

Mentoring Guidelines



TUM Mentoring

Technische Universität München
Alumni & Career

Mentoring Guidelines



TUM Mentoring guidelines for the successful mentorship
Technical University of Munich . Alumni & Career

The aim of this TUM Mentoring guide is to give you, the mentees and mentors, some assistance during your mentoring year. It not only describes the division of roles within the tandem, but also gives tips and guidance on structuring the mentoring relationship by passing on experience from previous.

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1

TUM Mentoring

1.1 From the Odyssey to TUM Mentoring

A mentorship is a tandem relationship between two people: the mentor and the mentee. The term mentor comes from Homer's epic "Odyssey", in which Mentor assumes the role of a fatherly friend, supporting Telemachus, the son of Odysseus, in word and deed during his father's long absence and helping him to defend the kingdom against invaders until his father returns home.

The institution of mentoring has survived the intervening centuries in various shapes and forms. Some well-known mentoring partners include James Joyce and Samuel Beckett, Mariah Carey and Christina Aguilera, Christian Dior and Yves Saint Laurent, Gottfried von Leibniz and Sir Isaac Newton, Hermann von Helmholtz and Max Planck, for instance.¹

In Homer's day, the tandem partners knew each other prior to their mentoring arrangements. The mentee adopted the role of the mentor's protégé. Nowadays, the institutionalized mentoring services, like TUM Mentoring, introduce two strangers to one another and focus on an exchange of experience and transfer of knowledge between these two persons.

TUM Mentoring, which has been teaming students and doctoral candidates of Technical University of Munich with experienced TUM alumni since 2008, is the result of a student initiative.



"The TUM Mentoring concept is based on the university's most valuable assets: the people, their experience and their knowledge."
– Dipl. Inf. Thomas
Jell, mentor

¹ Source: www.peer.ca/mentorpairs.html; Status: 03/26/2012

1.2 Personality development and networking

The main pillar of the program is the tandem relationship between mentor and mentee. For one year, experienced TUM Alumni in their role as mentors support current students and doctoral candidates in their career and life planning. By referring to their own experiences they give the mentees access to informal learning. In a one-to-one relationship they exchange experience, work on the points of interest of the mentees, set and pursue goals and thus promote the individual and personal development of young person on an individual basis.

Additional meetings and events supplement the program, allowing for vibrant networking opportunities with other members of alumni and career programm. Participation in these events is open to all, however not mandatory!



1.3 Regional . National . International

TUM alumni live and work across the entire world. In addition, spending a semester or two abroad is becoming an integral part of most students academic education. As a result, TUM Mentoring tandems exist locally around Munich, but also nationwide as well as worldwide.

While locally based tandem conversations happen mostly during personal meetings, international tandems work perfectly over long distances via emails, phone calls or Skype for their conversations. The crucial part for the mentoring process is simply about finding the best conversational format for both parties.



“Estimated
10,000 km distance and
5 hours time difference to
my mentor seem perhaps as a
disadvantage, however in view
of my upcoming semester to be
spent in Brazil this experience
proves to be priceless!”

– Markus Lintl,
mentee

1.4 Your benefits

Together with your mentoring partner you both decide on the form and the direction your mentoring tandem will take as well as on which aspects you and your tandem partner wish to concentrate on. Whether you are the mentee or the mentor, you can profit from TUM Mentoring in many different ways.

Opportunities for mentees

Self realization: In the dialogue you conduct with your mentor you get to know your own capabilities and strengths and learn to assess them better. As well as improving your ability to analyze problems and find solutions, you can also improve your sense of judgment.

Boosting your self-confidence: A confidential conversation with your mentor also gives you the chance to talk about your weaknesses, doubts, fears or difficult situations and to realize, that they are “normal” and can be solved. Your mentor will not solve the problems for you, but the backing you get from the mentor boosts your confidence in your own ability.

Social skills: You train your social skills and are able to work on them with your mentor systematically: they may include communication skills, conversational strategies, self-management, self-presentation, conflict management skills, or teamwork.

Qualifications: Your mentor can pass on so-called informal knowledge about organizational structures, rules of the game, tips and tricks of the trade for your job application, interview or even day-to-day work routine.

Planning ahead: You become clearer about your goals and can think together with your mentor about how they can be achieved in the best way. You can also work out individual solutions, such as reconciling work and family life in your particular circumstances.

Joining networks: You learn how important networks are in all areas of your life and will find out how to establish contacts and maintain relations. Under certain circumstances, your mentor may even introduce you to networks or individuals, who could be of assistance when you enter the business world.

Benefits for mentors

Self-reflection: The mentee's questions and opinions motivate you to consciously reflect on your own choice of career and personal development.

Boosting your counseling expertise: By practicing active listening and individual consultation you can benefit from your role as a mentor by developing your coaching skills. Other soft skills, such as communication tactics, conversational strategies, as well as tolerance, open mindedness and diplomacy when tackling controversial topics, are strengthened by the tandem discussions.

Feedback: The mentee sees your behavior through the eyes of an observer. If you give him the opportunity to accompany you to appointments or to become more acquainted with your personal life and day-to-day work routine, your protégé can give you some interesting feedback. You may possibly get some clues as to the effect your own leadership style has on younger people (millennial generation), from the perspective of your mentee.

Social commitment: Mentoring is a unique opportunity to play an active part in the development of the younger generation in the form of social commitment, nurturing them, as well as sensitizing and preparing them for critical topics. You enhance your reputation as a good leader, taking talented youngsters under your wing.

Networks: As well as expanding your own network, you also obtain an insight into a whole range of different subjects in which your mentee is involved.

