



Oxford  
Women  
*in Physics*

# MENTORING PROGRAMME



*Oxford Women in Physics Society*



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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MENTORING REFERENCE

Oxford Learning Institute

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### WHY GET INVOLVED?

Benefits of Being a Mentor  
and Being a Mentee

### CONTACT EMAIL:

womeninphysics@physics.ox.ac.uk

### MENTORING WEBSITE:

<https://www2.physics.ox.ac.uk/equality-and-diversity/women-in-physics-society/mentoring-0>

## HARD FACTS

# Under-representation and low retention of women in STEM



of **100** females



studying for  
undergraduate degrees

**12**



graduate  
with a STEM  
degree

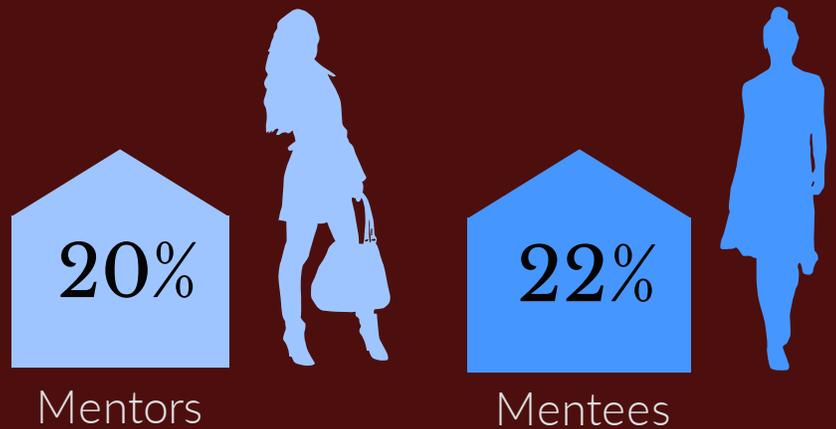
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Continue  
working in  
STEM 10  
years later

*Mentoring can improve  
these statistics!*

## HARD FACTS



Higher retention of women



More likely to request...

Statistics on the benefits of a mentoring programme

GET INVOLVED

# OVERVIEW

## Mentoring Process



### NEW WOMEN JOIN THE UNIVERSITY

Collect database of incoming students in Michaelmas



### MENTORS FOR STUDENTS

-- Undergraduates assigned to 2nd yrs.  
-- Graduates assigned to postdocs/faculty



### MENTORS FOR POSTDOCS AND FACULTY

Due to varying start dates, please opt in on website



**MEET YOUR MENTOR**

Mentors are asked to organise an initial, subsidised meeting over coffee/food



**ASK FOR HELP**

Feel free to contact your mentor as questions and problems arise. They're here to help



**CATCH UP OVER A DISCOUNTED MEAL**

Pairings are encouraged to meet up often and develop great friendships

# FAQS

About your membership...

## CAN I CHANGE MENTORS?

Of course! Let's find one who works for you.  
Simply email the Mentoring Coordinator.

## HOW CAN I BECOME A MENTOR?

Simple! Fill out a few short questions online.  
<https://www2.physics.ox.ac.uk/equality-and-diversity/women-in-physics-society>

## HOW CAN I GET A MENTOR?

If you haven't been automatically assigned one, then it's very easy! Just fill out a few simple questions on our website.

## I DON'T WANT TO BE INVOLVED

No problem! You are not obligated to be involved at all. If you're now too busy, that's okay! We understand. Just email us.

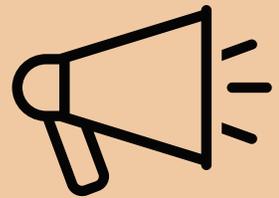


## FAQS

# Difficult topics to discuss...

### MY MENTEE IS BEING BULLIED

1. Communicate that bullying is NEVER okay
2. Reassure them that they're not alone & it's not their fault
3. Inform mentees of resources for help (below)
4. Empower them to stand up for themselves



### MY MENTEE HAS PROBLEMS WITH THEIR BOSS

1. Great scientists are not necessarily great supervisors
2. Compatibility works both ways -- be true to oneself
3. Help them recognise what they need from a boss
4. Either help them adapt or find a more compatible boss



### MY MENTEE IS A THREAT TO THEMSELVES

1. Use active listening skills and emotional intelligence to assess the situation well and provide support
2. Recommend outside help or counseling options (below)
3. In emergency cases only, contact a Harassment advisor



### SUPPORT RESOURCES

University Counseling Service, Occupational Health Services, and Physics Department Harassment Advisors

