

DAVIS WRIGHT TREMAINE'S

Mentoring Handbook

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Q1 | WHAT IS THE AIM OF DWT'S FORMAL MENTORING PROGRAM?

DWT believes that effective mentoring is vital to cultivating the talents and skills of our associates and furthering their professional development. This aligns with the firm's covenant, and speaks to our core values of selflessness, collaboration, inclusiveness, and supporting the success of others. DWT is fortunate to have a deep bench of talented and knowledgeable partners who generously contribute their time, experience and expertise to grow and develop the next generation of lawyers.

The mentoring program is not meant to replace the informal mentoring that occurs at the firm every day. Associates and counsel are encouraged to cultivate a "board of directors" who can provide varying types and degrees of guidance throughout their career. Assigning a formal mentor ensures that all associates and counsel are afforded opportunities to receive sponsorship, coaching, feedback, and support as they are needed.

Q2 | HOW DOES THE PAIRING PROCESS WORK?

Professional Development consults with Practice Group Chairs, Professional Development Partners, and PICs to determine a strategic match. Factors considered in the pairing can include the associate's workflow pipeline, professional development goals, areas for business growth, or key areas to target for improvement. Once a pairing is established, PD will contact the associate and mentor to confirm the pairing and offer tips for getting started. Mentoring relationships will be periodically reviewed for possible updates or changes.

Q3 | HOW OFTEN SHOULD MENTORS AND MENTEES MEET?

Effective mentors are accessible and approachable. Research on assigned relationships indicates that frequency of interaction is one of the best predictors of whether a mentorship will gain traction and develop into something meaningful for both parties. Junior associates especially may be reluctant to "bother" or interrupt a busy partner, so schedule routine meetings (ideally monthly, but no less than quarterly if that's more realistic) and make a point to seek out informal interactions between meetings. In a virtual work environment, an email or instant message can serve as a substitute for casual in-person encounters.

Whether you're meeting on a video call, over the phone, or in-person, make your mentee a priority for the duration of that time. By refusing to allow other commitments to intrude on designated time with your mentee, you communicate that you see them as valuable, that time spent with them is worthwhile, and that you are committed to their development.

Q4 | HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR A MENTORING MEETING?

If this is your first time meeting with a new mentee, take time to learn about them. Use their resume or firm bio as a starting point, talk to others who have worked with them, or consult with practice group leaders. If you're able to identify patterns of behavior, talents, and areas of proficiency, you'll be better equipped to provide encouragement and help set realistic and achievable goals.

Clarify expectations for the relationship from the outset. Ask your mentee what they'd like to prioritize, and what areas they'd like to focus on, and where they could use your support or counsel. Establish a mutually agreed-upon cadence for meetings, and preferred communication style. Plan to revisit expectations periodically to ensure they are being met and update them if necessary.

Whether this is a new pairing or established relationship, plan a topic for the conversation in advance. This might mean a status update on an assignment, evaluating progress towards a goal, or directly asking your mentee if there's anything they'd like to discuss. The list below outlines some additional topics for mentoring conversations to get started, but don't feel limited to just these suggestions.

- Workflow and practice management
- Developing new skills and building on existing strengths
- Network and reputation building
- Short and long-term practice objectives
- Department protocol and practice
- Navigating client issues
- Delegation and feedback
- Business development
- Opportunities for firm, community and bar involvement

Q5 | HOW DO I CHANGE MY MENTEE ASSIGNMENT?

We strive to be intentional and deliberate when making mentor pairings, but we recognize that circumstances change and there may come a point when the relationship no longer serves either party. If you'd like to make any changes to your existing mentee assignments, please contact Miriam Gordon (miriamgordon@dwt.com) or Cary Plewka (caryplewka@dwt.com) for assistance.

Q6 | WHAT ARE THE MENTOR PROGRAM TIME ENTRY AND EXPENSE CODES

Expenses: **Attorney Mentoring and Integration 8061-xx-114** (xx is your office billing code)
Please note that there is a \$50 max per person limited to lunches and incidental coffee/drinks.