Keep in touch with your alma mater: Your mentee gives you a glimpse of life at the TUM, current research and junior academics at your alma mater. In your role as a TUM alumni, you can stay in contact with your university, make an active contribution and stay updated of developments.

1.5 An overview of your mentoring year

The matching process

After receiving your application as mentee for the TUM Mentoring program including a motivational letter addressed to your mentor, the mentoring team starts with the individual search for an experienced alumni. Once we receive a positive reply, the mentoring team brings you in mutual contact and you will be asked to contact your mentor to arrange a first unbinding meeting.

The first unbinding meeting

During your first meeting you discuss your points of interests and questions with regard to your future life and expectation towards your mentoring experience. Which topics are important to you? How do you want to organize your meetings? Based on your first impression of each other, can you imagine to build a tandem for one year?

Tandem agreement

A tandem arrangement is a document which should be filled in and signed by both partners once you decide that you wish to continue as a tandem for the future. Once emailed to the TUM Mentoring team, it serves also as a confirmation, that you have agreed to the tandem and thus is very important to us. Furthermore, it contains open questions which are aimed at helping you to structure your first conversation. In the tandem agreement, you stipulate the first agreements, such as the frequency of your conversations and the form (in person, Skype), points of interest to be discussed and also future objectives.

Individual tandem relationship

In the individual tandem relationship you exchange your experiences and address the questions/points of interest of the mentees. We recommend a contact every 6–8 weeks, however you are free and encouraged to find your own mode which fits you both the best, so that you can work independently on the chosen issues.

Feedback

After each meeting, you are welcome to go through an online feedback form sent to you in the first welcome email. This serves as a short feedback to the mentoring team. In case of any questions or concerns of whatever reason, mentoring team will address any questions or occurring concerns and provide support.

Online final survey

At the end of your mentoring year, you will be asked to fill out the concluding feedback via an online form. This serves the quality assurance and improvement of the mentoring program for the future.

Certificate of participation

Once you concluded your mentoring year, mentors as well as mentees will receive from us a signed certificate of participation in the TUM Mentoring program.

Optional additional events

On top of your individual conversations, both mentors and mentees will be invited to join several events each term – together or on your own. It is a great opportunity to shape your network and get to know other fellow interesting people participating in the mentoring program. You will be informed about these events through our newsletter which you automatically receive via email once you started as a tandem.

2

Framework for your tandem relationship

2.1 Your role

University paves the way for your future life and career. Like every transition into a new stage of one's life, this phase is marked by many uncertainties. A personal tandem relationship provides the opportunity for discussions between the mentor and mentee, which can help to offset these uncertainties.

To create an atmosphere for open-minded, candid discussions and establish the required alliance between the tandem partners, it is important to be clear about the different roles you can adopt in your tandem. What these roles entail and how they can be fulfilled depends naturally on the individual expectations set in each tandem and the skills available, whereby they will vary from one situation to another too.

Some people need a sparring partner for heated discussions, while others give preference to career guidance. The following section lists just a few suggestions for a typical distribution of roles in a tandem. How the tandem relationship is actually organized depends entirely on you, of course.



"It is an enriching and exciting experience to participate as a mentor in the TUM's program. In the role as a mentor, one does not only try to support the mentee in defining and reaching his own goals – one is also challenged to question own positions and strategies." – *Dr.-Ing. agr. Arne Schieder, mentor*

The role of the mentee

Goal-setter: You choose the topics that you wish to work on in your tandem partnership. Only you can stipulate which goals you want to set yourself. Your mentor can give his/her advice, but on no account can he/she set the right goals for you without your active participation. You must be able to select from your mentor's experience, advice or suggestions the ones which are relevant for you and apply them to your own aims.

Initiator: You take care of arranging appointments, keeping in touch, proposing topics, calling when there is something of immediate relevance to discuss – in other words, you take the initiative. Think about what you wish to discuss and which topics are of interest to you beforehand.

Implementer: Implement what you have worked out with your mentor and give him or her some feedback. Seize the chance to try out something new. Talk about what happened, what went wrong and what mistakes you made, etc.

Developer: Be receptive to feedback, suggestions and constructive criticism. Ask questions and put your head together with your mentor to develop positive, alternative approaches.

Person responsible: In your role as the mentee, you are primarily responsible for seeking your mentor's guidance and staying in touch, because you know best when you need advice. You are advised to prepare each meeting with your mentor for greater efficiency and more beneficial results.

Note for mentees: Please remember that it is up to you to play the active role in your tandem and contact your mentor of your own accord. After all, the mentorship is for your own benefit!

The role of the mentor

In your role as a mentor, you can support your protégé in different ways while simultaneously developing your own plans and your own approach. We would like to give you a few tips that have been helpful for other tandems.

Source of information: As well as offering your mentee support and orientation, you also pass on your own experience in life. This involves being open-minded and candid about yourself, as well as providing aspects of your own successes, including difficult situations and how you mastered them. You offer guidance in matters of current relevance, give your opinion of the situation and try to find solutions that suit your mentee.

Advisor: You encourage your mentee, provide positive feedback, work out new approaches and practice modes of behavior, where appropriate and desired. Involve your protégé in the development of your own ideas. Suggest formulating realistic short- and long-term goals, devising strategies and setting challenging tasks to put your own ability to the test. You adopt a positive attitude to greet your mentee's new contemplations and plans and talk their feasibility over with him/her. Your role as mentor does not make you in any way responsible for the mentee's development. You are helping him to help himself. It is up to the mentee to implement his/her plans and ideas.

Sparring partner: You play the part of a sparring partner in discussions, providing constructive, critical feedback and holding up a mirror in a good-natured manner, to allow your mentee to see a neutral, candid reflection of himself/herself.

