

Mentoring that Matters

Presented for:

The Law Society of Alberta

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Agenda

Questions welcomed
throughout!

Introduction

Benefits

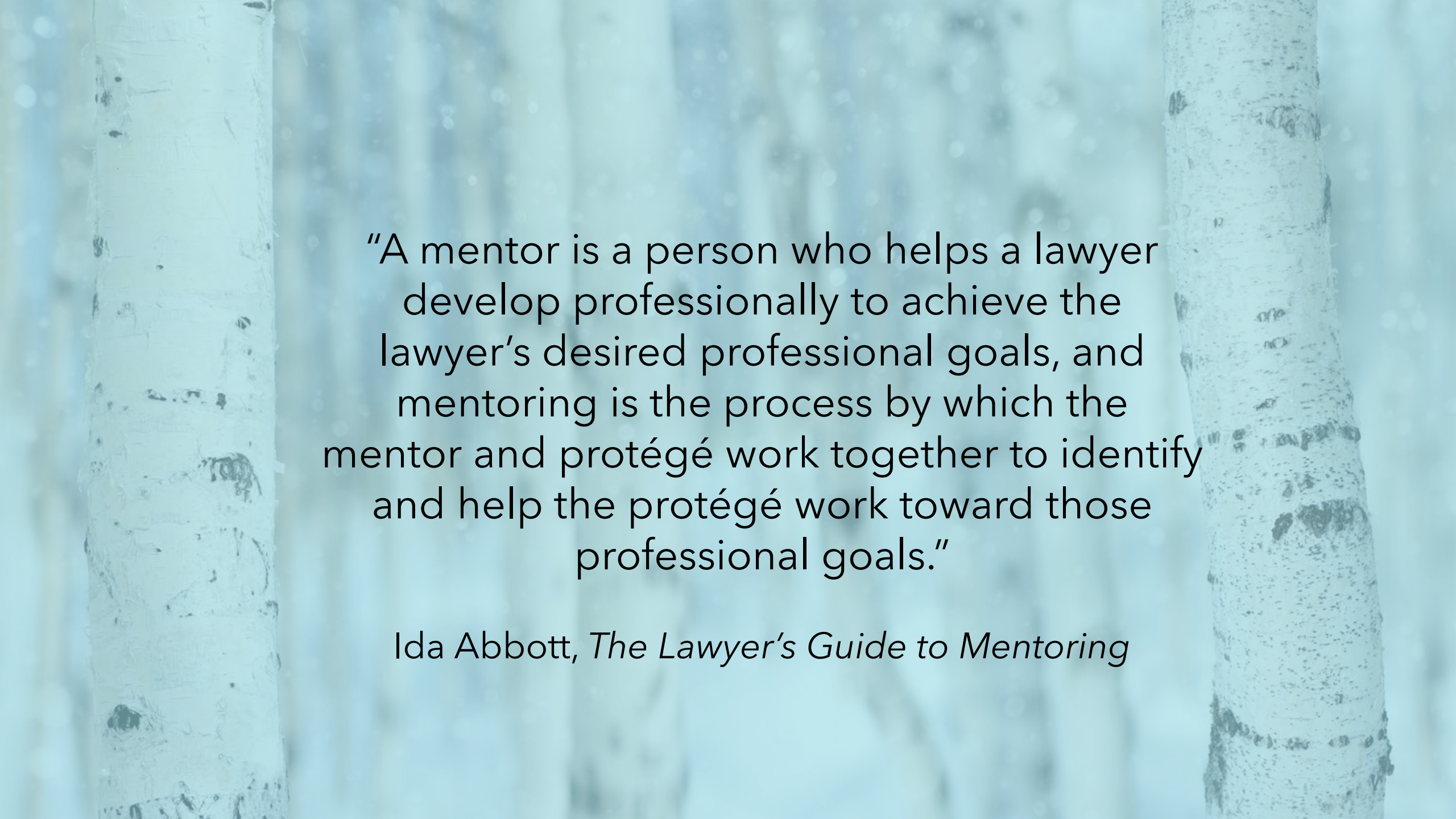
Brain-aligned mentorship

Guiding principles and skills

The sponsorship continuum

Stages and agendas





"A mentor is a person who helps a lawyer develop professionally to achieve the lawyer's desired professional goals, and mentoring is the process by which the mentor and protégé work together to identify and help the protégé work toward those professional goals."

Ida Abbott, *The Lawyer's Guide to Mentoring*



Effective mentoring means
caring about another's
success and generously going
out of your way to help them
achieve their goals.



Benefits of Mentoring?

For Firms

- Building and deepening firm culture
- Aiding recruitment
- Boosting retention
- Practical knowledge transfer
- Improved productivity
- Developing new leaders
- Fostering inclusion

For Mentors

- Meaning & purpose
- Improved management and communication skills
- Enhanced leadership skills
- Learning and growth
- Improved productivity
- Honour own mentors and leave a legacy



Poll Question:

Benefits of Mentoring – which is your top one?

