

Penn State Smeal College of Business

Mentoring Program

Mentor Guide



PennState
Smeal College of Business

Mentoring Program

Mentor Guide

Welcome

Thank you for volunteering to participate in the Smeal Mentoring Program! We know your time is valuable, and we appreciate your effort to make a difference in the lives of our Penn State Smeal students. This guide was created to help you get the most out of the program and understand the mentoring resources available to assist you. However, we encourage you to bring your own experiences to life through this guide.

The Smeal Mentoring Committee and the Smeal Alumni Relations Office are always available to assist you in this journey. Take advantage of all the support, resources, and assistance available.

“Mentorship is similar to friendship. A mentor is someone who always makes time for you. It is not a one-way street; it’s an opportunity to learn from each other.” – Simon Sinek, author, and unshakable optimist

“As you reach certain milestones in your life, you become rich with experience and knowledge, and sharing this knowledge with a newcomer can be invaluable to them. All leaders need mentors in their lives. It is natural. Mentorship is a life-changing relationship that lays the groundwork for our future leaders” – Walt Rakowich member of the Penn State Board of Trustees, member of the Real Estate Advisory Board of the Institute of Real Estate Studies, Smeal College of Business

The Penn State Smeal College of Business is a vibrant intellectual community offering highly ranked undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, and executive education opportunities to more than 6,000 students from across the country and around the world. Since our introduction in 1953, we have prepared thousands of students for professional success, annually adding to Penn State’s vast alumni network. We are a destination of choice for top global organizations seeking talent that will make a positive difference.

Through our leading faculty and network of research centers and institutes, we are a source of knowledge that influences the business practices of tomorrow. We are forging connections, creating opportunities, and producing results. Smeal delivers extraordinary educational experiences and provide the expertise, research, and talent to shape the future of business.

The key pillars of Smeal are honor & integrity, sustainability, and diversity. The college strives to cultivate ethical leadership through these pillars. To better understand the core of Smeal culture, please [review this short video](#) from Dean Whiteman and others in the college.

The Mentoring Program is an integral part of shaping future leaders by helping Smeal students better understand business from a mentor’s perspective. The Mentoring Program offers you an opportunity to share your experiences and provide feedback, advice, and insights on topics such as academic majors, internships, career planning, college to career transition, and leadership development. Our student protégés are eager to hear the perspectives of and learn from professionals from the business world. Your ongoing effort and engagement to support this program are key to its success.

Mentors should be willing to give constructive feedback to students to help identify goals, develop strategies, and instill confidence. A mentor can be a recent graduate or have many years of working experience; they can come from various academic majors with backgrounds and careers in a wide range of industries.

The Mentoring Program was established in 2009 by Smeal’s Alumni Relations Office, in participation with the Smeal Alumni Society.

Thank you for volunteering your time to mentor a Smeal student. Enjoy your experience!

Table of Contents

4 Additional Resources

5 Relationship Management: What to Expect

6 Relationship Management: Keep The Ball Rolling

6 On-Campus Support Services for Students

Conversation Starters – Ideas for Discussion Topics with Your Protégé

SECTION:

8 (1) – Your Backgrounds

8 (2) – Selecting A Major

9 (3) – Understanding Career Paths

9 (4) – Understanding Industries and Companies

10 (5) – Leadership

10 (6) – Extracurricular Involvement

10 (7) – Cover Letter and Resume Review

11 (8) – Identifying Internships & Full-Time Job Opportunities

12 (9) – Building a Personal Network

12 (10) – Researching Companies for an Interview

13 (11) – Interview Preparation

14 (12) – Accepting & Negotiating Internship or Full-time Job Offers

15 (13) – Transitioning to the Workplace

15 (14) – Workplace Experiences

16 (15) – Other Life Experiences

16 (16) - The Tarriff Center for Business Ethics and Social Responsibility



Additional Resources

[Smeal College of Business](#)

[Smeal Office of Development & Alumni Relations](#)

[Mentoring Program Website](#)

[Mentor Assistance Portal](#)

[Smeal Business Career Center](#)

[The Tarriff Center for Business Ethics and Social Responsibility](#)

[Penn State Smeal Center for the Business of Sustainability](#)

[Penn State Smeal Diversity Enhancement Programs](#)

[Code of Conduct for Professional Engagement](#)

