

# Inclusive Mentoring Practices



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The recommendations below emerge from an ongoing qualitative study of inclusive mentoring. We conducted semi-structured interviews with protégés from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups across a variety of occupational contexts. We identified three dimensions of inclusive mentor behavior: professional integration, personal integration, and protection.

## I. Professional Integration

Invite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invite your protégé to important meetings</li><li>• Invite your protégé to join important projects</li><li>• Invite your protégé to attend high-level trainings</li><li>• Invite your protégé to special professional events (e.g., lunches, receptions)</li></ul>
Ask for Input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask your protégé for their input and feedback</li><li>• Encourage your protégé to voice their opinions</li><li>• Incorporate your protégé's input when possible</li></ul>
Give Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tell your protégé that you trust their ability to work independently</li><li>• Delegate authority to your protégé (e.g., over projects, decisions)</li><li>• Let your protégé accomplish tasks in their own way</li><li>• Give your protégé the discretion to deviate from plans when appropriate</li></ul>
Keep Informed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give your protégé the “heads up” about important professional activities</li><li>• Communicate information about your profession that your protégé might not have access to</li><li>• Provide “in the moment” training as gaps in knowledge arise</li></ul>



## II. Personal Integration

Engage Personally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask your protégé about their nonwork life (e.g., How was your weekend?, How is the family?, What's new in your life?)</li><li>• Meet with your protégé in nonwork locations (e.g., at a restaurant, at a coffee shop, at home)</li><li>• Talk about your own personal life (e.g., the weekend, your family, what's new)</li><li>• Celebrate your protégé's positive life events (e.g., wedding, baby shower, birthday) and be there for them during negative life events (e.g., deaths, illness)</li></ul>
Be Available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicate an "open door policy" to your protégé (e.g., you can call/email me anytime; I'm always here for if you need me)</li><li>• Respond quickly when your protégé reaches out to you</li><li>• Make yourself available during discretionary time</li></ul>

## III. Protection

Defend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Back up your protégé when others are unhappy with them</li><li>• Stand up for your protégé when they are criticized</li><li>• Keep information that would harm them confidential</li><li>• Publicly take responsibility when things don't go well</li></ul>
Remove Blame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Validate challenges associated with inexperience ("I know there is a lot to learn")</li><li>• Normalize making mistakes</li><li>• Invite and affirm asking questions</li><li>• Disclose your personal experience making mistakes</li><li>• Personally take responsibility when things don't go well</li></ul>
Preserve Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Protect your protégé from overwork</li><li>• Take action to provide resources or reduce demands when protégés need it</li><li>• Protect against resource loss by providing information and tangible resources</li></ul>

