

Wedu's Mentorship Program Mentor Guide

Do you see their potential?

#Wedu

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Introduction

Welcome!

Welcome to the Wedu Mentorship Program. Thank you for joining our community of like-minded leaders who see the potential in bright young women to influence change in their communities. We are very grateful to you for sharing your time and for helping Wedu achieve its goal of supporting female leaders.

Wedu's Mission

To unlock the leadership potential of women in Asia by providing inspiring mentorship and affordable financial support to complete higher education and become change makers in their communities.



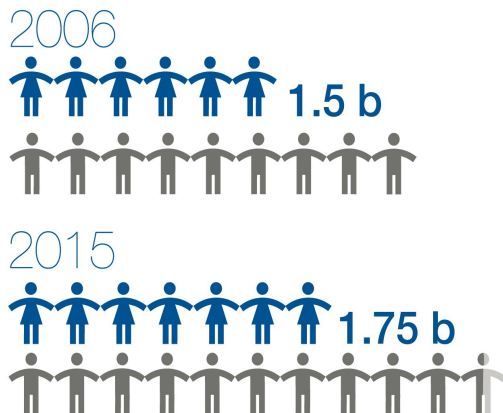
The Problem

In many developing countries, women make up an alarmingly low percentage of those in leadership positions. Despite research showing that equitable leadership is associated with more just societies and higher GDP, women continue to be under-represented. Women from low-income communities in particular are removed from the path to leadership from a young age as they face enormous difficulties in obtaining quality university education, guidance from role models and funding.

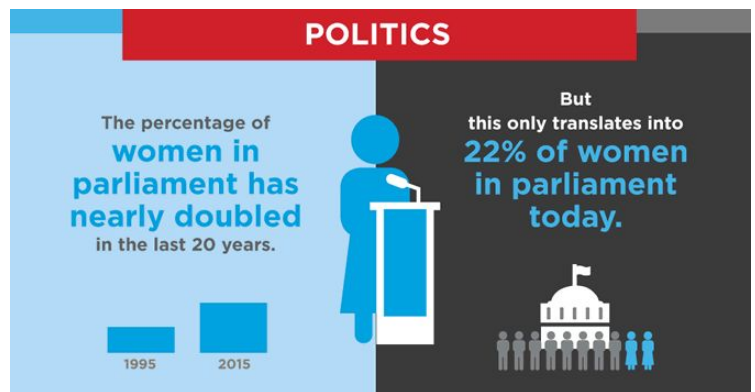
- Globally, women’s labor force participation rate decreased from 52.4% to 49.6% between 1995 and 2015.¹
- The 2016 *Fortune* 500 list includes just 21 companies (4.2%) with women at the helm—compared to 24 in 2015 and in 2014.²
- Only 22.8 per cent of all national parliamentarians in the world were women as of June 2016, a slow increase from 11.3 per cent in 1995.³
- Between 2008 and 2012, in Cambodia, while primary school participation of women was 83.4%, secondary school female participation dropped to 44.7%.⁴
- Only 24.2% of women aged 15 and over in Afghanistan are literate, according to CIA’s *The World Factbook* in 2015.⁵
- Our candidates report lack of support, funds, and information asymmetries as the main obstacles to achieving personal development and higher education

