



American Association  
of Colleges of Nursing

## Stages in Your Relationship

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**BECOMING ACQUAINTED.** You define your common interests and goals, and determine if the relationship has potential.

The responsibility of the mentoring relationship should lie with all parties involved. It is the responsibility of AACN to provide new deans with a mentor based on the new dean's priorities, and facilitate the distribution of information on the program and on mentoring in general.

It is the responsibility of the new dean to determine whether or not s/he is ready for a mentoring experience, and willing to learn from a colleague. S/he must determine what areas of interest, issues, problems, or goals are to be explored, and communicate those to the mentor. This facilitates a more personal, custom relationship.

It is the responsibility of the mentor to listen to these areas, issues, problems, or goals, and think about whether or not s/he can provide the information or guidance that is sought. The mentor is also responsible for serving as a positive and active example of membership in AACN, and work toward achieving AACN's objectives for the program. In this way, both the mentor and the new dean know what they are trying to accomplish, and can discover a little bit about each other in the process.

**SETTING PROCEDURE.** Determine how and how often you will communicate. Determine if you will set agendas or goals, or communicate on an "as-needed" basis.

Equally important as determining what areas you will explore together is **how** you will explore them. If the new dean wants to schedule a time each week for communicating with his/her mentor, explore this possibility. If a more casual arrangement is preferred, express this. Communication is the key to developing the "experience" into a "relationship." Clear communication from the beginning is essential to progress.

**LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER.** Share ideas, contacts, knowledge, GROW as professionals.

Learning is a lifelong process, and so is the successful maintenance of relationships. We hope this experience is a valuable one for both parties. Please provide us with your feedback on the program and how it has served you. Don't hesitate to let us know how we can improve the mentoring process.

Advancing  
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