Careers consultant: You discuss mentee's professional goals and those measures, according to your own experience, might help him/her to achieve them, or you act as his partner in discussions revolving around ideas, views and performance.

Door opener: The mentor can help the mentee to establish important contacts, introduce him/her to various networks or name other people to get in touch with.

2.2 Identification and enhancement of competences

Each tandem, each relationship between mentor and mentee is unique and includes a variety of learning opportunities. Both sides bring in their experience and expertise which contributes to their personal development.

In the role of a mentee, you pose your questions and take responsibility for the mentoring process. You are the active part - through practicing to formulate and pursue your personal goals. This enables you to develop your personal and social competences. You also actively seek ways, which match your own personality and your environment, you exchange ideas with experienced alumni and learn how to ask questions, to process information and to communicate. During your conversations, you get feedback and support from your mentor. You acquire the ability to find your own way as well as the right decisions for your future life.

In your role as a mentor, you apply your empathy and coaching skills, which you acquired throughout your life. The starting point is your willingness and ability to identify with the questions and topics of your mentee, as well as supporting and accompanying them in their development for the duration of the mentoring year. Sometimes you might find that the questions and communication are much different from your own perception. The challenge for you in such case is to find the right links and ways to each other. Hereby, your own self-reflection and communication skills are required. The most needed skills are those you bring already from your professional experience. You can gain these additional or missing instruments throughout the process or while exchanging the experiences with other mentors. Extend your consulting and coaching expertise and strengthen your reputation as a talent enhancer.

A few special tips for mentors

It is of crucial importance in a mentorship, that the mentor refrains from having any fixed, preconceived solutions ready. Instead, mentor helps the mentee to find his/her own way and answers.

The following skills are of particular importance throughout the mentorship:

- Helping the other person to change his point of view sometimes.
- Listening when your mentee has a problem.
- Identifying your protégé's feelings and providing pertinent feedback.
- Holding up a metaphorical mirror and pointing out any negative modes of conduct in a constructive manner.
- Providing information when it is appropriate and desired.
- Assigning authority or giving permission.
- Encouraging the mentee to look for options and alternative solutions.
- Boosting his/her confidence and motivating him/her.



"In my opinion, the role of a mentor is primarily focused on advice and contemplation. It is not so much about straightforward advice, but more about helping the mentee to find his/her own decisions in specific situations and about contributing my experience."
– Dr. rer. nat. Elke Rübenkamm, mentor

2.3 Communication with your tandem partner

We are communicating all the time: when we go shopping, when we have an appointment at the doctor's surgery, during negotiations, during team meetings and on many other occasions. Managerial staff devotes almost 80% of their working hours nowadays to communication. Communication is the ability to express oneself in an appropriate, precise and differentiated manner, as well as being able to listen to and understand what others are saying. This is possible when the communicating parties express themselves clearly and engage with each other. The ability to communicate is also one of the basic essentials for a tandem to work satisfactorily. A constructive communication culture of both participants is the key factor of an effective mentorship.

Active listening

Successful communication is based on active listening skills. It means to show your partners your interest for their concerns, empathize with their situation and think about it together. Allow your partners sufficient time to pose their questions or to present concerns. Show your interest and your understanding of presented issues by nodding or through concrete inquiries. Ask when something of what was being said is unclear to you. Summarize what you have understood, so that your partners can realize whether they expressed themselves clearly and have been understood by you.

Open questions

A balanced communication is based on a dialogue. In the tandem relationship, it can happen that mentees withdraw from the dialogue while focusing on listening to the mentor's experiences, thereby leaving majority of the speaking time to their mentors. It is therefore important to assure that both parties have been given enough space to speak out. Helpful are so called "W-questions" which are not easy to be replied by yes/no and thus help to keep the mutual conversation going. (e.g.: *What makes you so interested in XY company / topic? Why did you not decided differently?*)

Feedback

One important aspect of communication is feedback. Feedback is the response we give to a person in reply to their communication. It describes how these two factors have been perceived and understood by the person addressed.

A few rules need to be followed to ensure that feedback fulfills its purpose:

For the giver

- Any feedback should be given specifically at the recipient's request. It is important that he/she wants to hear something about himself or herself. The mentee might begin with a question, for instance, and invite an answer or feedback. Example: "You saw what I was like recently in the XY situation – could you tell me what your impression was?"
- If the person providing the feedback would like to respond unprompted i.e. on his/her own initiative, the mentor should first obtain the recipient's permission. Example: "I was struck by XY in this particular situation. Would you like me to comment on it?"
- The giver outlines what he/she sees or hears without making any judgment. It is important to name the positive aspects first. The transition to the negative criticism should begin with "and".... (not with "but").
- Criticism has to remain on an objective level without becoming personal.
- The giver should describe the situation unambiguously and precisely, as he/she perceived it. It is advisable to use the "I" form (and avoid the "you" form).
- It is best to arrange a meeting and talk about an incident straight away rather than provide feedback a few weeks later. An immediate, favorable response has the most powerful effect.

For the recipient

- Feedback amounts to a "gift" on behalf of the giver, and the recipient should be grateful and willing to listen in order to learn, without justifying or defending himself or being disparaging to the giver.
- Feedback requires the recipient to listen actively and be prepared to engage in self-reflection.
- The recipient should thank the giver for his feedback.
- Afterwards, the recipient should allow himself time to "digest" the feedback he has been given in order to decide whether he wants to accept what was said and, if so, which aspects he/she wishes to implement, or not.