Women in the global labour force

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM



each figure represents a quarter billion

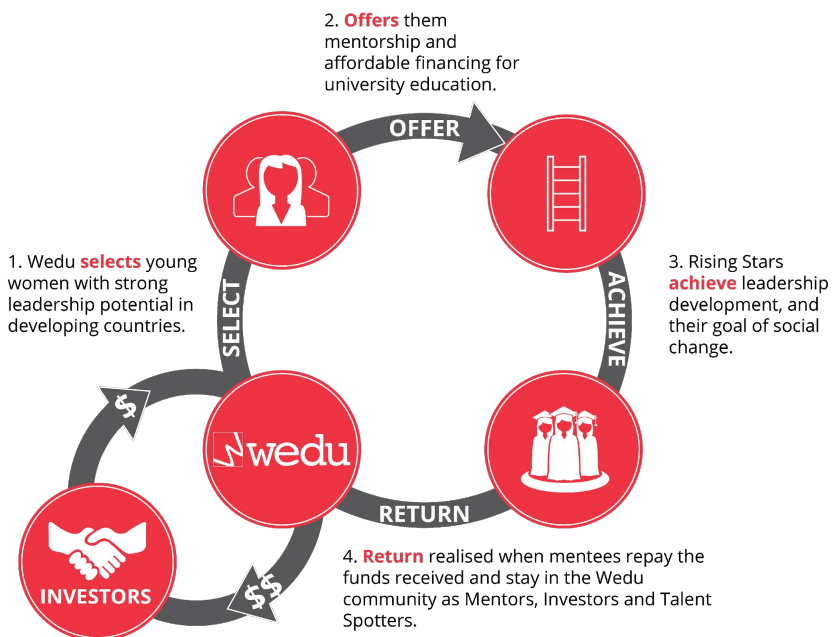


Source: The Global Gender Gap Report 2015

- 1) http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/statistical-overview-women-workforce#footnote38_tg8oygg
- 2) <http://fortune.com/2016/06/06/women-ceos-fortune-500-2016/>
- 3) <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures>
- 4) https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/cambodia_statistics.html
- 5) <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2103.html>

Our Solution

1. Lifelong mentorship by experienced individuals in many of our Rising Stars' field of interest focused on leadership development, confidence building, and networking. By creating a community of mentors, and monitoring mentee performance, we quickly re-match mentees as they develop and as their needs change, to ensure superior quality of service to mentees. Participants benefit from a combination of mentorship and formal training tailored to the specific phase of leadership development they are in.
2. Financial assistance for university fees in the form of scholarships, as well as Future Income Sharing Agreements (FISA) for those interested. We find that many of our Rising Stars are willing to consider loan options, but lack access to funding.
3. Advisory services on critical issues like funding for university and exam preparation.
4. Those studying abroad are incentivized to go back to their country within 5 years of graduation.



MENTORS & MENTORING



Mentors & Mentoring

A mentor is “a guide who can help the mentee find the right direction and who can help them to develop solutions.” –MentorSET

A Wedu Mentor is an experienced and inspiring individual who is passionate about the development of young bright women. A mentor does not give answers, but helps the mentee develop her own answers through a process of self-evaluation, discussion about goals, and providing knowledge/guidance on how the mentee can fulfill her aspirations.

The Wedu Mentor is not expected to have the answers to all of the Rising Star’s questions and problems. Mentors should work with their mentee to identify solutions and help them to reach their own decision.

Our mentors can always reach out to Wedu if any challenges arise, or they feel that they are unable to guide their mentee through certain situations.

A mentor embodies traits that are essential to a leader. Some of these qualities are:

- Guiding
- Empowering
- Setting vision
- Motivating
- Knowing when to step forward and when to step back
- Seeing the big picture
- Listening instead of being listened to



Your Role in the Program

The Mentorship Relationship is a long-term investment of a mentor in a mentee's well-being. Well-being is all encompassing and includes her leadership development, career development and personal goals. The mentor is a dedicated guide and confidante to the mentee.

A great mentor...

- is warm and caring
- is empathetic
- is welcoming and provides a safe space for people
- Can keep a confidence
- Helps mentees clarify a concern
- Allows the mentee to lead the discussion
- Asks open, feeling-level, and clarifying questions
- Uses the skills of summarizing and reflecting to show understanding
- Understands the importance of creating boundaries and setting limits

A great mentor does not...

- Talk mostly about self
- Encourage dependency
- Give solutions
- Jump to conclusions



Mentoring activities between mentors and mentees include;

- *Coordinating sessions*
- *Hearing a new perspective*
- *Storytelling*
- *Providing insights*
- *Challenging assumptions*
- *Comparing and contrasting experiences*
- *Exchanging ideas*
- *Organizing goals*
- *Sharing resources*
- *Listening*
- *Bonding*

Your Role in Practice;

- Commit a minimum of 1-2 hours every 2 weeks to speak with your mentee.
- Review the leadership development content provided and prepare to discuss it in one of the monthly sessions.
- You will receive conversation guides on the content.
- Identify the point where the relationship matures. It may transition into a more informal relationship – at this point you and your mentee may meet more often than required.

Mentor “Words” to live by:

Show Up - *If you agree to meet on a certain day and time, make sure to show up and don't cancel last minute or change the time. Building trust, especially in the beginning, is crucial.*

Be Open and Vulnerable – *Share your own weaknesses, fears and mistakes to set a tone of openness and to encourage your mentee to share hers.*

Listen Wholeheartedly – *Be an active listener; listen to what she is saying and what she might not be saying, and let her lead the conversation.*

Guide, Don't Decide – *You are not there to tell her what is best, only to guide her through her thinking and decision making as this is the way she will grow independently.*

What you gain as a mentor

Mentorship requires leadership skills. By mentoring others, you utilize several leadership dimensions that can help you grow personally and professionally.