[Tips for Mentors Working with Commonwealth Campus Students or Change of Location Students](#)

[Tips for Mentors Working with International Students](#)

[Smeal Career Checklist Timeline](#)

Relationship Management – What to Expect

- **Role Model:** You will serve as a role model to your protégé, developing a meaningful relationship, providing advice and guidance. You also are setting the example in business acumen, values, ethics, and integrity - all of which we model and pass onto the future generations of Penn Staters.
- **Code of Conduct for Professional Engagement:** Relationships relax over time, but it is important that students model a professional tone in your relationship; please communicate similarly with your Protégé. [Here are additional guidelines for developing your relationship with your Protégé.](#)
- **Job Search:** This is an opportunity to assist your protégé with identifying their career goals and explaining the power of building their network.
- **Meetings:** Meetings can occur on digital platforms such as Zoom, Skype, Facetime, Whats App, etc. If possible, it is beneficial to have an in-person meeting with your Protégé. However, we recognize this may not be feasible. Work to develop an open and trusted relationship despite the geographic distance between you and your Protégé.
- **Communication:** “Strive for 5!” Work together to identify the method and frequency you will communicate. We encourage five exchanges, meetings, or touchpoints per semester. Communication patterns may change over time; be flexible with the frequency and channels that you and your Protégé find to be convenient.
- **Focus Areas:** If you learn that your area of expertise does not match your Protégé’s career interests, identify other areas where your experience can offer value and insight. This may include resume prep, interview prep, work/life experiences, career lessons learned, and other topics in this guide. If you would like to be put in touch with another Mentor in the program, so that you can introduce them to your Protégé, please use the [Mentor Assistance Portal.](#)
- **Setting Expectations:** When you and your Protégé are introduced at the start of the program, be sure that each of you discuss your expectations and goals. When expectations are not communicated, the mentor or the protégé can become disappointed as the school year progresses. We hope that our Mentors will help set the expectations for a realistic and rewarding relationship.



Mentoring Program

Mentor Guide

Relationship Management – Keep the Ball Rolling

- **Maintain** frequent communications – students share that ongoing interaction works well. We encourage five exchanges, meetings, or touchpoints per semester.
- **Evaluate** progress and determine whether your goals are being accomplished.
- **Expand** your discussion list – jot down ideas based on your conversations throughout the year. Please use the [Mentor Assistance Portal](#) if you need additional ideas.
- **Respond** to your Protégé – acknowledge that you received their message within 48 hours as a professional courtesy.
- **Inform** your Protégé of schedule changes – be respectful of their time by limiting cancellations, providing ample notice, and suggesting alternate dates and times. Understand that your Protégé may also face unplanned schedule changes.
- **Resolve** communication issues – if your Protégé is not responsive after 2 attempts over 2-3 weeks, please use the [Mentor Assistance Portal](#).
- **Thank** your Protégé for the effort they have made to go beyond traditional academic tools to become better prepared to join the professional business world. Often pairs stay in touch after the program is over. At the end of the school year, be sure to stay in touch!

On-Campus Support Services for Students

Career Questions & Professional Development Skills

– Students at the Smeal College of Business have several on-campus resources:

➤ [Smeal Business Career Center:](#)

A Smeal operated center, best utilized when a student knows the business path they would like to pursue.

- o Resume reviews
- o Mock interviews
- o Career path exploration
- o Career development opportunities
- o Internship programs
- o Networking resources
- o Student organization information

➤ [Penn State Career Services:](#)

A Penn State center for all majors, located in the Bank of America building. Career Services is best utilized when a student is unsure of their major choice or career path.

Note: A Protégé needing help in the areas of resume reviews and mock interviews should strongly consider utilizing the resources of both Smeal's Business Career Center and Penn State Career Services. It's always beneficial for a student to have multiple professionals evaluating their resume and interview skills.

➤ [The Tarriff Center for Business Ethics and Social Responsibility:](#)

The mission of this Center is to improve lives through the advancement of ethical business practices by uniting students with

academic and business leaders in lifelong learning. The Smeal College of Business continuously affirms its commitment to a culture of [honor and integrity](#) and aspires to cultivate ethical leadership by challenging community members to strive for greatness while demanding that our successes come only from fair and ethical means. To further its emphasis on business ethics and social responsibility, the Tarriff Center supports [Smeal's Mentoring Program](#), which pairs students with mentors who are seeking to develop strong ethical leadership skills.

