

American Association of Physician Liasons

Guide to

MENTORING



The **American Association of Physician Liaisons** *Liaison Connect* program brings together liaisons from all types of organizations and all levels of experience. The program supports professional growth and knowledge for our members. *Liaison Connect* fosters engagement, networking, and support among the AAPL members who participate.



To serve as a Mentor, you need to have a minimum of 5 years job experience as a physician liaison. There is no requirement to be a Mentee except AAPL membership status. *Liaison Connect* is especially beneficial for those with less than 3 years job experience, but even those who are senior in the role can grow by being mentored by someone more experienced.

What is a Mentor?

Mentors are flexible and willing to adjust based on the Mentees' experience, needs and learning styles. Physician liaisons could be just starting in their roles, changing product lines or facilities, or working toward a promotion. The Mentor you are matched with through AAPL's *Liaison Connect* program will be able to provide guidance matching the need or goal to be attained. Effective mentoring is a continuous learning process that is a synthesis of events, experiences, thoughts, observations, feedback, and analysis.



What is a Mentee?

The Mentee, as a learner, will be free to participate in conversations driven by their interest to gain knowledge, best practices, and recommendations from their Mentor. Mentees should be involved in all phases of the learning process, including needs identification, planning, participation, and evaluation of the learning outcome.

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a partnership between the Mentor as a coach and the Mentee as a learner. The quality of their partnership determines the value of the learning experience. As a coach, the Mentor guides and facilitates learning.

A great Mentor/Mentee pairing from AAPL ensures that both participants can be flexible and adjust to the current circumstances and job situations.

Why be a Mentor?

Mentoring is especially useful in helping orient new liaisons, improve their self-confidence, understand best practices, and develop skills. Mentors can truly make a difference in someone's career path, successes, and achievements.



Mentoring strengthens the workforce by retaining and strengthening relationships, which benefits the individual, the workforce, the network, and ultimately the healthcare industry. Novice liaisons, and those young in their career or role, can advance at a quicker pace, feel empowered, and reap great satisfaction in their positions. Nurturing, retaining, and building confidence in a Physician Liaison solidifies the value of the liaison role within their team and with their employer.

Expectations as a Mentee

As a Mentee, you want to start your AAPL *Liaison Connect* experience so that you gain as much as possible throughout your 12 months. Give some thought to what you would like out of the program and come prepared. For example:

- Have a clear understanding of professional goals
- Create goals with milestones and deliverables
- Clearly communicate expectations of the relationship
- Be open and accepting of constructive feedback
- Share your best practices with you Mentor – it is a two-way conversation
- Plan on celebrating successes

Key Mentoring Skills

To get the most out of your AAPL *Liaison Connect* experience as a Mentor, here are a few tips:

1. Listen First

Your job is not to solve the Mentee's problems. Ideally, you will navigate the mentee to the next step or the solution. Help them remove roadblocks and build bridges that lead to solutions. Also, remember your mentee is not you, so they need to carve their own professional path. Be careful about falling into being the perfect example. Failures and difficulties in your career are just as valuable as your successes. Showing some vulnerability eases any unspoken pressure for the mentee in trying to be perfect. Taking notes helps you to stay actively engaged. If you give your mentee some direction, make sure to follow-up on it at your next meeting by asking, "How did that go?"



2. Give Honest Feedback

People are all too willing to tell you when you are doing something well, but it takes a strong relationship for someone to give you honest feedback especially if it is pointed criticism. It is important for your Physician Liaison Mentee to hear things that other people are not willing to say. These opportunities help Mentees grow and, in the process, they will learn you have high expectations for them. It helps to understand your Mentee and where they want to go with their career. Constructive feedback is a part of that growth.

3. Motivate

Sometimes we miss this one. Is not one of the main points of mentoring to helping the next liaison become strong, motivated, confident, and thoughtful leader. Your job is to encourage and inspire the Mentee to reach their fullest potential and to get out of their comfort zone. We have all known that the ability to be uncomfortable allows someone to grown.

4. Establish Mutual Respect



To be successful, the Physician Liaison Mentor/Mentee relationship needs to be built on mutual respect, trust, and support. Remember, this is a partnership, so it should foster acceptance and openness to communicate in a safe place. This is where someone can feel safe to take risks and throw out ideas without any fear of being judged. Also, remember to show respect by valuing their time. This may be another meeting on your calendar for the day, but it may be the most important meeting for

your Mentee. They could have ideas or a problem they have been waiting to share with you before moving forward. Treat it with respect!

5. Be Present and Open

Showing up may be half the battle but being fully present is crucial. Take notes. Put your phone away. Follow-up on past discussions. Be ready to share your experiences both positive and negative. Remember, you can learn from this experience to. Your Mentee may have a different background or experiences than you do.

Roadmap to Successful Mentoring

Plan: The Mentor Role is 12 months and includes three phases:

A. Beginning

- a. Time to meet your Mentee
- b. Set meeting frequencies, at least bi-monthly
- c. Time of building the relationship

B. Middle

- a. Time of nurturing
- b. Developing current plans and growing from coaching
- c. Progressing to achieving goals
- d. Exchange of feedback
- e. Growth of both Mentor and Mentee

C. Closing

- a. Mentee feels comfortable on their own

Mentoring Framework

Getting started with AAPL's *Liaison Connect* program is easy. To express interest in this program please email us at contactAAPL@gmail.com and put in the subject line "*Liaison Connect-Mentor*" or "*Liaison Connect-Mentee*."

Program Structure:


- Pairs are expected to regularly interact and collaborate for a year and can elect to continue or terminate their pairing in the Mentorship Program at the end of the year.
- Pairs are notified of their match through email. They should exchange contact information and set-up an "introductory meeting" via phone.
- A "good fit" 90-day trial period will start immediately upon pair notification to ensure that the mentoring activity is working as anticipated by all participating in the program.
- Anytime during the first 90 days, you or your mentor may contact the program coordinator to express concern that the pairing is not the best fit for whatever reason.
- A minimum contact of one official mentoring phone call is required per quarter. More frequent, informal communication, such as emails or other communication, is encouraged if both parties agree.

We are very excited about this program as a membership benefit to AAPL members and are proud of how *Liaison Connect* brings together dynamic groups of professionals to provide visibility to the Physician Liaison role across the nation.

We hope that you have a positive experience as you participate in *Liaison Connect*. Please feel free to provide feedback to AAPL at any time to share thoughts or recommendations on what we can do to improve.

AAPL is an organization for liaisons, led by liaisons, and membership can be a pivotal alliance that can help you to excel in your career. Visit our website at www.physicianliaison.com.





American Association
of Physician Liaisons, Inc.
461 Cochran Road, Box #246
Pittsburgh, PA 15228 USA