Our mentors

83% feel inspired by their Rising Stars, improving their capacity for creative thinking and innovation

90% report improved listening and communication skills

86% described improved coaching skills

100% have access to a global network of like-minded professionals across diverse industries

Ethics, Empathy & Integrity

Mentors will

- Develop a stronger moral compass.
- Learn to act honestly and be consistent.
- Expand their appreciation for people of diverse backgrounds.
- Strengthen commitment to serve their community and take part in social change.

Communication & Influence

Mentors will

- Learn how to convey messages effectively, in an inspiring and passionate way.
- Listen attentively and remain attuned to people's needs
- Create a close, lifelong relationship with a mentee

Coaching & Mentoring

Mentors

- Identify and nurture the talent of the Rising Star, channeling it toward the highest social impact.
- Adapt leadership and coaching style to the different characters of the Rising Stars and become a selfless & trusted advisors.
- The satisfaction of guiding a young leader's professional and personal growth

Social Impact & Personal Effectiveness

Mentors will learn how to

- Support the Rising Star to stay focused on the long term social impact she aims to achieve and help her draw a plan to get there.
- Foster Rising Stars' career development by sharing relevant personal experiences and useful skills helping her getting things done.

From our mentors ...



*“What I didn't expect and what keeps me recommitting to being a mentor is the fact that I get to be an intimate part of the personal growth of a young woman from a very different culture, facing very different challenges - and yet, there are often so many things we have in common as well. **Being a mentor is both an empowering and humbling experience for me - keeping me grounded and keeping my own preconceived notions about how to create positive change for and by women all over the world in check.**”*

Daniëlle van de Kemenade,
Netherlands

LEADERSHIP MODEL



Wedu's Leadership Model

Wedu measures the initial leadership potential of a Rising Star candidate through our selection process where a selected group of Wedu staff and non-staff evaluates Rising Stars candidates on the 7 Leadership Dimensions.

Wedu conducted a detailed research to identify the most significant characteristics for a person to successfully grow into a leader. We based our research on sources such as the Harvard Business Review¹, Guru Maker - Executive Development Coaching Organization² and World Economic Forum³ which provided a basis for the Wedu's model of 7 Dimensions of Leadership. These seven dimensions encompass key traits of Wedu Rising Stars and act as a guide to help them develop and evaluate their leadership skills.