- Meaning & purpose
- Enhanced leadership skills
- Learning and growth
- Honour own mentors and leave a legacy



Brain-Aligned Mentorship



Respect & Recognition

Connection & Belonging

Autonomy

Certainty

Fairness

Growth

Meaning

Guiding Principles



- Be Curious
- Be Supportive
- Be Accepting
- Be Focused
- Be Committed

Core Skills

Listening

Questioning

Encouraging

Sharing

Action Planning



Listening and Questioning

- Focus
- Listen for tone, emotion
- Ask questions to build a full picture with as much detail as possible
- Notice their body language and yours
- Say more about that...
- You mentioned...
- What's underneath this question?
- Here's what I heard you say...
- Sounds like...

Hold a Mirror

- Catch their strengths – and reflect them back
- Catch their improvements – and reflect them back
- Hold up a vision of who they are becoming
- Remind them of who they have told you they are and what they have told you matters to them



Encouraging

- See their potential and reflect that back to them
- Imagine them achieving their goals and share that with them
- Help them see possibilities
- Share your belief in them to help them navigate through fear and lack of confidence to arrive at courage and a willingness to stretch and grow

Sharing and Requesting

- First - explore their ideas for how to resolve a challenge using active listening
 - "What have you thought about doing?"*
 - "What is keeping you from acting on this?"*
 - "What is holding you back?"*
- Catch their good ideas, share possible pitfalls
- **If** they need more guidance provide your own insights based on your experience
- *"Would you be willing to experiment with..."*
- *"Here's how I handled a related challenge..."*
- *"Here's an idea for you to consider - you can run with it, change it, or pass on it"*

Action Planning

- How do you want to move forward on this?
- What's the first small step to take?
- When will you take that step?
- What could get in the way? What do you want to do about that?
- How would you like me to support you on this?



Poll Question
Core Skills – Which is
one you would like to
strengthen?

Listening

Questioning

Encouraging

Sharing / Action Planning

Mindset Alert



- Listen for proving, being good, comparing self to others and being right.
- Instead, encourage improving, getting better, measuring own performance, and learning from success and mistakes (miss takes).
- Mentorship as a learning relationship - for both parties

Truth telling



- Truth-telling is central to mentoring
- Offer the *real story* about the profession and practice
- Speak candidly, even when it's not what the mentee wants to hear
- Honesty builds trust and deepens the relationship
- Deliver truth with respect and care – not sugar-coating, but not harsh
- Helps mentees make informed decisions and grow

Ida Abbott, *The Lawyer's Guide to Mentoring*

Gen Z Mentorship



- Focus on training and shadowing
- Seeking mentorship from colleagues in specific areas
- Short-term engagements
- Online roster of mentors

Source: How to Mentor Gen Z Lawyers
by Susan R George (ABA)



Difference Between Mentorship and Sponsorship

"A mentor is someone who has knowledge and will share it with you. A sponsor is someone who has power and will use it for you."

From: "A Lack of Sponsorship Is Keeping Women from Advancing into Leadership" by Herminia Ibarra, published in Harvard Business Review, August 19, 2019.

A Continuum of Support



Poll Question: A Continuum of Support – How far do you go?



01

Mentor: Provides support, advice, or coaching

02

Strategizer: Provides insider insights to help person advance

03

Connector: Makes helpful introductions

04

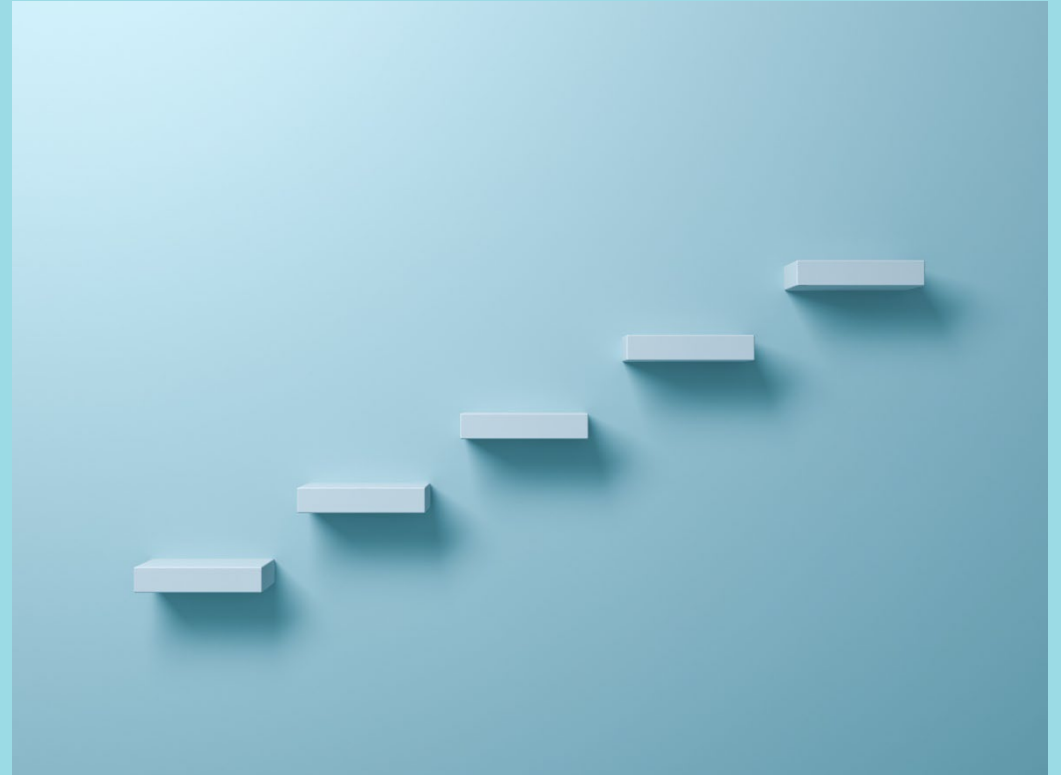
Opportunity Giver: Provide a valuable opportunity