Time Entry: **Professional Development 0000099.041000**



Guidelines for Mentors

ESTABLISHING THE MENTORSHIP

- **Establish clear expectations for the relationship**, including frequency of meetings and preferred modes of communication. Plan to revisit periodically to make sure that expectations are being met, and make changes as necessary. Junior associates might feel nervous about “bothering” a partner, so it’s incumbent upon you as the mentor to take the lead in scheduling meetings.
- **Build trust through dependability and accountability.** Be present and attentive in meetings, practice active listening, and follow through with commitments. If your mentee asks you to review their work, return your feedback in a timely manner. Be open and communicative if client demands pose a conflict for a scheduled meeting.
- **Provide unconditional encouragement and support** to build trust with your mentee, and affirm their value. Demonstrate that you have faith in your mentee’s judgment and ability, even in the face of short-term setbacks. Don’t make your approval or support contingent on error-free performance, and discourage perfectionism.
- **Don’t withhold honest and constructive feedback**, even if the conversation is difficult. Feedback is essential for growth, and long-term success, and necessary behavior corrections should be addressed directly and compassionately.

YOUR MENTEE

- **Get to know your mentee**, both as a professional and a person. Without violating their privacy, inquire about your mentee’s family, hobbies, community connections, and other interests outside of work. Be especially attentive to their fears and personal challenges—acknowledge them as valid, but don’t allow your mentee to fixate, or see obstacles as insurmountable.
- **Understand your mentee’s short-term and long-term goals**, and work together to develop a roadmap for meeting them. Regularly check in on their progress, and acknowledge achievements along the pathway to success.
- **Ask your mentee about existing roadblocks** that might inhibit their practice management or career development. What can reasonably be done to overcome these obstacles, and what are realistic ways you can help remove hurdles?
- **Review your mentee’s Practice Development Plan** (or Business Plan) and provide feedback and suggestions. Are their current matters providing exposure to the right developmental opportunities? Does their current pipeline of work align with their plan, and if not what needs to change? Suggest partners to work with, committees, cases, pro bono and community activities to be involved in, and training that can benefit your mentee.



SPONSORSHIP

- **As a mentor, you may be expected to take on the role of sponsor.** No one can seize an opportunity if the door is shut, and as a mentor your influence and social capital can open doors that your mentee can't open for themselves. Highlight your mentee's contributions and wins both laterally (to peers and colleagues) and vertically (to firm leaders).
- **With an understanding of your mentee's career goals,** facilitate growth by identifying challenging and high-profile assignments that will test your mentee's performance threshold and allow them to develop necessary skills.
- **Introduce the mentee to others within the firm,** your clients and other potential contacts. When appropriate, include the mentee in your business development initiatives.
- **Recognize your own limitations,** and assist your mentee in cultivating a network of informal mentors who complement you. Your mentee will benefit from a constellation of support from multiple sources.

WHEN MENTORING BECOMES COACHING

- **Occasionally a mentoring conversation turns into a coaching opportunity.** While the goal of a mentor is often to give advice, the goal of a coach is to ask questions to assist the associate in understanding and resolving their own issues.

1. Define the goal of the discussion

What topic do you want to discuss?

What outcome do you want to achieve from our discussion?

2. Explore what's happening

Briefly, describe the situation?

What have you tried so far?

What were the results?

What seem to be the obstacles?

3. Explore options

Describe "in a perfect world"—if you could do anything, what might you do?

Would you like suggestions from me?

Do any of these ideas interest you enough to explore further?

4. Agree on next steps

How will you go about it?

What might get in the way?

How might you overcome that?

What and when is the next step?

When should we talk again?

Mentoring Your Mentee | Junior Associates

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Introduce your mentee to other attorneys in the firm. Include them in meetings, social events, and virtual gatherings whenever possible. Make sure your mentee is building good working relationships with staff, especially their legal assistant.