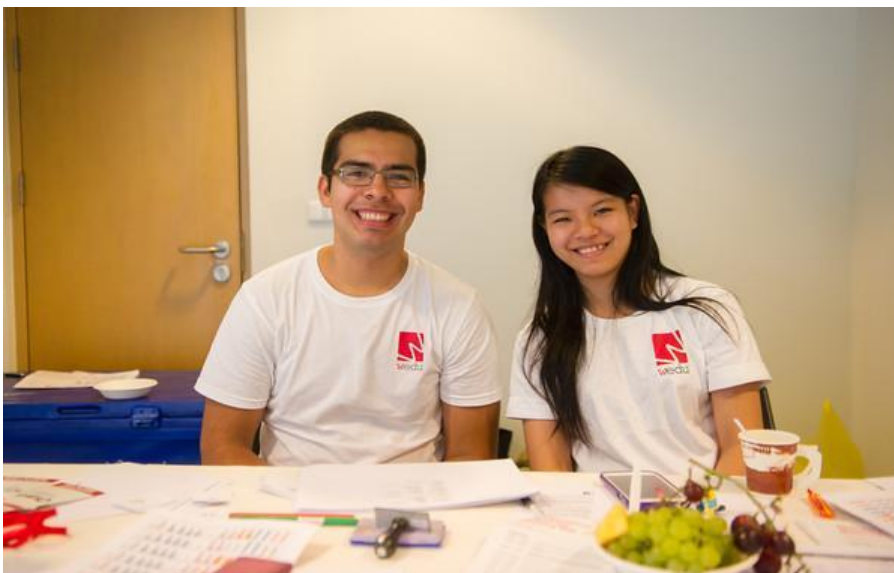
7 Dimensions of Leadership



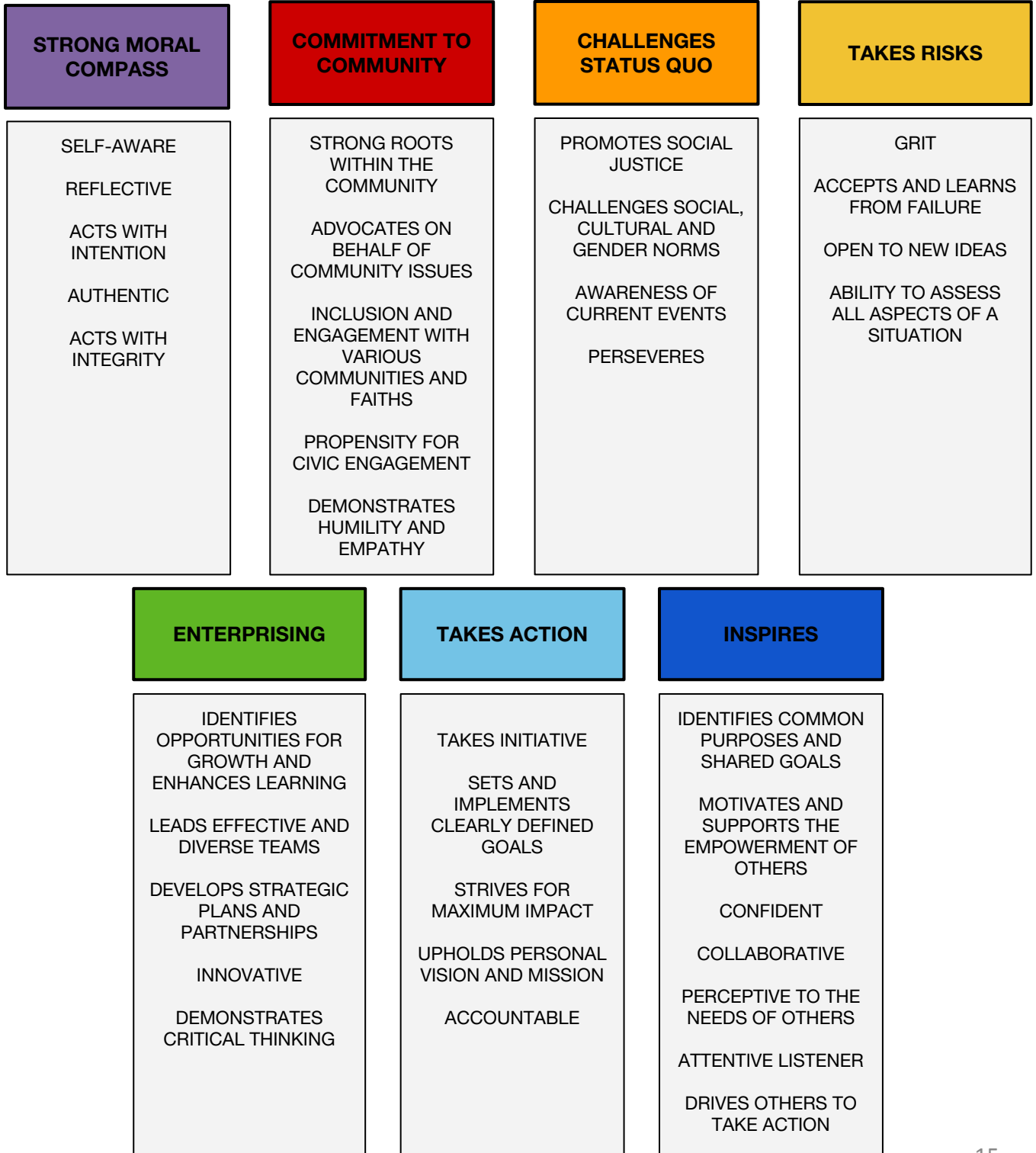
- 1) <https://hbr.org/2015/01/evaluate-your-leadership-development-program>
- 2) <http://gurumaker.com/services/leadership-development/>
- 3) <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/05/a-retired-navy-seal-commander-s-12-rules-for-being-an-effective-leader>

What do these 7 Dimensions mean?

- 1) **Demonstrates a strong moral compass:** strong desire and passion to make positive change
- 2) **Shows commitment to community:** show a strong passion to help their own community or country
- 3) **Cannot accept the status quo:** unable to accept the way things are in their community/country
- 4) **Is willing to take risks:** willing to think outside the box and take risks to accomplish their future goals
- 5) **Is searching for solutions and resources:** critically thought about solutions and resources that can assist them in accomplishing their goals
- 6) **Has a propensity towards action:** taken proactive action to eradicate the problems that they are most passionate about
- 7) **Inspires others to take action:** Motivates others to work towards positive social change. Strongly encourages others to become actively involved in their community.



