dentistry
- Don't expect to know all the answers. And it's okay not to know ALL the answers, you might learn something too!

What if things just aren't working out with my mentee?

- We understand that not all matches are meant to be. Feel free to call us for tips or suggestions to try and improve your relationship.
- However, at any time, a mentor or mentee can request a different match.

Benefits of being a Mentor

- Sharing expertise, gaining new perspectives, providing satisfaction
- Giving back to the profession in a concrete way
- Playing an active role in the professions' future
- Getting something in return, e.g. staying apprised of the changes in dental education

10 Tips to Make the Most Out of Your Mentorship

- 1) **Be clear on why you want a mentor and why you are meeting.** Define what type of help you're looking for in a mentor. Are you looking for someone with similar skills or someone with a very different skill set who can coach you? Are looking for someone who has their own practice(s) or someone with experience in Dental Service Organizations?
- 2) **Establish goals for the relationship.** Discuss and agree on the goals of the relationship and what you, personally, are doing to make it a successful venture. Review these goals from time to time to be sure the relationship is working. If not, adjust or seek out other mentors.
- 3) **Don't limit yourself to one mentor.** You can establish multiple mentoring relationships with individuals who can help you grow in different aspects of your life. Think of it as building your own personal coach lineup. Your "coach" can include GPs, specialists, professional, and more.
- 4) **Establish communication methods and frequency of contact from the beginning.** Talk with your mentor to determine the lines of communication that will work for both of you. Will you meet face-to-face or communicate mainly through email and phone? Make sure you meet/talk enough to suit both of you.
- 5) **Manage expectations and build trust.** Mentoring takes time and implies sacrifices for both the person being mentored and the mentor. Be respectful of your mentor's time and the other priorities in his/her life, such as family, travel and community activities. Avoid any trust-breaking behaviors such as canceling appointments or not following through on leads and contacts given to you by your mentor.
- 6) **Acquire mentoring skills and competencies.** Pay attention to great skills that you notice in your mentors. These skills include listening, guidance, recommendations and wisdom. When you receive corrective feedback from your mentor, don't be defensive. Listen, digest and take immediate steps to apply what you have learned.
- 7) **Be respectful of your mentor's time.** Do not overburden him/her by demanding too much time or too many contacts. Understand that the moment you decide you need information might not be the best time for them, so be patient.
- 8) **Express your gratitude.** Your mentor is likely to give a lot more than you do in the relationship in terms of time and contacts. Be sure to express regularly that you value and appreciate your mentor's guidance.
- 9) **Vary the activities you do together.** There are numerous activities you can do with your mentor, such as talking about your past experiences, goals, plans and skill development. Setup up virtual meetings or attend meetings, conferences, and social events together when possible. You can also shadow your mentor at their practice or review your resume. There are lots of opportunities to know each other on a professional and personal level. Take advantage of it.
- 10) **Have fun!**