Mentors can share their perspectives on the role of ethics in business and guide proteges on how to strategically fulfill social responsibilities. Through the Tarriff Center, students can attend events and webinars with their mentors to strengthen relationships and prompt additional conversations that encourage development into ethical leaders.

As a mentor, you have a unique opportunity to contribute to the work of the Tarriff Center by helping students develop into ethical leaders and pointing your protégé in the direction of the resources and opportunities provided through the Tarriff Center, such as:

- o Webinars and other speaker events
- o PSU 6 Ethics Case Competition
- o Kohl's Business with Integrity Case Competition
- o Smeal's Business Ethics Case Competition Team
- o Smeal's Ethical Leadership Challenge
- o Tarriff Center Scholars

➤ [Office of Honor & Integrity](#)

Smeal has a longstanding commitment to continuously develop a culture of honor and integrity. This office provides support for academic and professional integrity and developing skills to meet associated expectations for members of the Smeal community. Examples of resources and opportunities that your protégé may take advantage of include:

- o Signing the Smeal Honor Code
- o Academic and Professional Integrity Speaker events
- o Integrity Advocates peer leaders
- o Certified H&I Advocate student organizations

The Office of Honor & Integrity works closely with the Business Career Center, for example, ensuring integrity through the recruitment process.

Visit the [Smeal](#) website to understand the latest news from Smeal, strategic initiatives, and other current information being conveyed to all students and alumni. Share appropriate resources with your Protégé as you evolve your relationship. More specific information about these resources is available at the Mentoring website.

Mentoring Program

Mentor Guide

Conversation Starters – Ideas for Discussion Topics with Your Protégé

Section 1

Your Backgrounds

- *Share your story (life before Penn State, why you chose Penn State, family, hobbies)*
- *Get to know your Protégé's story*

Personalize your relationship by introducing yourself at a deeper level. This may help your Protégé to feel more comfortable and inspire conversation and questions. Ask similar questions to your Protégé.

Consider:

- Your major at Penn State – how it helped you in your career and/or why you decided to change your area of focus after joining the business world.
- Your career path – changes in roles, locations, responsibilities, or companies
- Extracurricular activities while in school
- Where you have lived
- Hobbies
- Family
- Things that went well in your career and lessons learned including any ethical dilemmas encountered in your career. Site an example or two. This will set-up your Protégé to be thinking about the importance of ethical behavior and social responsibility

Section 2

Selecting A Major

- *Ask your Protégé to share majors that they are interested in with you. They may ask:*

- o What are key factors that I might consider when deciding my major?
- o How did your major influence your career path?

- Help your Protégé to reflect on things they enjoy doing and situations they are comfortable with. Example: analytics, creative activities, quiet time, writing, problem-solving, meeting new people, individual vs. team activities, free flow of time, highly organized time, etc.
- Have your Protégé discuss classes that they have taken thus far – what have they enjoyed or not and why.
- Encourage exploring internships to learn more about possible career areas in a hands-on setting.
- Explain the benefit of talking to professionals in career fields of interest; help them locate such individuals. If you would like to be put in touch with another Mentor in the program, so that you can introduce them to your Protégé, please use the [Mentor Assistance Portal](#). Guide your Protégé to ask for “informational interviews” with professionals to learn about career areas rather than seeking a specific job.
- Suggest asking professors about possible careers and professional roles within different disciplines.
- Share your journey of selecting a major and applying it to your initial and successive positions.

Section 3 Understanding Career Paths

- **Ask your Protégé to share their career aspirations, if known. They may ask:**
 - o Can you tell me about your career path?
 - o How much went as planned and how much did not?
 - o How did you proactively advance your career?
 - o What career advice do you wish you had received when you were in college?
- Talk about your career path, the changes you have made, and why. Introduce your Protégé to others who can illustrate unplanned and planned components of careers and career changes.
- Encourage your Protégé to continue “informational interviews” during their career. Consider aspects of your role(s) that are very enjoyable and the elements that limit your enthusiasm. Encourage them to learn as much as possible in each position and demonstrate their ability to work hard and achieve stated results.
- Articulate how skills and approaches learned and demonstrated in one place could be applied to another area.
- Remind them that the selection of a major is important, it is not a make-or-break decision.
- Encourage them to learn what they can from each position they hold, demonstrate their ability to deliver results, and apply those experiences to other career areas.