Sample Questions

Who are you getting to know?

Who would you like to meet?

What type of work are you delegating to your legal assistant?

How often do you update your legal assistant on your projects and deadlines?

LEARNING THE UNWRITTEN RULES

For junior associates, especially those in their first year of practice, understanding the fundamental assumptions and values of the firm's culture can be the difference between failure and success. As a seasoned veteran, one of the benefits you can offer is crucial insider knowledge, and the implicit values and subtle skills expected of a professional in a law firm. Keep in mind the following questions when helping socialize your mentee:

What are the ropes, norms, traditions, and politics of not only the firm, but the practice group and office?

What are the expectations of junior associates, and what are the hidden traps and landmines?

How can associates develop the requisite behaviors, skills and knowledge needed to succeed?

Who are the gatekeepers, power brokers, allies, and people with institutional memory?

DEVELOPING GOOD TIMEKEEPING HABITS

Emphasize the importance of entering time contemporaneously. Help your mentee learn how to capture time and write good narratives. Consider a daily review of your mentee's timesheets for a period of time.

Sample Questions

Are you using the online time entry system?

Do you enter your time as you go?

What do you think would make your time entry process more efficient?



MANAGING WORKFLOW

Talk to your mentee about the type of assignments they are receiving and from whom. Look for opportunities to discuss your mentee's work needs with lawyers who are in a position to provide work.

Sample Questions

Who are you working with and what type of work are you doing?

Who would you like to be working with and what type of work would you like to be doing?

What strategy have you implemented to obtain work in your desired area?

SOLICITING FEEDBACK

Encourage your mentee to have frequent follow-up conversations to receive timely feedback and enhance skill development. Talk with lawyers who assign work to your mentee to gain feedback that can help you mentor effectively.

Sample Questions

Are you soliciting informal feedback from assigning attorneys?

What is your approach?

Do you ask for a copy of a final brief, memo or contract to determine what changes the partner made?

Do you attempt to meet with the partner to discuss their changes?

DEVELOPING A LONG-TERM PRACTICE

Share your experiences with your mentee, including why you chose this career path, what you enjoy about it most and important lessons learned along the way. Recount your experiences as a new attorney and how your experience differs today.

Sample Questions

How does your experience with the firm differ from what you expected?

What are your methods for coping with the changes presented by a new career?

What is most important to you in your career?

Mentoring Your Mentee | Mid-Level Associates

REVIEW YOUR MENTEE'S PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

As part of the Path to Partnership initiative, mid- and senior-level associates are asked to draft a Practice Development Plan (also called a Business Plan). The goal of the plan is to develop the attorney's skills and initiative to build a sustainably healthy practice that also contributes to the firm's overall success, and help others succeed.

Ask your mentee if they would like to review their Practice Development Plan together. As a mid-level associate, your mentee's Practice Development Plan should include a comprehensive set of goals related to business development, including developing their network and strengthening their reputation. Make sure your mentee has set specific short-term and long-term goals and outlined the action steps to achieve them.

Review your mentee's plan for these key points:

1. Decide what kind of work you want to do, for what kind of clients, at what rates.
2. Understand the strategic direction of the firm and your practice group and, to the extent possible, align your practice vision and ambition to that direction.
3. Develop your relevant skills, reputation and network so you can become a top-tier attorney in your chosen area(s) of focus.
4. Collaborate with your colleagues to develop and deliver solutions to clients' articulated needs (as opposed to hoping a client that needs your particular skills will appear).
5. Who are your top clients and from which partners do you get most of your work (making up approximately 75% of your work and billings)?
6. For mid-level associates, hours per year for the past three years; For senior associates and counsel, statistics (hours per year for the past three years, MOC, RAC).
7. A description of the types of work you do for your clients, with some sense of the relative weight of each type of work in your overall portfolio.
8. Describe your vision and ambition for your practice.
9. How would you like people to describe you (as a lawyer) and your practice in 3–5 years?
10. What is your path to becoming a top-tier attorney?
11. Describe the kinds of work opportunities you'd like to have.
12. What skills do you plan to develop and what specific steps will you take to do so in the coming year?
13. How do you plan to enhance your visibility and reputation in your relevant market(s) and what specific steps will you take in the coming year?
14. How do you plan to nurture and expand your network in the coming year?