2.4 Proximity and distance

One of the basic essentials for a successful mentorship is mutual respect between the tandem partners. Accompanied by good-natured candidness and trust, this creates personal proximity, which is capable of bridging spatial or subject-related distance or even differences in character and culture.

Whether you conduct your tandem on a friendly or a more reserved level has no influence on the success of your tandem, but only on the nature of your relationship. Whether you meet at a neutral venue or open up your personal sphere by inviting each other home, whether you undertake outings or skiing tours together, whether you wish to show your counterpart your place of study or workplace or prefer joint activities like visits to the theatre, cinema or museums defines the nature of your relationship but says nothing about the long-term results of your mentorship.

Not even the willingness to switch from the formal form of address to first-name terms gives any indication that the tandem partners have become closer than those mentors and mentees who continue to call each other Mr. or Mrs., possibly including their partner's title, where applicable. Whichever mode of address you choose, it is vital to respect each other's private sphere, and it is normally the older of the two who proposes switching to first names.

2.5 Tandem agreement

Signing the tandem agreement marks the beginning of your own personal TUM Mentoring tandem. You will receive the empty tandem agreement form with the first welcome email prior to your first meeting session. The TUM Mentoring tandem agreement serves to draft a basic framework for your individual one year relationship at the beginning of your mentorship. The agreement defines the time-frame by stipulating the commencement and termination dates of the mentorship as well as the main thematic aims you wish to discuss.

It is a good idea to plan the number of sessions right from the beginning and, where possible, to enter the dates for the first few meetings into your calendar. Suggestions for a suitable meeting place and specific events can also be discussed and noted down together with your appointment arrangements. Laying down your mutual goals and defining your respective expectations are two points of important groundwork that needed to be dealt with when you embark on your mentoring year. It also gives the partners a structure for establishing a sound basis for open dialogue, compiling the topics for the forthcoming sessions and deciding how to prepare for the meetings. It is also possible to exclude certain subjects from the discussions. The agreement also helps to define the role of each partner, who should be responsible for what, and how they should keep in touch with one another. The document clarifies the obligations of the mentor and the mentee as well as the rules of confidentiality that apply to both parties.

Besides giving the partners a great deal of scope in setting up their personal one-to-one mentorship to suit their own particular needs, the TUM Mentoring agreement also provides a few useful tips which should be borne in mind from the very beginning of the mentoring relationship. Please note that the goals described in this agreement are nothing more than a snapshot, which is subject to the dynamics of the tandem concerned. It is quite likely that they might shift over the course of this mentorship, which should really be regarded as a favorable sign.

Please remember to send the tandem agreement to Alumni & Career once you decide to continue as a tandem after your first meeting. It is very important for us to have this document not to control you, but as a confirmation that you both accepted your partnership and commitment towards each other.

2.6 Feedback

You and your tandem partner should each fill a separate anonymous feedback via link provided in the welcoming email during your mentoring year. The mentee and the mentor use these questionnaires, independent of one another, to record their personal impressions of how the mentorship is progressing. They make notes on the location and length of their meeting as well as commenting on their perception of the other party and whether the results come up to their expectations.

The completed feedback sheets enable the mentoring team to keep track of your tandem. If you and your tandem partner develop contradicting views about the mentorship or your perceptions differ entirely from one another, the mentoring team can get in touch with you and act as a mediator.

Please make use of the blank spaces provided, too! By submitting your comments and feedback on the TUM Mentoring service, you are making an active contribution towards improving the program for the future.



"In the last six months, the TUM Mentoring program has helped me on in an unexpected way and to an extent I could never have imagined. Thanks to his professional background, his years of experience and an extensive network within innovation management, my mentor is a 'business angel' to me." – Catharina von Delden, mentee

TUM
Technische Universität München
Die internationale Universität

Sie sind nicht angemeldet. Loggen Sie sich ein. Registrieren Sie sich. Support

Deutsch Englisch

Stempel: Alumni und Career Feedbackbogen - Mentee
Feedbackbogen - Mentee

Alternativ: 22.08.2014
Zurück zum Start

Der Fragebogen dient Ihnen, die Treffen mit Ihrem Mentor zum Stand der Mentorenschaft sowie den damit verbundenen Erwartungen und Fortschritten abzugeben.

Meine E-Mail-Adresse:

Benutzername (Portal des TUM Helpdesk):
*
Vorname:
*
Nachname:
*
Datum des Treffens:
*
Das war unser Treffen Nr.:
*

1. Wie hat das Treffen mit Ihrem Mentor / Ihrer Mentorin
☐ Campus der TUM
☐ Analoges Meeting
☐ Lokal
☐ Anders

2. Wann hat das Treffen stattgefunden?
☐ Vormittags 9 - 12 Uhr
☐ Mittags 12 - 14 Uhr
☐ Nachmittags 14 - 18 Uhr
☐ Abends nach 18 Uhr

3. Das Treffen dauerte:
☐ Zu kurz

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Stempel: Alumni und Career Feedbackbogen - Mentor
Feedbackbogen - Mentor

Alternativ: 22.08.2014
Zurück zum Start

Der Fragebogen dient Ihnen, die Treffen mit Ihrem Mentor individuell zu beschreiben und eine Einschätzung zum Stand der Mentorenschaft sowie den damit verbundenen Erwartungen und Fortschritten abzugeben.

Meine E-Mail-Adresse:

Benutzername (Portal des TUM Helpdesk):
*
Vorname:
*
Nachname:
*
Datum des Treffens:
*
Das war unser Treffen Nr.:
*

1. Wie hat das Treffen mit Ihrem Mentor stattgefunden?
☐ Campus der TUM
☐ Analoges Meeting
☐ Lokal
☐ Anders

2. Wann hat das Treffen stattgefunden?
☐ Vormittags 9 - 12 Uhr
☐ Mittags 12 - 14 Uhr
☐ Nachmittags 14 - 18 Uhr
☐ Abends nach 18 Uhr

3. Das Treffen dauerte:
☐ Zu kurz

Beachten: Der persönliche Kontakt war damit 62-mal.