05

Advocate: Publicly advocate for the person, and support behind the scenes when they cannot advocate for themselves

Phases of a Mentoring Relationship

- Formation - establishing trust, aligning expectations
- Relationship deepens - deepening trust and learning
- Relationship closure - reflection, appreciation, next steps

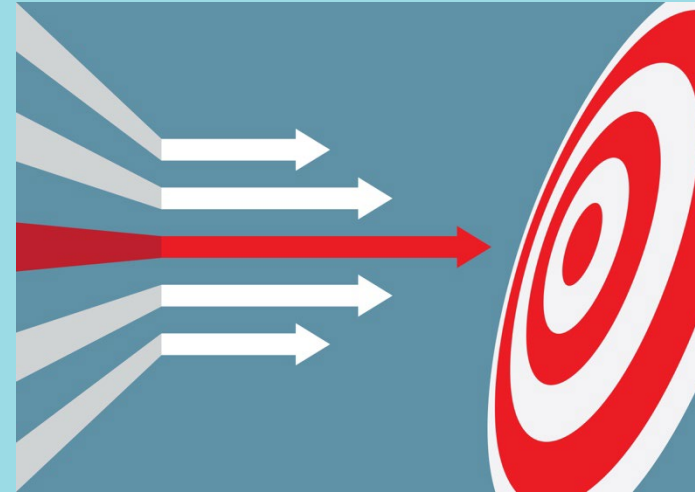


Formation – meeting one

- Get to know each other – ask many questions and listen deeply.
- Learn about the protégé's background and current work situation. What do they enjoy most about legal practice? What are their aspirations?
- Learn about what the protégé perceives as their strengths.
- What are they seeking from the mentorship relationship?
- Have they any questions / challenges they'd like to immediately explore?
- Align around expectations

Meeting One – Align Expectations

- Goals
- Frequency
- Scheduling
- Commitment
- Confidentiality
- Touch base calls?
- What might cause a meeting to be rescheduled? How to minimise this occurrence?



Start well to avoid these common challenges

- Missed or last-minute rescheduled meetings
- Broken trust
- Mentor mismatch
- Over-reliance – protégé is passive, seeking advice vs sharing possible solutions
- Over-controlling – not listening enough, mentor is doing most of the talking

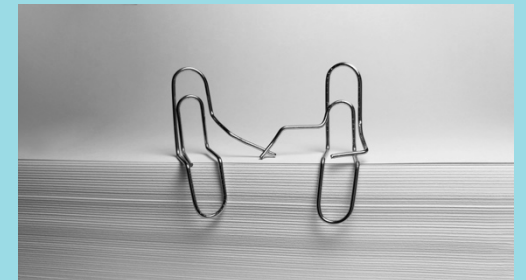
Mentor Express

- Pre session communication from protégé
- Introductions and background
- Explore the question / challenge together – Ask and listen
- Encourage and explore their ideas – Ask and listen
- Share from experience – Talk, question, listen
- Action plan – Question, listen, encourage
- Disembark – What will they commit to doing?



Sample Agenda

- What's gone well and what was their part in that?
- What's something they would like to discuss (challenge/opportunity/question)
- Engage in positive inquiry to learn more about what is underneath their question and to help them think the question through and explore possibilities.
- Share from experience, offer ideas for consideration
- Action planning
- Reflection from the protégé about what was most helpful
- Reflection from mentor about key takeaways
- Next steps
- After... take notes



Closing the Relationship – Meeting Preparation



- Ask the protégé to think about their top takeaways from the mentorship relationship – learning, growth, insights.
- Mentor thinks about how the protégé has developed over the relationship.

Final Meeting Sample Agenda

Catch-up

Protégé share takeaways

Mentor shares perspective
and takeaways

Mentor asks for feedback

Conclude with what's next



More Mentors is Better



Questions?

