

Mentoring Conflict Resolution Process

Conflicts can arise within the mentoring relationship that ultimately may lead to its total breakdown unless resolved in an equitable, timely and effective manner. There are many reasons why the relationship can degrade, including:

- **Ghosting** – a person in the relationship fails to maintain any form of contact despite frequent contact attempts via email, telephone or other messaging services.
- **Misunderstanding** – communication between the mentor and mentee may have been misunderstood by either person creating a fractured relationship.
- **Goals** – a mentor or mentee may become frustrated that agreed goals may have failed and the cause perceived as a failure of one party.
- **Matching** – a mentor or mentee may feel that the matching process was ineffective and he/she is disempowered or disincentivised to request a change.
- **Meetings** – a mentor or mentee may fail to attend scheduled meetings without communicating with the other party. This may have arisen due to circumstances out of their control which, on a one-off occasion, would not ordinarily be an irreparable relationship event. However, if this occurs on numerous occasions (with or without notification to the other party), may become irreparable.

It is important that any conflict arising, whether perceived or real, is addressed between the mentor and mentee immediately it is identified. It is expected that **Both** parties work collaboratively and collegiately to prevent escalation. The steps to achieve this are as follows:

1. Revisit your Mentoring Agreement, goals and expectations and have a truthful discussion about what factors may be impacting your ability to meet any element of these. Consider strategies that can be put in place by both parties to effectively resolve the issue(s).
2. Focus on SMART (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable/**A**ttainable, **R**elevant, **T**ime-bound) goals, re-energise the mentoring process, and affirm the rewards of achieving the goals through program dedication and commitment.
3. Acknowledge that challenges and failures are in fact positive opportunities for improvement and eliminate any notion of “blame”.
4. Commit to the program, affirm expectations, and acknowledge that both parties are in a position of privilege and responsibility for a successful mentoring outcome.

In the unlikely event that the conflict has resulted in an irreparable relationship breakdown between the mentor and mentee, the matter must be escalated to the AIHS Mentoring Program Coordinator mentorship@aihs.org.au at the earliest possible time. The coordinator will action any required escalation to the Chair.

The Chair makes the decision to terminate the participation of a mentor or mentee after a thorough review of the circumstances and factors that led to the escalation.

Documented non-attendance at scheduled meetings by either party on more than three occasions will result in Mentoring Committee intervention and determination by the Chair of a participant termination.

For further information on maintaining effective mentor and mentee relationships, and successful mentoring outcomes, refer to the Mentorloop “Mentoring Blog” resources available at <https://mentorloop.com/blog/>.