



## Frequently Asked Questions For the Mentor

**Q: What is mentoring?**

A: Mentoring is defined as a professional relationship in which an experienced person (mentor) assists a less-experienced person (mentee) in developing specific skills and knowledge that will enhance the less-experienced person's professional and personal growth.

**Q: What is a mentor?**

A: A mentor is someone who has gained wisdom and knowledge from their experiences, and can offer insight, guidance, and inspiration to another person. Their knowledge can come in many forms, depending on their experience and years in the profession. Mentors do not evaluate the mentee with respect to his/her current job, do not conduct performance reviews, and do not provide input about salary increases and promotions.

**Q: What is a mentee?**

A: The mentee is the less-experienced colleague or student who wishes to learn from someone who has more experience and/or knowledge in an area that will benefit the mentee. The mentee has the ambition and desire to know what to do with this knowledge and may receive guidance from the mentor in order to practice and apply what he/she has learned.

**Q: What attributes make a good mentor?**

A: A good mentor is flexible with their approach and advice, will take the initiative to draw out the mentee, and is responsive to inquiries from the mentee. Effective mentors are comfortable sharing personal experiences, asking questions, and engaging the mentee in discussions. They are confident that their unique experiences can be shared and know that encouragement from them will go a long way in helping the mentee.

Good mentors remember what it was like when they were in the mentee's position and understand that mentees may not understand many of the cultural norms and formalities of business. Good mentors will help facilitate the learning and growth of the mentee without being directive and imposing personal opinions.

**Q: What is an NCRA mentor?**

A: An NCRA mentor is an NCRA member who has held the Certified Tumor Registrar (CTR) credential for at least two years. NCRA mentors have also officially registered with the NCRA Mentoring Program. The NCRA-registered mentor will offer support to mentees seeking to earn the CTR credential. NCRA mentors will also be available to offer guidance and advice to CTRs looking to advance their career. A mentor can help in many ways, such as answering questions, providing resources and networking opportunities, and being a confidant for professional issues and/or concerns.

**Q: What are the qualifications of an NCRA mentor?**

A: The NCRA mentor must be a CTR for at least two years, register with the NCRA Mentoring Program, and commit to helping the assigned mentee achieve their professional goals in the field of cancer registry.

**Q: What are the responsibilities of an NCRA mentor?**

A: All NCRA mentoring pairs are required to outline their plan, goals, and timeline in a Mentoring Agreement before the mentoring begins. At the very minimum, NCRA mentors commit to spending at least two hours per month working with the mentee. This can be via e-mail, phone, and/or in-person.

NCRA mentors are required to respond to communication from their mentees within 24 hours of receipt. NCRA

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mentors are required to be open and honest in their communications with the mentee. The NCRA mentor is required to maintain a Mentor Activity Log and provide the Mentoring Committee with a copy of it at the end of a mentoring relationship. The NCRA mentor is required to consult with the Mentoring Committee should s/he experience problems with the mentoring relationship.

**Q: What are the benefits of being a mentor?**

A: Individuals benefit from the mentoring experience by making a difference in the profession. In addition, mentors groom new and future CTRs, who may become employees. Mentoring can enhance a resume as it illustrates the mentor's commitment to improving the cancer registry field. Being a mentor also enhances the mentor's professional development and provides a great opportunity for personal growth. Often times, the mentor learns as much from the experience as the mentee.

**Q: How does an NCRA member become a mentor?**

A: NCRA members apply to the Mentoring Program by completing the Mentor Information Form. The Mentoring Committee will review and assign an appropriate mentee. The Mentoring Committee will provide a sample Mentoring Agreement for the mentor and mentee to use to craft an agreement specific to their needs. The committee will also provide a Mentoring Activity Log to track activities.

**Q: Who is responsible for initiating the first contact?**

A: The NCRA Mentoring Committee receives requests from potential mentees and reviews the information, seeking to ensure the mentee applicant is placed with an appropriate mentor based on review of the application. After the mentor has been selected, the Mentoring Committee will contact the mentor to share information about the mentee. At that time, the NCRA mentor is required to contact the mentee within 24 hours and to work together to develop a Mentoring Agreement. The signed Mentoring Agreement should be sent to Mary Maul, NCRA Mentoring Committee, at [mmaul@ncra-usa.org](mailto:mmaul@ncra-usa.org).

**Q: Is there a cost to participate as a mentor?**

A: There is no cost to the NCRA member to participate as a mentor.

**Q: How many Continuing Education (CE) credits will a mentor receive?**

A: Mentors are eligible to receive one (1) CE credit per five (5) hours of mentoring, not to exceed three (3) CEs per year.

**Q: How does one become a mentee?**

A: Applicants need to complete the Mentee Information Form. The NCRA Mentoring Committee will review the forms and match with an appropriate mentor. If a mentor is not available, the applicant's form is retained and re-reviewed as mentors become available.

**Q: What are the responsibilities of a mentee?**

A: NCRA mentees are required to collaborate with their mentor and come to an agreement on expectations and schedules, which are outlined in the Mentoring Agreement. After signing the agreement, the mentee will adhere to agreed-to schedules and timelines and respond to communications within 24 hours.

**Q: How long are the mentors assigned for?**

A: The Mentoring Agreement is an opportunity for the mentor and the mentee to discuss and agree to specifics, including the length of the agreement, methods of communications, and goals.

**Q: Can the mentor/mentee be changed, if the relationship is not working as planned?**

A: Yes, mentees/mentors can be changed. The Mentoring Agreement should stipulate that the mentoring relationship can be terminated at any time for any reason. The Mentoring Committee asks that the mentor and the mentee discuss the reasons for ending the relationship and notify the committee if a decision is made to end the agreement.