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice/advisornetwork/>



## MENTORING TOOLS

# Habits of SUCCESSFUL MENTEES

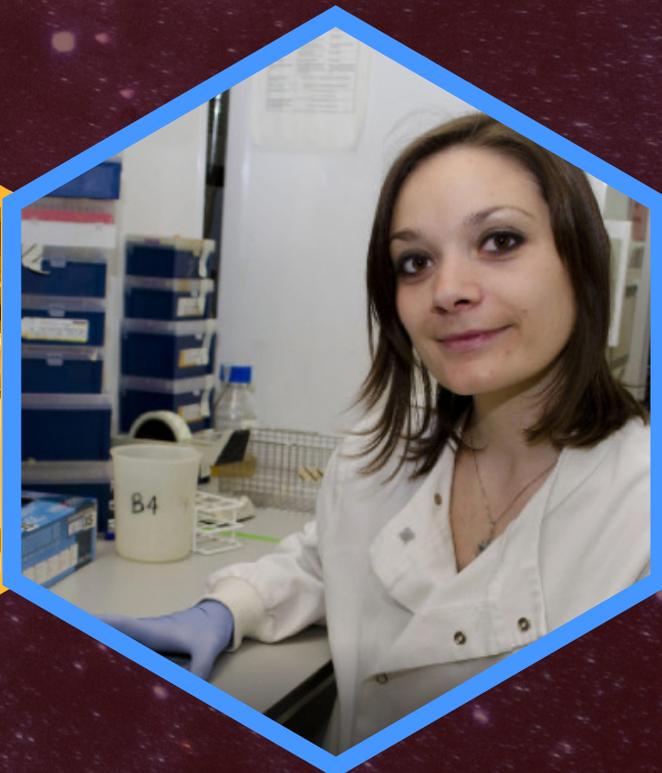


1. Be willing to take responsibility
  - *There are no "quick fixes"*
  - *YOU will be empowered to solve your problems*
2. Prepare to be challenged, instead of just receiving sympathy or validation
3. Sincerely reflect on conversations
4. Take action needed!

## MENTORING TOOLS

# Habits of SUCCESSFUL MENTORS

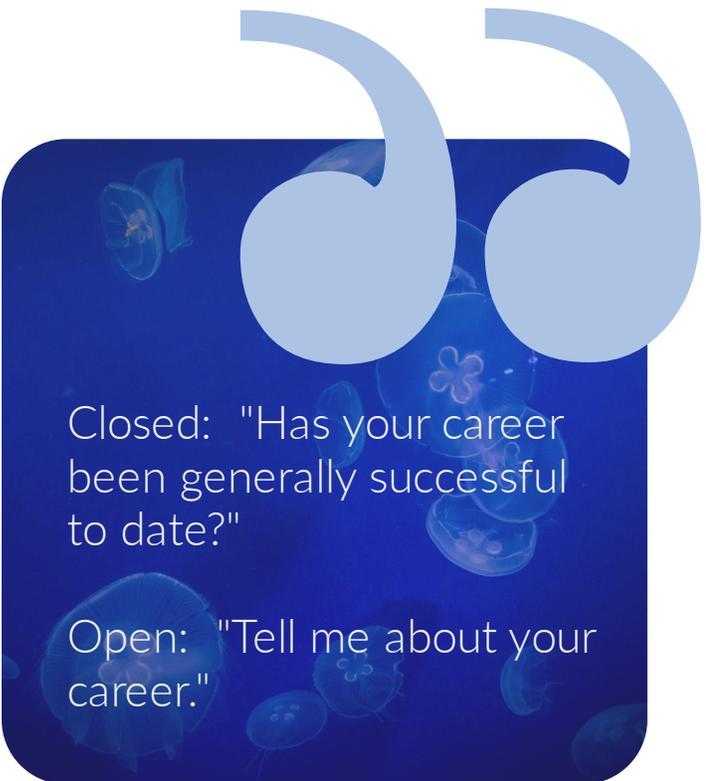
1. Actively listen with interest
2. Lead by example
3. Use emotional intelligence
  - *Not everything is said out loud*
  - *Observe a mentee's feelings and use that information to guide conversations*
4. Celebrate their achievements
5. Help your mentee consider different perspectives
6. Take a genuine interest in your mentee as a person



