MENTORING FAQS FOR THE MENTEE

Q: What is mentoring?
A: Mentoring is most often defined as a professional relationship in which an experienced person (the mentor) assists a less-experienced person (the 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: In general, 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 level and years in the profession. Mentors do not evaluate the mentee with respect to his/her current job, does not conduct performance reviews of the mentee, and does not provide input about salary increases and promotions.

Q: What is an NCRA CTR mentor?
A: An NCRA CTR mentor is an NCRA member who is registered with the NCRA Mentoring Program. An NCRA mentor is an experienced, certified cancer registrar who is committed to the growth of the cancer registry profession, who, in addition to being registered with NCRA, has agreed to volunteer his/her time and expertise to assist prospective CTRs and CTR colleagues attain their professional goals. The NCRA registered mentor will offer support to mentees as they navigate the field of cancer registry and the role of the cancer registrar and prepare for the Certified Tumor Registrar examination. NCRA mentors will also be available to offer guidance and advice to those who are looking to advance their career. A mentor can help you in many ways: answering questions, providing resources and networking opportunities, and being a confidant for professional issues and/or concerns.

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 are attributes of a good mentor?
A: A good mentor is flexible with their approach and advice, will take the initiative to draw out of the mentee the important reasons why he/she wants a mentor, and is responsive to inquiries from the mentee. Good mentors are comfortable sharing personal experiences, asking questions and engaging the mentee in discussions. Good mentors are confident that they have unique experiences to share and know a little bit of encouragement from them will go a long way to 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 and email interactions that are learned through experience, especially in this age of text and instant messaging. Good mentors will help facilitate the learning and growth of the mentee without being directive and imposing personal opinions.

Q: In the NCRA Mentoring Program, who is responsible for initiating the first contact?
A: The NCRA Mentoring Committee receives requests from potential mentees and reviews the information to ensure the applicant is placed with an appropriate mentor, whose background and experience will be of benefit to the mentee. After a selection of a mentor is made, the Mentoring Committee will contact the mentor to share information about the applicant. At that time, the NCRA mentor is required to contact the applicant within 24 hours. Once a Mentoring Contract has been agreed to and signed, the mentor and mentee will work out a schedule based on their needs.

Q: What can an NCRA mentor do for you?
A: An NCRA mentor will be available to discuss your professional goals and offer their knowledge and experience to help the mentee become successful in the cancer registry field. An NCRA mentor may be able to introduce the mentee to professional networks of cancer registrars and help broaden their knowledge of the field. An NCRA mentor may provide critical feedback to the mentee in key areas, such as communications, interpersonal relationships, technical abilities, change management and leadership skills. **NCRA mentors cannot help mentees find positions in hospitals or cancer registries, write recommendations for the mentee, or attest to the knowledge, experience and abilities of the mentee.**

Q: What are the responsibilities of a mentee?
A: NCRA mentees are required to collaborate with their mentor and come to an agreement on the aspects of the Mentoring Contract. Upon contracting, the mentee will adhere to schedules and
timelines as agreed upon, and respond to communications, if not as soon as possible, then within 24-hours. The mentee may bring issues of concern to the Mentoring Committee.

Q: How does one become a mentee in the NCRA Mentoring Program?
A: Applicants for the NCRA Mentoring Program need to complete the online Mentee Information Form. Applicant forms are reviewed by the Mentoring Committee and matched with an appropriate mentor when available. If a mentor is not available, the applicant’s form is retained and re-reviewed as mentors become available.

Q: Can a mentee change mentors if the situation does not fit the mentee’s needs?
A: Yes, a mentee can change mentors. The Mentoring Contract stipulates that the mentoring relationship can be terminated at any time for any reason. We ask that the mentor and the mentee discuss the reasons for ending the activity and notify the Mentoring Committee.

Q: How long are the mentors assigned for?
A: The Mentoring Contract is an opportunity for the mentor and the mentee to discuss and agree to the specifics of their contract. Whatever the mentor and mentee agree to is included in the contract, whether it is the length of time for the contract or the methods by which the mentoring pair will communicate. Once contracted, the Mentoring Committee will hold the mentor and mentee to their commitment, unless otherwise notified.