Section 4 Understanding Industries and Companies

- **Ask your Protégé to share industries and companies they are interested in. They may ask:**
 - o What are the current opportunities, challenges, and trends in your industry/ company/professional area?
 - o Are there central locations for this industry (for example, in the northeast, California, Georgia...)?
 - o What positive and negative experiences have you had in your industry?
 - o How long have you been with your company? What is the culture like? Do you have any tips for how to learn about a company’s culture before accepting the job?
 - o What qualifications and expectations are required for an entry-level position in this industry/company? Versus your position?
- Share your experiences working with different industries and companies. Point out positive and negative aspects and items you learned or were unexpected. Identify how you might research at a top-level, knowing what you know now.
- Talk with your Protégé about the importance of researching companies and industries they have an interest in. Include whether the companies they are considering have formal “business conduct guidelines” or a “company credo” that employees sign or their own credo or honor code. Does this appear to be woven into the fabric of the company?

Mentoring Program

Mentor Guide

Section 5 Leadership

- **Ask your Protégé to share leadership opportunities they have held (leadership roles in clubs, class projects, etc.). They may ask:**
 - o How do I demonstrate leadership if I am not a leader in a group or organization?
 - o What steps can I take to develop leadership skills?
 - o What leadership roles did you hold as a student?
- Have your Protégé describe activities they have been (or are) involved in, their role and contribution. Have them clarify how they contributed to shape progress and outcomes. They should highlight what they did to go above and beyond to achieve better results.
- Use your Protégé's insights to help them frame responses to future interview questions and identify ways to bolster their leadership experiences.
- Help them broaden their view of leadership. Share that leadership can be demonstrated in many ways through interaction with others – not all leadership comes from being the official team leader.

Section 6 Extracurricular Involvement

- **Ask your Protégé to share extracurricular activities that they are involved in. They may ask:**
 - o How do I balance extracurricular activities without jeopardizing my academic performance?
 - o What activities might help me gain exposure to the professional area that I am interested in?

- Encourage your Protégé to select extracurricular activities for a specific purpose that provides a meaningful experience, demonstrates their abilities, and supplements academic performance. These activities can help build skills, offer opportunities to engage, develop team-work skills, and demonstrate commitment.
- Remind them that there are diverse options: clubs, university sports, intramural sports, study abroad, local jobs.
- Advise your Protégé that recruiters will look for candidates who demonstrate a broader experience beyond academics. Managing a balance between academics and extracurricular activities can bring a broader perspective to their "work/life" experience.
- Discuss your Protégé's interests and development needs to identify ways that extracurricular activities may bolster their leadership experiences.
- Use your Protégé's experiences in extracurricular activities to help frame responses to future interview questions.

Section 7 Cover Letter & Resume Review

- **Ask your Protégé to share their cover letter and resume with you. They may ask:**
 - o What does my cover letter convey about my interest in their company and the position I am applying for?
 - o What does my resume convey about my skills, strengths, and accomplishments? Is there anything that could be clearer?
 - o What do you think sets apart one resume from another?
 - o How do I modify these documents for specific positions?

- o Does the resume format conform to existing technologies that “read” these with emphasis on certain key words?
- Provide a critical review of all their documents and consider
 - ◆ What do the resume and/or cover letter communicate about the Protégé?
 - ◆ Are strengths portrayed and obvious?
 - ◆ Do these documents invite questions that the Protégé wants to talk more about or not?
 - ◆ Are the documents succinct and focused?
- Remind them to be honest and accurate in their resume and cover letter.
- Remind them to communicate results and achievements.
- Focus on items that best demonstrate their capabilities and strengths.
- Focus on action words. Formatting, spelling, and grammar are also critical.
- Encourage them to tailor their cover letter and resume to each company and position being pursued.
- Ask your Protégé if they have received a resume review from the Smeal Business Career Center.