EVALUATIONS AND OTHER FEEDBACK

Encourage your mentee to have frequent follow-up conversations to receive timely feedback and enhance skill development.

Sample Questions

What did your last evaluation identify as your areas of strength and how could those be leveraged to support your practice development goals?

What did your last evaluation identify as areas that need further development and how are those addressed in your Practice Development Plan?

What methods are you utilizing to receive informal feedback and how often are you receiving feedback?

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Is your mentee developing good practice management skills, including delegating when appropriate?

Sample Questions

Do you feel you are managing your projects efficiently with minimal time written off?

What type of work are you delegating to staff and more junior associates?

Is there work you are doing that could or should be delegated to others?

RECOGNIZING WEAK SPOTS

You are in a good position to help your mentee become aware of their weak spots. See the Resources for Mentors page on the Professional Development portal for resources on how to have a coaching conversation.

Sample Questions

Are you seeking and receiving feedback on skills and behavior not directly tied to substantive work (such as your communication and other interpersonal skills)?

What do you perceive as your strengths and weaknesses in these areas?

Mid-level associate mentee guidelines also apply to senior level associates, with a focus on their Path to Partnership.

ADDRESS PARTNERSHIP READINESS EARLY ON

As an associate moves to senior level, practice groups will begin to ask associates about their interest in becoming a partner. These conversations are intended to help the associate develop a partner-level practice by looking at their interests and expertise and helping them set specific goals and objectives that align with the firm's strategy and position in the marketplace. These meetings will take place annually at which time practice development plans and progress toward goals are reviewed and updated.

Sample Questions

Tell me about your Path to Partnership meeting. What did you learn? What surprised you? What questions or concerns do you still have?

According to your PGC, what areas of your practice need further development prior to partnership consideration?

Is there information you need about the partnership process?

A practice development plan should explore two main topics:

How will you develop and apply your skills and initiative, and use the DWT platform, to build a **sustainably healthy practice** that contributes to the firm's overall success?

How will you contribute your time and ability to **enhance the DWT platform and help your colleagues succeed**?

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLY HEALTHY PRACTICE

Building a sustainably healthy practice results from the following process:

1. Decide what kind of work you want to do, for what kind of clients, at what rates.
2. Understand the strategic direction of the firm and your practice group and, to the extent possible, align your practice vision and ambition to that direction.
3. What is your path to becoming a top-tier attorney?
4. Collaborate with your colleagues to develop and deliver solutions to clients' articulated needs as opposed to hoping a client that needs your particular skills will appear.

With that approach in mind, briefly answer the following questions:

1. Provide an overview of your practice:
 - a. Who are your top clients and from which partners do you get most of your work (making up approximately 75% of your work and billings)?
 - b. For junior and mid-level associates, hours per year for the past three years.
 - c. For senior associates and counsel, statistics (hours per year for the past three years, MOC, RAC).
 - d. A description of the types of work you do for your clients, with some sense of the relative weight of each type of work in your overall portfolio.
2. Describe your vision and ambition for your practice:
 - a. How would you like people to describe you (as a lawyer) and your practice in 3–5 years?

3. What is your path to becoming a top-tier attorney?
 - a. What kind of work opportunities would you like to have?
 - b. What skills do you plan to develop and what specific steps will you take to do so this year?
 - c. What specific steps will you take to boost your visibility and reputation in your relevant market this year?
 - d. How do you plan to nurture and expand your network this year?