Here you will find your anonymous feedback forms:

For mentees: <http://portal.mytum.de/alumnicareer/formMentee>

For mentors: <http://portal.mytum.de/alumnicareer/formMentor>

3

Actively shaping your
tandem relationship

3.1 Initial conversation

Your first meeting with your tandem is not binding for any of you. First encounter should allow you to get to know each other and your very first personal experience will determine whether it makes sense for you both to continue the relationship – other words whether you as tandem will make the match together.

It is then the subsequent, one-to-one personal conversation that it is really possible to establish mutual trust. This initial conversation is one of the key aspects of the mentoring relationship, because it defines the direction in which your mentorship will lead. Experience has shown that this conversation is best conducted on “neutral” ground, such as a café.

The idea is to set up the framework for your mentoring partnership, define goals and discuss your respective needs and expectations. Priority should be given to the mentee’s concerns, but you should discuss this matter with the mentor so as to reconcile your wishes with the mentor’s ability and expectations. It is only at this point that you can decide whether you are sure you agree to a regular, one-year mentorship.

If you decide in favor of the mentoring relationship, the next step is to think about signing the tandem agreement. The tandem agreement will allow you to reflect on your relevant goals, ideas and expectations and give thought to your respective roles at the very beginning of the mentorship.

Here are a few points that ought to be addressed in the initial conversation:

Getting to know each other

- Which information do you have about each other?
- What is still missing and would like still to know about the other?

Content

- What expectations do you have of each other?
What do you hope to gain from the mentoring relationship?
- Which topics are to be discussed?
- Do you intend to keep a record of each meeting?
Who will take care of this task?
- Which subjects do you not wish to discuss?

Organization and implementation

- How often do you want to meet? What is the minimum number of sessions you wish to have? How do you want to be in touch?
Are meetings in person possible?
- Do you also plan to keep in touch via telephone/skype and email?
How often? Are there certain times when it is not convenient to call?
- Are there any plans to accompany each other to appointments, events or network meetings? Which ones?
- Arrangements if a meeting needs to be postponed at short notice.
- Where will you meet?
- Do you have any objections to being accessible at weekends?

Trust

- If you wish to stipulate discretion and confidentiality: which group(s) of people does it apply to? What is allowed to be passed on, and what not?
- What form should feedback take? How can you make it clear to the mentor that something doesn't help or appeal to you?
- Does your mentor also want to get feedback from you? In what form?

Revision and termination

- How do you approach the subject that one party is not keeping his/her part of the bargain or not complying with the terms of the agreement?
- How do you plan to sum up and draw conclusions at the end of the mentorship?

Please remember to send the tandem agreement to the TUM Mentoring team (mentoring@tum.de) following your initial conversation.

3.2 Topics

TUM Mentoring intentionally refrains from stipulating what topics should be included in the tandem sessions. You alone decide which subjects you wish to discuss. The choice of topics is determined by your own needs and preferences, your skills and natural propensity, your commitment and your mutual trust. You are free to choose the content of your mentoring discussions. See below for a list of possible subjects that might serve as inspiration:

Personal topics

What is the present situation? What is proving to be burdensome, difficult or unresolved? Which obstacles, barriers or resistance are there? Are there any wishes, goals or a vision? Which interests, strong points or talents does the person have? What kind of self-image does he/she have, and how do others view him/her? How about decision-making, methodological and social skills? What past experience have the mentee and the mentor had respectively? How do you view your tandem partner's development so far? Is he/she involved in any voluntary commitments, sports, hobbies, etc.? How well developed are his networking skills? What does he understand by success? What goals are worth pursuing?

Topics related to your studies/to the doctorate

What is the status quo? Where does the main focus lie? What current challenges are there? What about planning? Is it worth contemplating a term or internship abroad? Does the thesis have to contain an empirical part in collaboration with a company or an institution, alongside the theoretical part? What can be done to improve your skills at delivering papers, teamwork and presentation? Would it make sense to consider studying for a Master's degree or a doctorate? Which soft skills training or interdisciplinary courses would be useful, and what openings are there for students to engage in voluntary work?

Topics connected with careers openings

Which careers are of particular interest to the mentee? What job requirements and responsibilities do these careers in industry involve? What qualifications does the mentee have and what other qualifications does he/she need? What kind of work experience, courses, terms abroad, career events should he take advantage of? What position would the mentee like to have in ten years' time? How does he envisage his work/life balance? What information can the mentor provide on companies, institutions, associations, business sectors, the employment market, job applications, employment contracts and terms etc.?

Topics connected with Technical University of Munich

What subject-related or other TUM-specific information can the partners exchange (such as research results, events etc.)? What developments have the university or individual courses undergone? What were things like then, and what are they like now? What did both the mentee and mentor experience at TUM? Where is there room for improvement?