Section 8 Identifying Internship & Full-Time Job Opportunities

- **Ask your Protégé to share job experiences that they have had and the type of internship or**
- **full-time job they would like. They may ask:**
 - o When should I begin my internship or full-time job search?
 - o Other than the resources available at Penn State, how can I identify internship opportunities? Full-time opportunities?
 - o What have you found most helpful when searching for an internship or a full-time job?
- Remind your Protégé that internships are valuable for gaining professional experience and career, industry, or company exposure and that sometimes, internships may lead to full-time job opportunities.
- Encourage them to look for internship opportunities at Career Fairs and on Smeal’s job posting board nittanylioncareers.psu.edu. Internships and full-time positions are also posted online at job aggregator sites and at the employment section of a company’s website.
- Career Fairs begin in the first few weeks of the fall and spring semesters. These are imperative for juniors and seniors. Sophomores should also consider these a priority; at a minimum, they should attend to watch and experience the process of a Career Fair.
- Help your Protégé to recognize the importance of understanding a company and position before sending a cover letter, resume, and participating in an interview.

Mentoring Program

Mentor Guide

- Help them develop questions to demonstrate interest in the position and prepare examples that prove qualifications noted in the job description.

Section 9 Building a Personal Network

- **Ask your Protégé to share their LinkedIn profile and/or discuss how to build a beneficial list of connections. They may ask:**
 - o At the beginning of your career, how did you build your professional network?
 - o What changes would you make if you had to do it again, and what techniques have proved to be most effective?
 - o Questions about social networking etiquette and social media professionalism.
- If you are familiar with LinkedIn, provide an overview of this professional networking site. Encourage your Protégé to build a LinkedIn profile with a professional focus that is simple, 'clean,' and organized. Highlight words that are likely 'searched' and focus on successes. Explain the benefit of accepting only people that they know to their network versus anyone.
- Encourage them to attend professional events to practice networking and meet new people. Communicate the value of getting to know people that they meet, particularly those who have specific knowledge of the Protégé's area of interest or that are in leadership positions or at jobs/companies of interest (this could include summer jobs, internships, and full-time positions).

Section 10 Researching Companies for an Interview

- **Ask your Protégé to share their experience researching a company. They may ask:**
 - o What are some techniques to research a company?
 - o What aspects of a company should I be researching?
 - o What are the benefits of spending time to research a company? Can you share how research made a difference in an interview or selecting a job?
 - o Are there any resources/websites that you can share? Are there company profiles sites, industry resources, or professional organizations that might be helpful?
- Consider sharing these researching techniques:
 - ◆ Talk with professionals in companies and industries of interest via an "informational interview." If you would like to help your Protégé connect with other Mentors in the program, please use the [Mentor Assistance Portal](#).
 - ◆ Research on the internet – visit company and industry organizations' websites. Read "About Us", "Home", "News", "Our Products", "Industries Served", and related areas of their websites.
 - ◆ Learn more about the company's honor, integrity, and social responsibility efforts. Does the company have a corporate code of conduct, credo, or other formal business conduct guidelines? Do the company values line up with theirs?
 - ◆ Look for articles in their "News" or "Investor Relations" sections.

- ◆ Perform general internet searches on recent company activity, deals, mergers, earnings reports, and other news.
- Help your Protégé to reflect on their research: what did they like, what did not they like.

Section 11 Interview Preparation

• Ask your Protégé to share their interview experiences. They may ask:

- o What type of interview questions would you ask me after looking at my resume?
- o What are some traditional and unusual questions you have been asked in an interview?
- o How do I prepare for competency-based interviews? What stories should I tell to demonstrate my abilities?
- o What types of questions should I be prepared to ask the interviewer?
- o What steps should I take to follow up on an interview?
- Suggest that your Protégé schedule a mock interview with the Business Career Center.
- Have your Protégé explain the scope, role, and outcome of various jobs and activities highlighted on their resume.
- Discuss tips for greeting the interviewer, dress code/appearance, body language, professional language vs. vernacular, and focus on the interviewer.
- Remind your Protégé that the interview process is focused on getting to know who the candidate is as a person. They will seek to understand the Protégé's personality, capabilities, and where the candidate can

apply past experiences to new situations.