## SPECIAL SKILLS

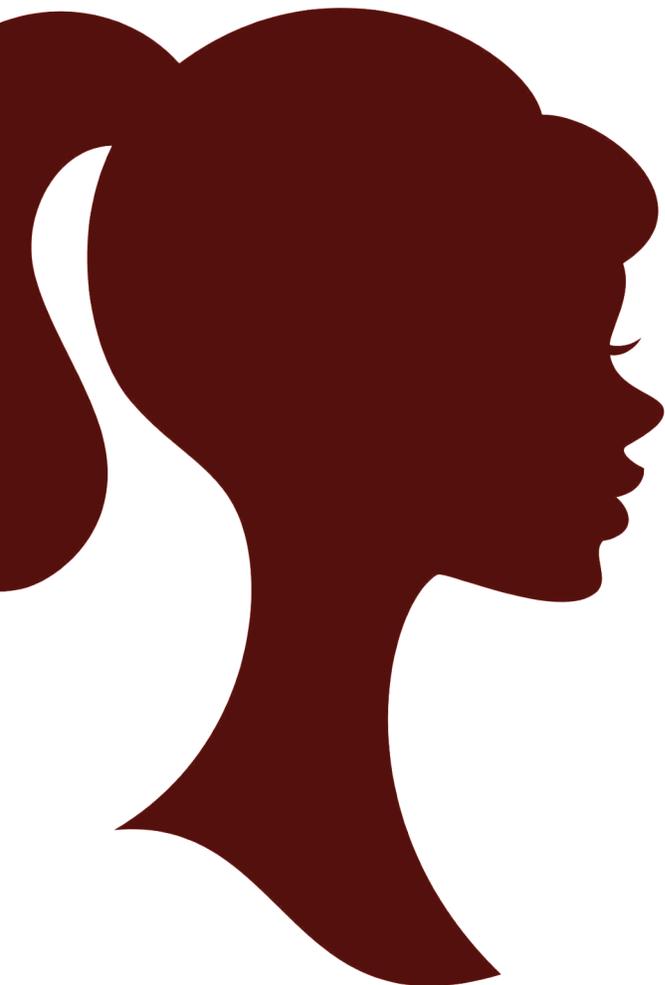
# OPEN v. CLOSED QUESTIONS

- Closed questions can usually be answered with "yes" or "no"
- Open questions require the mentee to answer more fully and thoughtfully



Closed: "Has your career been generally successful to date?"

Open: "Tell me about your career."



Open questions start with words such as 'What, How, Where, Describe, Tell me about...'

Try to avoid accusatory questions that start with Why?

Stay on topic and move to action by controlling the replies.  
e.g. "What are your next steps?"

## SPECIAL SKILLS

# How to be an ACTIVE LISTENER

*When a mentee feels you're actively listening, they're more likely to open up and ask for help*

Active listening requires a high-level of attentiveness, not just the ability to hear a conversation.

How can you non-verbally show that you're listening?

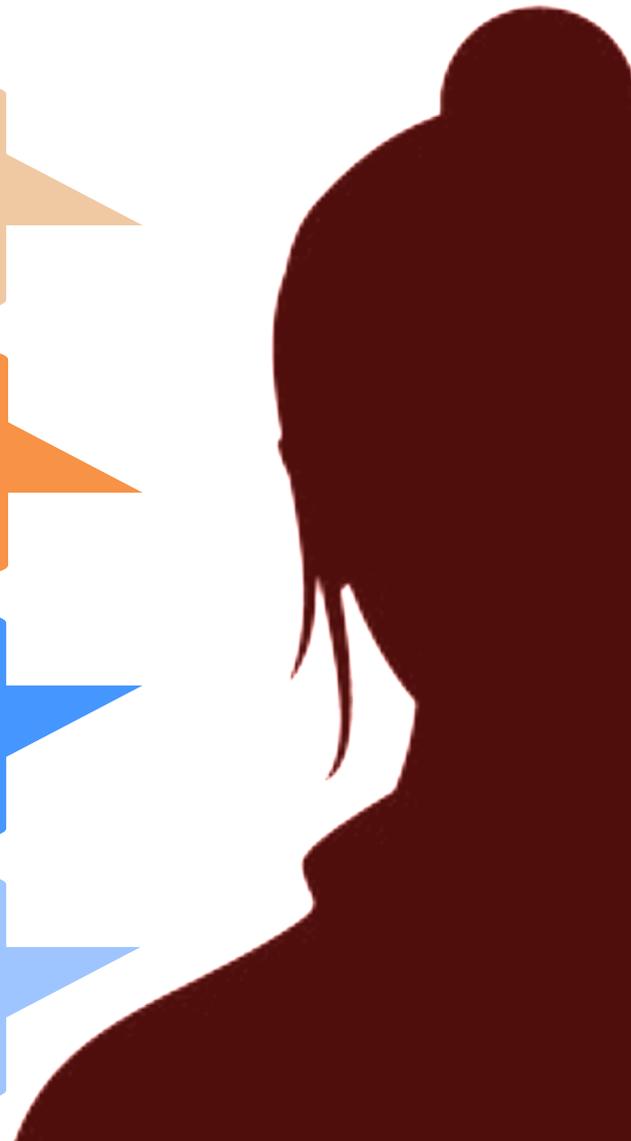
Nods, smiles, and eye contact

1. Practice turning yourself off completely and concentrating on the other person.

2. When you notice yourself not listening well, bring your attention back to the speaker.

3. Be aware of body language and the unspoken messages. Mentees might be hesitant to speak freely at first.

4. Indicate you're listening with "Mms" and "Ahs" along with non-verbal language.



WHY GET INVOLVED?

# BENEFITS of ... being a Mentor

Improve communication and listening skills

Opportunity to reflect on your practice

Increase job satisfaction

Development of leadership skills

Widely recognised and valued skill for careers



## WHY GET INVOLVED?



## ... being a Mentee

Receive one-to-one personalised help

Unique career path guidance

Reduce imposter syndrome

Improve focus on goals and progression

Learn from your mentor's mistakes & successes