

## Senior Project Community Mentor Do's and Don'ts

### Selecting a Community Mentor

Choosing the proper mentor to work with you is critical to the success of your senior project. If you choose a mentor who doesn't have time to work with you, or one who has little knowledge of the area you have selected, you will have a difficult time acquiring the knowledge you need to complete a quality presentation. Some key questions to ask when selecting a mentor are:

- How many years have you worked in this field?
- What education do you have?
- Do you own your own business?
- What is your time availability to work with me?

### Community Mentor Do's

- Your mentor should have specific knowledge of your topic, and be willing to make time to work with you. You will be able to judge their interest in you and your project when you make contact with them.
- **Do not show up to the place of business unannounced.** Community mentors are very busy; they are usually involved in some sort of work, and you will need to work around **their** schedules. Most people work during the day, so make sure you call first and set up a time to meet with your community mentor. Do not call a business at night unless your community mentor has given you those instructions. Be respectful of their time, and show up when you say you will. Be sure to call as early as possible if you will be late or to reschedule. Do **not** reschedule for frivolous reasons (i.e. I had to go to the game!).
- If your potential community mentor is unable to work with you, ask them if they may know of someone else in their field who can help.
- Notify your teacher mentor of your potential contacts before you call so we can avoid duplication. This is done on your own time; do not ask to be let out of class for mentor contact. Follow the phone contact tips sheet.
- When you speak with your community mentor have a brief summary of your paper topic, and what you are hoping to achieve through the field experience.
- Log your time and activities with your community mentor. Do not wait until the last minute. You have 3 months until your project is due. You should target about five hours of project/mentor time per month.
- Provide your own transportation to meet with your community mentor.

- Be prepared. Think about the questions you want to ask. Bring paper and a writing instrument. Take notes. Remember to thank your community mentor for their time, every time!
- Work with your community mentor outside of school time.
- When you visit your community mentor, allow plenty of travel time, as well as time to park to get to the meeting on time.

### **Community Mentor Don'ts**

- No relatives -- the exercise is designed to help you meet and work with other people outside of your family.
- No school staff without prior approval, which will only be granted if no other options are available.
- No matter what your own personal feelings are about the required project do not complain to your community mentor about it.

### **Phone Script**

First phone call to a potential community mentor. "Remember that you do not get a second chance to make a first impression."

"Hello, may I speak to \_\_\_\_\_, please? \* Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am a senior at Lewiston High School. As a part of our graduation requirements, I am completing a senior project. I am doing my senior project on (briefly explain your project and what you want to accomplish), and I would like to ask you to be my community mentor.

I will spend a minimum of 15 hours on my project, and I will need your support to advise me and help me carry out my project. My final paper is due in April, so I have 3 months to complete my project. (This gives them time to plan out when it is best for them). I know you are busy, but I have free time on (this is where you talk about times you are available).

At this point, set up a time to meet. Write it down in your planner so you don't forget!

Write down the phone number, the address, and directions if you need them. Ask about how to dress at their business.

\* (No, would you like to leave a message?) You may ask "when is the best time to reach them?" and offer to call then OR say, I can be reached at (your number) at these times