- Remind them that the workplace is highly dependent on teams – with team members possessing different, yet complementary skills. Therefore, it is important in an interview to help the interviewer understand who they are as a person and what they do well.
- Review common and unusual interview questions. Remind your Protégé that question formats/styles may vary, but by keeping their experiences, accomplishments, and skills top of mind, they should be able to respond more easily to a variety of questions.
- See Section 16 “Ethics and Social Responsibility” for specific questions related to honor and integrity or see the questions by visiting the [Career Center Honor & Integrity Interview Questions](#)



- Help your Protégé with their interview question answers to help improve their responses.
- Note the importance of being able to self-reflect on strengths (those items they do well and with ease), weaknesses/development areas (those areas they should be working to improve or become more comfortable with).

Mentoring Program

Mentor Guide

- Remind your Protégé that they should prepare questions for the interviewer. Questions should pertain to the job role and responsibilities, the company, or recent company news.
- Interview follow-up: Remind your Protégé to send a thank you note (hand-written is best, email is fine – especially when the timing is critical); be personal and professional; a “one size fits all” thank you note does not fit anyone.
- Suggest allowing 1.5 - 2 weeks for the recruiter/interviewer to follow up. If no contact has been made, a brief, polite, and focused email or phone inquiry on the expected timeline is appropriate. Based on the situation, guide your protégé on the number of outreach attempts.



Section 12

Accepting & Negotiating Internship or Full-Time Job Offers

- **Ask your Protégé to share their experiences with accepting and negotiating an internship or job. They may ask:**
 - Is it acceptable to request adjustments to an offer? How do you approach requesting adjustments?

- What if I have one offer, but the job I really want has yet to extend an offer?
- What is the appropriate way to decline an offer?
- Can you share your experiences with accepting, negotiating, and rejecting an offer?
- Share with them that it is OK to request adjustments to the offer. The worst outcome is that the company does not support the request. Be polite and professional. It is good practice for future situations when asking for changes that may really matter.
- Remind your Protégé not negotiate over voicemail! Negotiation conversations should be done over the phone or in person.
- Encourage your Protégé to become comfortable advocating for themselves instead of having someone else represent them:
 - Do not ask someone (parent, friend, or advisor) to intervene on your behalf. This will indicate to the hiring entity that an inability to self-manage responsibilities.
- If your Protégé is awaiting another potential job offer, they should consider the timing on receiving that offer. If relatively soon, they might ask the first company to allow for an extension in providing an answer to their job offer. If timing is uncertain, then the Protégé should consider the trade-offs in declining or accepting the initial offer.
- Talk with your Protégé about the most professional way to decline a job offer. Remind them to keep a positive in tone (do not close any doors!), be respectful, and offer a simple, straightforward reason for declining.

- Feel free to share your experiences (the good and the bad) and what you wished you had been told before accepting, declining, or negotiating job offers.

Section 13 Transitioning to the Workplace

- **Ask your Protégé to share any concerns they may have about the college-to-career transition. They may ask:**
 - o What experiences stand out from your college-to-career transition?
 - o What are the attributes of someone who shows success in the workplace, in general, and when they first start their job?
 - o What if my job is boring and I feel I could handle more or different work?
 - o How is social media used in the workplace?
 - o Do you have any tips or experiences to share about managing relationships with co-workers?
- Share any memories of adjusting to a permanent work life and living on your own.
- Remind your Protégé that their manager is expecting a lot from them, and they set the rules.
- Be professional and respectful in every situation. Share with them that special project work, special assignments, larger responsibilities, and promotions come with experience.
- Help them get in the habit of using full sentences and adapting to different styles of communication. Examples include email etiquette, phone meetings, conducting in-person meetings. Remind them that chats/messaging and texts only go so far and can be misinterpreted. Also remind them to treat

their colleagues with respect, inclusivity, and celebrate differences.

- Remind your Protégé that to effect change, a person needs to demonstrate that their ideas are credible. The best way to do this is to deliver on what your manager asks. Encourage them to go above and beyond and seek interaction with others in the organization – become recognized for their capabilities.

Section 14 Workplace Experiences

- **Ask your Protégé to share their workplace experiences from internships or other jobs. They may ask:**
 - o Tell me about an experience (good and bad) that impacted you at work; what were the key insights you learned?
 - o How do you manage your work/life balance? Does your employer offer much flexibility?
- Share some experiences with your Protégé that went well for you and/or not so well. What happened, why, what did you learn?
 - ◆ This might include interviews, presentations, negotiating a deal, projects or assignments at work, interactions with co-workers, customers, or vendors, etc.
- Remind your Protégé that they will likely encounter difficult personalities and work situations during their career. Talk through some examples and how to handle them in a professional manner.

