Guidelines and Tips for a Successful Mentor-Mentee Relationship

An effective mentorship can be a great source of useful information, ranging from cultural norms to local business practices, and a potentially life-changing opportunity to establish a mutually beneficial relationship aimed at the mentee’s personal and professional development while also providing a great way for UT alumni to contribute to their fellow Longhorn’s success and stay connected to and involved with the University.

A mentor-mentee relationship, simply put, is what you make it.

UT Austin Study Abroad wants nothing more than the success and satisfaction of our many program participants and the continued success of and valued connection with our UT Alumni living and working abroad. As such, below you will find some useful guidelines and tips on how to engage in an effective and successful mentor-mentee relationship.

Prior to Meeting (You should initiate these steps) -

- Write a brief introductory email to help your mentor get to know you.
- Ask your mentor what method(s) of communication he/she is most comfortable with and accessible by (e.g., Email, telephone, Facebook, LinkedIn etc.).
- Plan your first meeting in the emails that follow to avoid time conflicts later on.

Potential Activities –

- Meet up at a local café or restaurant to enhance your cultural immersion.
- When and if appropriate, the mentor might invite you to participate in cultural events.
- Discuss current events that apply to the specific field of interest or have local significance.
- Ask to set up a “Shadow Day” to observe your mentor in their workplace.

In General -

- Communicate what your future goals are and what you hope to learn from your mentor.
- Commit to getting to know your mentor on an individual basis.
- Remember that your mentor is not an unlimited resource.
- Maintain contact and don’t be afraid to ask questions. Be honest, polite, and courteous.
- Remember that your mentor is a working professional; be considerate of their time and be reliable.
- Stay active and positive throughout your time abroad and when engaging your mentor.
- Take your mentor’s guidance seriously and commit at least as much time and effort to the relationship as your mentor.
- Be sure to research culturally appropriate gifts and gift-giving norms. Remember to formally thank your mentor.