SUPPORTING THE DWT PLATFORM AND YOUR COLLEAGUES

Supporting the platform and your colleagues results from the following process:

1. Discuss with your PGC your practice group's strategic direction and how you can best contribute to the group achieving its objectives.
2. Learn about your colleagues' practices and capabilities—who does what work for whom.

Criteria for Contract Partnership

For a candidate applying for contract partnership, each question in the criteria below must be answered in the affirmative. How each criteria applies and whether it has been met in a particular instance will be determined in the judgment of the firm leaders designated to assess the candidate.

1 | PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

- A. Has the candidate demonstrated the ability to perform high-quality, partner-level work?
- B. Has the candidate assumed significant responsibility on major matters demonstrating client service skills, supervisory and managerial skills, and technical legal skills?
- C. Has the candidate developed a personal brand internally and with their clients as a strong, substantive lawyer?
- D. Has the firm's General Counsel and/or Quality Assurance Committee confirmed that the candidate has not created (and is not expected to create) quality assurance risks for the firm?
- E. Has the candidate demonstrated a commitment to client service beyond delivering satisfactory work product?
Has the candidate embraced, or demonstrated a willingness to embrace, innovation in service delivery?

Partnership Expectations Covered: 1 and 2

2 | PERSONAL QUALITIES

- A. Is the candidate collaborative, inclusive, and cooperative with other attorneys and groups?
- B. Does the candidate have the integrity, ethics, and conduct we expect of DWT partners?
- C. Does the candidate act in the best interests of clients, the firm, and colleagues rather than the candidate's own interests?
- D. Is the candidate respectful in their interactions with others at the firm, both at the attorney and staff level?
- E. Has the candidate demonstrated a commitment to the firm's values and advancement of our lawyers, i.e., pro bono and community involvement; and offering opportunities for all attorneys, including those traditionally underrepresented in the legal community?

Partnership Expectations Covered: 2, 3, and 5

3 | BUSINESS OWNERSHIP AND FULL ENGAGEMENT

- A. Has the candidate developed a business plan that the candidate, the candidate's Practice Group Chair (PGC), the candidate's Partner-in-Charge (PIC), and any applicable Industry Group Leader (IGL) believe has strong, long-term prospects for success, and profitability?



- B. Has the candidate demonstrated full engagement by consistently meeting their economic and non-economic hours expectations, and substantially met the firm's time-entry and in-office attendance requirements?
- C. Has the candidate begun executing against that plan in a meaningful way?
- D. Has the candidate demonstrated in a sustained way the commitment and effort necessary to achieve long-term success and profitability as a business owner?
- E. Is the candidate engaged in their practice like a business owner, tending to all aspects of the business and serving the business, rather than like an employee, tending to a role or specific function within a business?
- F. Do the candidate's PGC believe that the candidate has a foreseeable path to equity partnership? (Note: If the candidate's PGC does not expect the candidate to satisfy the criteria for equity partnership within five years from the date of becoming a contract partner, consideration should be given to whether another status [e.g., counsel] is more appropriate.)

Partnership Expectations Covered: 4, 6, and 7

4 | SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION AND ABILITY TO DEVELOP A PRACTICE THAT BENEFITS THE FIRM

- A. Has the candidate consistently made a positive, economic contribution to the firm, taking into account the revenue generated and the resources needed to support the candidate's practice?
- B. Has the candidate consistently met their billable-hour expectations or comparable firm approved goals, and in particular, have they met their economic hours expectations? (Note: A candidate's billable-hour goal may be reduced from 1,850 hours as part of a firm-approved reduced hours schedule or as approved by the MP or their designee, i.e., CFO or EOP)
- C. Does the candidate meet at least one of the following criteria (with subpart 1 being the preferred method of meeting this requirement):
 - 1. The candidate has demonstrated qualities and skills that will allow the candidate to develop billable-client work that significantly enhances the practices of other attorneys (for instance, as evidenced by matter origination or through the effective management of, or critical participation in, significant client relationships).
 - 2. The candidate's individual practice is an *extraordinarily* profitable one and, in the opinion of the candidate's PGC is likely to maintain that attribute if the candidate were to become a partner. The candidate is critical to the success of other partners' practices or the firm's strategic initiatives.