Mentoring Program

Mentor Guide

Section 15

Other Life Experiences

- **Ask your Protégé to share accomplishments or experiences that have impacted their life or future plans. They may ask:**

- o What are some of your accomplishments or experiences that have been impactful? (Good and bad – moving to a new area, establishing new friends and connections, travel experiences, choosing between an apartment, and buying a house?)
- o What are some goals that you set for yourself outside of work?
- Share some appropriate experiences that went very well for you and/or went badly. What happened, why, what did you learn?
 - o This might include moving to a new area, establishing new friends and connections, travel experiences, or choosing between renting an apartment and buying a house.

Section 16

The Tarriff Center for Business Ethics & Social Responsibility

- **Is ethics actually important in business? (Don't a lot of people make a lot of money being unethical?)**
 - o Share professional standards that exist in your company or industry
 - o Help students gain awareness of ethical issues in business
 - o Share your own values and commitment to ethical leadership with your protege
 - ◆ Discuss ethical challenges you've faced, and lessons learned
 - ◆ Provide examples of how ethical

leadership has benefit you

- o Does your protégé know that Warren Buffett advises leaders to weigh integrity above all traits when assessing job candidates during the interview process?
- **Discuss how their courses are helping them develop an understanding of business ethics and social responsibility?**
 - o Ask about how ethics and responsibility is discussed in coursework: What questions does your protégé have about this topic, and what do they think about this topic?
 - ◆ Students enrolled in PSU 006 (First-Year Seminar) complete a Business Ethics Case Competition assignment in class
 - ◆ Every Smeal student takes BA 342
 - ◆ Some students complete MGMT 451
- **Ask if your Protégé is taking advantage of co-curricular opportunities provided through [The Tarriff Center for Business Ethics & Social Responsibility](#)?**
 - ◆ Consider attending a Tarriff Center webinar or (some other professional event) together
 - ◆ Be a resource or “coach” to their team in the Kohl’s Business with Integrity Case Competition
- **Talk to your Protégé about why ethics matters in their college career, and how to leverage [Smeal’s Commitment to Honor & Integrity](#)**
 - ◆ Ask them why they think academic integrity matters?
 - ◆ Ask if they have signed the Smeal Honor Code and posted about it on LinkedIn

- ◆ Discuss how can they leverage Smeal’s reputation for honor and integrity in interviews



- ◆ Discuss techniques for doing the right thing?

- If a peer asks your Protégé to break academic integrity standards (e.g. sharing one’s work), discuss getting comfortable with saying “no” without damaging social networks
- When you see someone doing something unethical, how do you offer a correction or express your concerns while maintaining work or personal relationships?

- o Talk about how professional integrity is related to personal brand management?
 - ◆ How is professional integrity signaled via social media presence?
 - ◆ What constitutes ‘respectful’ communication with recruiters?
- o Prepare your Protégé for behavioral interviews that will include a focus on the candidate’s character. Consider using these sample questions:

- ◆ Tell me about a specific time when you had to handle a tough problem that challenged fairness or ethical issues. What happened and how did you respond?

- ◆ When was the last time you “broke the rules”? What was the situation and what did you do?

- ◆ Describe a situation where you saw an employee or co-worker (assumes the Protégé has some work experience) do something you thought was inappropriate. What did you do?

- ◆ What values do you appreciate the most in a team environment? (used to assess traits like honesty, fairness, openness, transparency, and inclusiveness – all hallmarks of integrity)

- ◆ If you ever got into a bind with a client, would you be willing to tell a little lie to help your company out?

- ◆ What would your current/past manager say makes you most valuable to them? (Besides intelligence, skills, and qualifications for the job, the hiring manager may listen for clues that point to integrity)

- o Talk to your Protégé about the value of understanding the corporate culture of their potential employers.

- ◆ How will culture impact quality of life?

- ◆ What does it mean for an organization to be values-driven, beyond compliance efforts?



PennState
Smeal College of Business



Alumni Relations

Smeal College of Business

The Pennsylvania State University

209 Business Building

University Park, PA 16802

814-865-7831

Fax: 814-865-7785

Attention: Alumni Relations

alumni@smeal.psu.edu

smeal.psu.edu/alumni