

A good way to start a mentoring conversation is by setting expectations for the call: what do each of you want out of the conversation and what is realistic to accomplish within the time frame. When it comes to giving advice, the student may not know what questions to ask, but that doesn't mean they don't have any.

One good way to get your student to ask you questions is to first ask them about their interests and goals. If you are faculty, talk about what you look for in applicants. If you are a grad student, talk about your own experience applying to grad school; this may bring up questions about the process. If a student asks a question you can't answer, that's okay. Try to connect them with some tools, resources or other people who might be able to help. [This article](#) from the APA, has great tips on how to be an effective mentor. We found the section on *How to Mentor Ethically* (pps 15-18) to be especially helpful, so we've summarized some tips from that section at the end of this email.

The best you can do for your student is to be open, honest, encouraging, and excited to meet with them.

#### TIPS:

- Prepare - Be aware that mentoring can be a labor-filled process. Be honest with yourself about the limits of your mentoring capabilities, and if a student needs more than you can give, let them know.
- Manage Expectations - Talk with potential mentees early on about what they, and you, expect from the relationship
- Be Inclusive - It may take more time and effort to form a strong mentorship with a student who is different from you, but keep reaching out.
- Protect Mentee's Privacy - Mentors should always work to protect mentees' privacy (this helps form trust, which is hugely important) while remaining mindful that mentor-mentee communications are not privileged in a legal sense.
- Maintain Boundaries - You are a mentor, not a friend in this instance. Your job as a mentor is to see your mentee succeed on their own; having boundaries helps ensure your mentee can move on to their next steps.
- Advocate but Evaluate - You can't simply be a cheerleader for your mentee. If there is an aspect that they need to work on, give kind feedback rather than only focusing the mentees virtues.