Critical topics

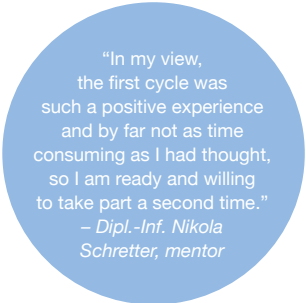
It is never easy to find a common ground. In the case of two strangers, which is basically what the TUM mentor and mentee are to begin with, getting to know one another calls for a lot of sensitivity on both sides. It is obvious that you and your respective tandem partner form an individual tandem and are necessarily not open to all topics to the same degree. Allow yourselves enough time in your mentoring relationship to become better acquainted. You have a whole year ahead of you. Mentors should make a conscious effort to exercise restraint and listen. It makes sense to hold back with personal feedback regarding the other party's personality to begin with. Mentees should have some idea of their plans and visions but at the same time be curious about their tandem partner. Every tandem constellation is different, so it is not possible to draw up a list of possible "no go" topics at this stage. If there are any subjects that should be excluded from the mentoring relationship, it is important to make this perfectly clear to your tandem partner. It is a good plan to get it clear in your own mind which topics you do not wish to discuss and to inform your tandem partner accordingly, to avoid any misunderstandings right from the start. Once you have established a good relationship based on trust, or have possibly built up a friendship, you might wish to redefine the arrangements you made at the beginning of your tandem.

3.3 Checklist

The basis of any TUM Mentoring relationship is the dialogue between the tandem partners. Dialogue is the key to the mutual respect, candidness and trust required to make headway. Every mentoring conversation is a unique opportunity in itself and accordingly calls for proper preparation and follow-up in order to reap the greatest benefits. Checklists are a good way of keeping a record of the preparatory work for the post-processing (see pages 56 – 57).

3.4 Time

Experience has shown that a personal conversation is best held at least every six to eight weeks and should last approximately two or three hours. The number of sessions differs considerably and depends entirely on your commitment. TUM Mentoring itself refrains from imposing any regulations. You know best how much communication is required in your mentoring relationship and can accordingly make your own decisions as to the amount of time that needs to be invested. Previous tandems have ranged from short, irregular telephone calls to solving specific problems, and from meeting regularly for lunch to spending the weekends together. It is up to you to discuss how much time each of you expects of your tandem partner, how much time you yourself wish to invest and what possibilities there are for actively managing your tandem relationship.



“In my view,
the first cycle was
such a positive experience
and by far not as time
consuming as I had thought,
so I am ready and willing
to take part a second time.”
– Dipl.-Inf. Nikola
Schretter, mentor

3.5 Communication channels

Which means of communication you prefer to use for your discussions varies from one tandem to another, but basically everything from emails to phone/Skype conversations and personal meetings is possible and desired. As with many other aspects of TUM Mentoring, the general rule is that every tandem is free to decide how they wish to organize their particular relationship.

In the past, face-to-face meetings have proved to be particularly beneficial. But “remote tandems”, where the partners only managed to meet up very rarely, have also thrived and benefited both sides, thanks to modern technology.

Agree on what kind of contact and communication you would like from the very start of your mentorship and clarify how much time you wish to invest or where your limits are.

Choose from the following options:

Personal meetings: Experience has shown that a personal meeting every six to eight weeks, lasting between two and three hours, is extremely beneficial. This is the most popular option in operation in the TUM Mentoring program, and it is applied in various shapes and forms.

Email or telephone contact: Whenever something of immediate relevance crops up in connection with a specific problem, many mentors allow their mentees to call them or send them an email in between the regular meetings in order to obtain some feedback or advice.

Shadowing: Provided it has been agreed beforehand, mentees can sometimes accompany their mentors to appointments, conferences or meetings and subsequently discuss what they have seen or heard with one another. Another variation of shadowing is for the mentor to take part in one of the mentee's events (such as a seminar, for which the mentee has prepared a talk).

Projects: Mentors confront their mentees with a question related to their work. They then proceed to work out possible solutions, discuss their ideas and the results.

Events/networks: The tandem partners can draw each other's attention to any interesting events or accompany one another to network meetings.

Role-playing games: Some tandems arrange role-playing games with one another in order to practice interviews or difficult situations, etc.

3.6 Venues

The variety in communication options is only matched by the range of suitable venues. Some mentors like to meet their mentees in their common alma mater and test whether the food in the Mensa still tastes the same as it used to. The cafés distributed over the TUM campus and in Schwabing have also proved to be popular meeting-places in the past. Some former tandems went to the Modern Pinakothek together, or to the opera, to Munich's Christmas market, to a lecture or to the mentor's company, for a change. There are plenty of opportunities for the mentee and the mentor to meet up.

3.7 Overcoming problems

The evaluation of the TUM Mentoring program shows that more than 90 % of all those taking part are satisfied with TUM Mentoring. So there are just a few individuals whose expectations were not fulfilled or where the mentor and mentee were unable to achieve a good personal relationship with each other or to come to a mutual understanding.

The points set out below may be interpreted as warning signs that the tandem relationship is failing, if:

- it proved impossible to make suitable arrangements for a meeting,
- the conversation lapsed to idle chatter,
- only past events were discussed and
- no real progress was made.

What can you do if a continuation of the mentorship fails to serve the intended purpose? Talk about it! After all, the success of any mentorship depends on communication between the tandem partners. Every conversation you have with one another is beneficial, even if it leads to conflict. It calls for a certain amount of skill to discuss these issues and find a satisfactory solution. This tests and hones both partners' communication ability in equal measure. If they are fortunate, even a tandem in a precarious position may survive the crisis and both parties decide to pursue their mentorship.

Keep to the provisions of the tandem agreement you both signed when discussing the goals for the mentoring year. If you are not happy with the choice of topics, the amount of time invested, the nature of your sessions, there is a chance that this can be rectified. It is a good plan to begin by defining your aims, your ideas and personal expectations.

Should you still feel that your mentorship is not having the desired effect, you can get in touch with your TUM Mentoring coordinator at Alumni & Career. The mentoring relationship can then be terminated subject to mutual agreement and – if desired and possible – a new mentoring partner be found for you during the current cycle or the next one.

