

## Formal and Informal Mentoring

### Examples of Each...and Ideas!

While we encourage each Inn to have an official mentoring program and mentoring activities incorporated into their operational plan, we know that not all mentoring is done under formal circumstances. There are many ways to bolster your mentoring efforts; it's always good to mix it up!

#### Formal

- Mentors and mentees complete applications and are matched by a committee or the Inn's mentoring chair.
- There are specific mentoring themed programs and activities sponsored at Inn meetings.
- Mentoring groups and pairs are encouraged to meet on a regular basis.
- The mentoring relationship lasts for a specific duration (usually an Inn year).
- Mentoring topics are decided in advance, and often by a committee or by a Master.
- Mentoring groups or pairs are asked to complete reports and evaluations.
- Mentoring pairs may sign agreements detailing confidentiality, non-compete, and duration arrangements.

#### Informal

- During pupillage group meetings, advice, and support is shared and given.
- Meetings may begin with a short "mentoring moment" where more experienced attorneys share a story with the entire group.
- Official groups or pairs may meet for coffee or happy hour outside regularly scheduled meetings.
- Networking events, cocktail parties, or dinners offer many opportunities for mentoring.
- Informal mentoring can also benefit from being "evaluated" as it is a critical component to any mentoring program.
- "Speed Mentoring" is a great program available in the American Inns of Court Program Library, which details how to hold a fun, interactive, low commitment mentoring event.

*This list is not meant to be comprehensive—there are many excellent formal and informal mentoring activities happening in Inns across the country! Are you proud of your program? Do you have a story or example to help illustrate the many ways of mentoring? Share it with us! <http://home.innsofcourt.org/shareyourstory>.*