

Creative Mentoring—Closure Protocol

Mentoring relationships can end both in anticipated and unanticipated ways, but it is critical to have a way with dealing with either. According to research in MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership's 3rd Edition of *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring*, matches that end prematurely can result in negative outcomes for mentees. It can actually do more damage than help. Creative Mentoring has created closure protocol for both kinds of conclusions. In either case, it is essential that the mentor coordinator facilitate closing the match in a way that affirms the contributions of the mentor and mentee, allowing both individuals the opportunity to assess the experience.

Anticipated Closures The most important element of closure is the mentor coordinators responsibility to facilitate closing the match in a way that affirms the contributions of the mentor and mentee, allowing both individuals the opportunity to assess the experience.

Examples of anticipated endings of mentor relationships:

- Conclusion of academic year
- Mentor anticipates moving/changing jobs
- Mentee is changing schools/homes

1. Procedure for mid-year closures

- a. Conduct Exit Interview (see *exit interview*)
- b. At last meeting, the mentor and mentee should discuss memories of fun times they've had together and participate in a special activity.
 - i. We suggest the mentor/mentee make cards or letters for each other.
- c. Follow system for mentor or mentee rematch, which allows both an honest expectation for rematch. Think about the following before discussing rematch:
 - i. Is there enough time left in the year to develop a meaningful mentoring relationship at this point? Would it be better to start the new mentor/mentee relationship at the beginning of next year?
 - ii. Was the mentor/mentee a good match for the program?
 - iii. Do you have the capacity to find a rematch for the mentor/mentee?
 - iv. Does the mentor/mentee want to be re-matched?

2. Procedure for end-of-year closures

- a. Conduct Exit Interview (see *exit interview*)
- b. Participate in Creative Mentoring's End of Year (EOY) survey
- c. At last meeting, the mentor and mentee should discuss memories of fun times they've had together and participate in a special activity.
 - i. We suggest the mentor/mentee make cards or letters for each other.
- d. Host a Graduation Night or Mentor Appreciation event
 - i. This is important for mentors and mentees to feel a sense of closure of their relationship, as well as be part of a larger group.
 - ii. Recognize specific contributions of mentors and mentees
- e. Attend Creative Mentoring's Mentor Appreciation Event
 - i. Creative Mentoring hosts Mentor Appreciation events in all 3 counties, so encourage your mentors, administrators, and other volunteers to attend to celebrate the continual support they provide.
- f. Follow system for mentor or mentee rematch, which allows both an honest expectation for rematch. Think about the following before discussing rematch:
 - i. Is there enough time left in the year to develop a meaningful mentoring relationship at this point? Would it be better to start the new mentor/mentee relationship at the beginning of next year?
 - ii. Was the mentor/mentee a good match for the program?
 - iii. Do you have the capacity to find a rematch for the mentor/mentee?
 - iv. Does the mentor/mentee want to be re-matched?

Unanticipated Closures The most important element of closure is the mentor coordinators responsibility to facilitate closing the match in a way that affirms the contributions of the mentor and mentee, allowing both individuals the opportunity to assess the experience.

Examples of unanticipated endings of mentor relationships:

- Unexpected move/change in jobs
- Illness

- Interpersonal or practical challenges
 - Failure to attend scheduled meetings
 - Failure to discuss personal issues
1. Conduct Exit Interview
 2. If there is enough time, plan a last meeting. At this closure meeting, the mentor and mentee should discuss memories of fun times they've had together and participate in a special activity.
 - a. If the match ends suddenly (without a planned last meeting) then coordinate a letter/card exchange between the mentee and mentor separately.
 - b. Do not give out the addresses of either individual, but rather have them send any correspondence to the school or program site and the mentor coordinator should mail/hand it to the mentor/mentee from there.
 3. Follow system for mentor or mentee rematch, which allows both an honest expectation for rematch. Think about the following before discussing rematch:
 - a. Is there enough time left in the year to develop a meaningful mentoring relationship at this point? Would it be better to start the new mentor/mentee relationship at the beginning of next year?
 - b. Was the mentor/mentee a good match for the program?
 - c. Do you have the capacity to find a rematch for the mentor/mentee?
 - d. Does the mentor/mentee want to be re-matched?

Sample Exit Interview for Mentors

Please use the following questions as a baseline for your exit interview. Include any additional questions you believe relate to your program.

1. What was the reason for ending the mentoring relationship?
2. Are there any additional resources or support that the program could provide to allow the match to continue?
3. How would you rate your experience in the mentoring program?
4. What was your favorite moment during your mentoring relationship?
5. How has the mentoring relationship been meaningful/beneficial?
6. Do you plan to continue in the mentoring program?
 - a. Do you wish to be matched with the same mentee?
7. Have you felt support from the mentoring program staff?

- a. In what ways could the mentoring program improve to better support you?

Sample Exit Interview for Mentees

Please use the following questions as a baseline for your exit interview. Include any additional questions you believe relates to your program.

1. What was the reason for ending the mentoring relationship?
2. How would you rate your experience in the mentoring program?
3. How has your relationship with your mentor been beneficial?
4. What was one of your favorite memories of your mentoring relationship?
5. Do you plan to continue in the mentoring program?
 - a. Do you wish to be matched with the same mentor?
6. In what ways could the mentoring program improve to make it a better experience for you?