3.8 Final conversation

All good mentorships are defined by a good-natured parting conversation between the mentoring partners.

This concluding conversation should be used to evaluate the mentoring year:

- Was the mentoring relationship successful?
- What were the highlights of the year?
- What were the biggest changes you realized?
- What would you do differently next time?
- Did the relationship come up to the expectations of both participants?
- Are there any points or issues that remain unsolved?

4

Beyond the activities
of your tandem

Active Networking

4.1 TUM Mentoring program

The personal tandem relationship between you as the mentee and your mentor is the central aspect of TUM Mentoring. There is, however, an interesting program designed to contribute towards the success of your relationship as well as helping to promote communication across all the TUM Mentoring tandems. Participating in the supporting events or even helping with the organization of the “on top” program is based purely on interest and should accordingly be regarded as optional.

Any suggestions for events or even mentees' or mentors' own initiatives are really welcome. TUM Mentoring is based on strong commitment and a high degree of initiative and motivation on the part of the participants throughout:

Few duties and a lot of freedom!

Check the planned events at:
www.together.tum.de/en/events

4.2 TUM Mentoring network

Not only you, the current participants, but also all previous participants of the TUM Mentoring program will be invited to our regular events. On this occasion, all the program participants can get to know each other and take advantage of the opportunity for networking. Not only the students and doctoral candidates will benefit from this network by becoming acquainted with mentors of all technical and vocational areas. It is also interesting for alumni to communicate with the current generation of students and obtain authentic, first-hand information on new developments at the TUM, whether it is about specific courses of study, tuition, innovative scientific approaches or about the management of the university itself. Meeting other alumni from all academic disciplines is also an excellent opportunity for the mentors to expand their personal network. Of course, the nostalgic factor should not be underestimated – because the contact to the mentees allows them to enjoy reminiscing about their own time at TUM again.



TUM MENTORING NETWORK

"I consider
TUM Mentoring to be
a great opportunity to get
to know interesting people,
to extend my network and
especially to stay connected
with the TUM."

– Dipl.-Ing.
Peter Martini, mentor

4.3 Keeping in touch after the mentorship

Quite often, the mentors and mentees continue their relationship informally after the official end of the mentorship. Several long-standing relationships have already been formed in this way. Whether you choose to follow this example and how strong the bond will be, is entirely up to you.



"In my view, mentoring is a long-term contact with occasional meetings – not short-termed with frequent meetings. However, the few questions I had were all the more important to me. I was very pleased with the meetings and my mentor's advice and I hope we will stay in contact."

– Gökçe Iyıcı, mentee

5

Insights

5.1 Four mentoring tandems report on their experience

- Our friendship has become important to us
- It's just great to see young people be successful
- A bridge between German and Chinese culture
- A real researcher must have intercultural contacts

Our friendship has become important to me

Mentee

Obaid Mushtaq, during the mentorship (2010/2011): Master's student of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology; Software Developer, Uniscon universal identity control GmbH

Mentor

Dr. Edmaier, TUM-alumni of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology 1990, doctoral degree in 1996, today Senior Development Specialist, BT (Germany) GmbH & Co. oHG

Mentor and mentee got to know each other seven years ago. Dr. Bernhard Edmaier wanted to help the student of Communications Engineering along with his start into a professional career. Then, everything happened very quickly: Obaid Mushtaq found a job even before completing his master's thesis. However, the two of them did not break up their connection – on the contrary: Now, Obaid Mushtaq's visits to the Edmaier family are as common as visits to restaurants or shared recreational activities. "I was most pleased when Bernhard and his family came to see me and my Cricket team play a match at the English Garden and cheered for me." In Pakistan, Obaid Mushtaq's home country, Cricket is very popular. The friendship of the former mentoring tandem has become quite down-to-earth. The two engineers exchange Bavarian and Pakistani recipes and invite each other to home cooked food. Obaid brought along traditional Pakistani clothes for his mentor's three daughters as a present: costumes made by his mother especially. And some day, Dr. Bernhard Edmaier – who was born in Munich – might be able to follow an invitation to pay a visit to Islamabad, the Pakistani capital.

„I had not expected that the mentoring project would lead to cross-cultural friendship – but that's exactly what is important to me.“

Bernhard Edmaier, mentor



It's just great to see young people be successful

Mentee

Katharina Schätz, during the mentorship (2013/2014) Master's student of Environmental Planning and Ecological Engineering, currently: Precautionary environmental planning, Munich Municipality

Mentor

Dr. Herbert Hoffmann, TUM-alumni of Brewing and Beverage Technology 1972, doctoral degree in 1975; currently owner of professional DREAM, Management Services, Deputy General Manager of Coca-Cola Germany and Senior Vice President of Coca-Cola Japan (retired).

"Just discussing something helps to make progress," affirms Katharina Schätz, who is very happy to be able to take part in the mentoring program. The 25-year-old is at the beginning of her professional career, while her mentor Dr. Herbert Hoffman can look back on a successful career as former Deputy General Manager of the German division of a world-famous soft drink manufacturer, with positions in the US, Japan and Belgium. "I think we have a good basis for conversation. Also, I like my mentor's rational, structured approach. I really enjoy our meetings," says the Master's graduate of Environmental Planning and Ecological Engineering, who was considering whether to pursue an academic career or to venture into the economy. She appreciates that her mentor is demanding: "He questions my ideas and always tries to get to the bottom of the reason". She learned to set her own goals and to justify them, to make decisions and to go through with them. And how does Dr. Herbert Hoffmann benefit from the mentoring relationship? "I find deep satisfaction in watching the young people be successful."

