Mentor Map

This exercise helps you to map your personal and professional networks, identifying key individuals who provide support, mentorship, and opportunities. By visualizing your connections, you can recognize strengths, gaps, and areas to expand your network for career growth.

> **Understanding your network helps you leverage relationships for feedback, guidance, and accountability while also identifying ways to support others. A strong, intentionally constructed network enhances career opportunities, fosters community, and provides a foundation for long-term success.**

STEP 1

Understanding Network Support

Career success is rarely a solo journey. Networks provide:

- Substantive Feedback: Input on work, projects, and ideas
- Access to Opportunities: Guidance, mentorship, and introductions
- Emotional Support: Encouragement, connection, and understanding
- Accountability: Helping you stay on track with your goals
- Role Models: Examples of success and inspiration
- Community: A sense of belonging and shared purpose

Think about people in your life who play these roles and how you can also offer support to others.

STEP 2

Build Your Network Map

Using the template on the next page, create a network map with yourself at the center.

Create branches for the following categories:

- Substantive Feedback: Who gives you constructive feedback on your work? (for example, mentors, colleagues, editors)
- Access to Opportunities: Who opens doors or connects you to opportunities? (for example, family members, peer mentors, friends)
- Emotional Support: Who supports you emotionally? (for example, friends, family, peers, and others)
- Accountability: Who keeps you accountable to your goals? (for example, accountability partners, coaches, and colleagues)
- Role Models: Who inspires you? (for example, professionals, leaders, historical figures)
- Community: Where do you feel a sense of belonging? (for example, groups, professional associations, local networks)

For each branch, list 2-4 names or groups of people.

PROVIDING

1._____

2._____

3._____

RECEIVING

1._____

2._____

3._____

FEEDBACK

PROVIDING

1._____

2._____

3._____

RECEIVING

1._____

2._____

3._____

OPPORTUNITIES

YC

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

ACCOUNTABILITY
FOR WHAT REALLY
MATTERS

OU

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROVIDING

1._____
2._____
3._____

RECEIVING

1._____
2._____
3._____

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

PROVIDING

1._____
2._____
3._____

RECEIVING

1._____
2._____
3._____

COMMUNITY

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____

ROLE MODELS

WHO ARE YOUR ROLE MODELS?

1._____
2._____
3._____

WHO ARE YOU A ROLE MODEL TO?

1._____
2._____
3._____

STEP 3

Identify Gaps and Opportunities

Once you have mapped your networks:

- Identify Strengths: Which categories are well-populated with people who actively support you?
- Spot Gaps: Are there categories where you need more support or connections?
- Think About Reciprocity: Who in your network could you support? What do you have to offer others?

Reflection Prompts:

- Where do you feel your network is strong, and where could it grow?
- What steps can you take to strengthen relationships or fill gaps in your network?
- How can you contribute to the growth or success of others in your network?

STEP 4

Next Steps and Action Plan

Create an action plan based on your reflections:

- Strengthen: Identify 1-2 relationships to nurture further.
- Expand: Name 1-2 areas where you need new connections. Brainstorm potential individuals and groups to approach.
- Give Back: Identify at least one person you can support and describe how you plan to do so.
- Wrap Up: Revisit your network map regularly as your career progresses. Networks evolve over time, and being intentional about both receiving and offering support is key to sustained growth and success.