Partnership Expectations Covered: 4 and 6

5 | DEMAND FOR SERVICES

Does the anticipated long-term demand for services from the candidate's practice group and IGL (if applicable) justify the addition of another partner? For these purposes, the practice group's plans with respect to its other members shall be considered.

Partnership Expectations Covered: None

Path to Partnership | Sample Meeting Agenda

OVERALL MEETING GOALS

- Listen to you
- Give you feedback and guidance
- Help you build a practice development plan that will advance your practice and contribute to the firm's success
- Make sure you have the tools you need to succeed
- Prepare you for the next path to partnership meeting

YOUR PRACTICE

- Open discussion about your current practice. What do you enjoy the most about your practice currently? What do you least enjoy?
- Which clients and partners do you get most of your work from?
- Are there attorneys or clients you don't currently work with that you would like to?
- Are there attorneys or clients you would like to do more work for?
- Are there additional areas of work you would like to explore or other skills you would like to develop?
- Are there attorneys with complementary practices you would like to collaborate with? In what ways?
- Review of practice statistics and trends (especially billable and non-billable hours, realization percentages)

PATH TO PARTNERSHIP

- Overview of the path to partnership
- Interest in partnership and timeline
- Discussion of current practice development relative to contract partner criteria
- Questions about partnership

NEXT STEPS

- What specific steps will you take between now and the end of the year to develop your practice further and move closer to partnership?
- How can we help achieve those goals? (Formal trainings, additional work experiences, additional client-facing activities, etc.)
- Has anyone served as your informal mentor to champion your future in the firm? If not, would you be interested in having a mentor? Who knows you and your practice well enough to fill this role?
- Written or updated Practice Development Plan



Giving Effective Feedback

TIME & PLACE

- Be conscious about giving feedback in a timely manner. The closer to the event you want to address, the more top of mind it will be for the individual.
- Give individual feedback privately in a safe place. No one wants public scrutiny.
- Limit your focus to a couple of issues. Any more than 3 and you risk the person feeling attacked and demoralized.

PREPARE YOUR MINDSET BEFORE GOING INTO FEEDBACK SESSIONS

- Recognize that when we receive criticism, our brains view it as a threat to our survival. We generally remember criticism strongly but often inaccurately. This is known as **negativity bias**. Our brains will process “bad stuff” more thoroughly than positive things. This means receiving criticism will always have a greater impact than receiving praise.
- Cultivate a growth mindset, which focuses on the individual’s own ability to change and grow. View feedback as an opportunity for your own improvement.

FOCUS ON ACTIONS OR BEHAVIOR, NOT THE INDIVIDUAL

- Be mindful of how you phrase feedback to your team. Phrasing feedback around actions or items frames it around areas they can control. Phrasing feedback around individuals makes people feel like you’re criticizing them as a person. Be sure to include actionable guidelines of how you’d prefer them to act moving forward.

Bad Example:

“Amy, you’re really bad with responding to stakeholders. You need to fix this and not let it happen again.”

Good Example:

“Amy, I noticed with this project that you were slow to respond to crucial stakeholders. Given that the project had so many key leaders involved, it’s important that we keep them abreast of our updates. For next time, please respond to them within 24 hours, even if it’s just a ‘I’m working on it and will give you an update tomorrow’. Acknowledging their emails is enough.”

i Johnson, W. Brad, and Charles R. Ridley. The Elements of Mentoring. St. Martin's Press, 2018

Specific

What do I want to do?

Measurable

How will I track my progress?

Attainable

Is this realistic for me? Do I have what I need to make it possible?

Relevant

Why am I doing this? Does it matter to me?

Time-oriented

When will I have this completed?



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