"The best moment with my mentee was her feedback that we should meet again. This gave me the feeling of being able to pass on something of importance."

Herbert Hoffmann (Mentor)



A bridge between German and Chinese culture

Mentor

Markus Hartinger, TUM-alumni of Computer Science 1999, currently Founder and Managing Associate of jambit GmbH

Mentee

Jaimie Lu, During the mentorship (2012/2013) Master's student of Electrical and Computer Engineering, currently: Electrical Engineer at IFF GmbH

What caused you to join the mentoring program?

Hartinger: I had a good time at TUM and learned a lot. So I decided that it was time to give something back to my former university. Apart from that, I wanted to get in contact with student life again.

Lu: When I came to Germany two years ago, I didn't know the German education system or the university structures in this country. I needed a contact person to give me orientation.

What were your expectations of each other?

Hartinger: When I read her resume, I knew that our tandem would be characterized by two different cultures. I wanted to know more about life in China, but also about the professional networks there.

Lu: At first, I imagined that Markus could teach me how to run a company. After finishing my Master's degree, I had originally planned to go back to China to start my own business. But now I've changed my mind. I like Germany and want to stay here.

What do you like about your mentor?

Lu: Although he is very busy as a CEO, he makes time for me. He always motivates me concerning my applications. With Markus' encouragement, I have become more confident. Chinese parents are very attentive towards their children. This results in the fact that many decisions are made on behalf of the children. Here, the young people are much more independent and confident. Two years ago, I would not have dreamed that I could decide to stay here and try to cope on my own.

"Thanks to my mentor, I have become more confident."

Jaimie Lu, mentee



A real researcher must have intercultural contacts

“Mentoring for Scientists” stands for a special form of tandem. It connects international research alumni with young academic talents. The mentees are able to gain insight into the scientific careers and research priorities of renowned experts all over the world.

Mentor

Prof. Dr. Amaresh Chakrabarti, TUM Research Alumni and TUM Ambassador, Professor, Centre for Product Design and Manufacturing, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore

Mentee

Paul Bockelmann, During the mentorship (2013/2014) and currently: Doctoral studies of Mechanical Engineering, Research Associate at the Chair of Carbon Composites

In 2013, Prof. Amaresh Chakrabarti stayed at TUM as a guest researcher for several months. He is the founder of the IdeasLab and Professor at the Centre for Product Design and Manufacturing of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. After an alumni-event, he spontaneously agreed to serve as a mentor for the doctoral student Paul Bockelmann. Together, they formed the first “Mentoring for Scientists”-Tandem.

Professor Chakrabarti, what was your motivation to start this “Mentoring for Scientists”-Tandem?

Chakrabarti: I have an interest in Paul's work. He is working on composites. And composites are one of the future directions that everybody is looking at, because they are much lighter than steel and other metals and probably perform as good. He also has an interest in coming to India and doing his research with me for several months – and we have in fact just written a proposal to the Bayerische Forschungsstiftung.

Are you also talking about how to become a scientist?

Bockelmann: I get a lot of support from Mr. Chakrabarti and this gives me a feeling about how, for example, to conduct science properly – or thoughts on how I can reflect on how to become a scientist or to write a thesis; Also, we talk about very specific things, for instance how to fund, how to organise the project.



What about intercultural contact? Is it a benefit?

Chakrabarti: I think so, it's not just a benefit, it's essential nowadays. If you want to be a researcher with international recognition, you must have intercultural contacts and intercultural competence.

And what about the meaning of interdisciplinary exchange?

Bockelmann: I think basically it depends on your research. If you try to see the things that you work on systematically, there are certain other disciplines which you have to consider, and then it is very beneficial to get in contact and to work in an interdisciplinary manner.

Chakrabarti: Well, I work in the field of design; it can't get more interdisciplinary than that. I cannot imagine that any kind of science can be done today on one's own. You can read papers and try – but you will still be very, very myopic.

Can you imagine mentoring online without meeting physically?

Chakrabarti: It would be interesting as well, in order to see what turns out. I'm a designer – so I would like to see what happens. But normally my experience has been that if you have met at least once, this improves the quality of the interaction.

“Thanks to my mentor, I am learning how to conduct scientific research.”

Paul Bockelmann, mentee

In December 2014, President Prof. Herrmann appointed Prof. Chakrabarti as a TUM Ambassador to thank him for his TUM-specific commitment.



6

Your contact:
Alumni & Career

TUM Mentoring is a service offered by the Technische Universität München and coordinated by Alumni & Career.

If you have any questions regarding your mentorship and TUM Mentoring in general, the TUM Mentoring team of Alumni & Career are there to help you and provide support, even in difficult situations.

TUM Mentoring thrives on your commitment! Your suggestions and program-related ideas are always welcome. Wherever possible, they will be included and implemented straight away in the conceptual development of TUM Mentoring.



Campus Munich



Campus Garching



Campus Weihenstephan

mentoring@tum.de

www.together.tum.de/mentoring

Checklist for mentees

Date:

Place:

Which topics remained unanswered from last time?

Which topic do you want to discuss?

What thoughts have you already given to this matter?

Can you give an example of how this topic affects you?

To what extent do you expect your mentor to assist you?

How would you like your mentor to help over and beyond this meeting?

Are you interested in any experience your mentor had in this connection?

Have you told your mentor the topics you wish to talk about?

Checklist for mentors

Date:

Place:

Which topics remained unanswered from last time?

Did your mentee tell you which topics he/she wanted to discuss?

Are you prepared for these topics?

On which topics/problems/skills do you want to work with your mentee?

Which tasks do you want to give your mentee for your next meeting?

Notes

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