Traits Link to Dimensions



Wedu's Leadership Model
(continued)

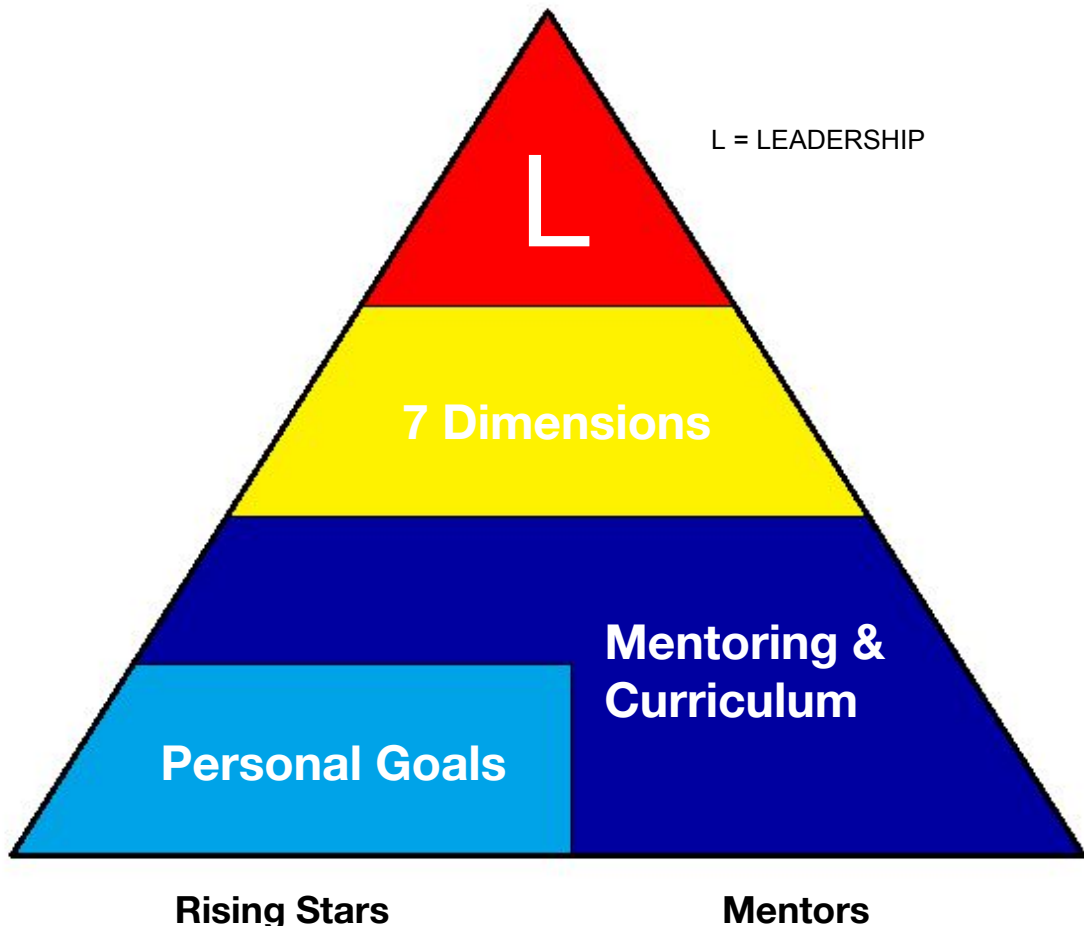


We identified **7 Dimensions of Leadership**, which we cultivate through a lifelong mentorship based on:

- A **leadership development curriculum** focused on **7 dimensions and traits** that goes into details of the dimensions.
- Achievement of **personal goals** of Rising Stars

With years of experience, endless commitment and inspiring successes to eradicating poverty Acumen has remained a proponent of leadership development. That is why Wedu has partnered with Acumen to develop a more effective curriculum.

Rising together through Wedu's Leadership Development model



MENTORSHIP GUIDELINES



Curriculum and Timeline of Mentor/Mentee Activities

Wedu's Leadership Development Program provides mentors and mentees with a curriculum to follow during the mentorship. This curriculum has been developed by professionals, where lessons are carefully selected and created to reflect the 7 Dimensions of Leadership and their respective traits.

Mentorship sessions should be held at least twice a month, with one being a leadership development session and another focusing on goals (see example below). More detailed information can be found in our Curriculum Guide

Timeline	Activities
1st Meeting	Introduction - Mentees will contact you and provide general introductions.
2nd Meeting	Goal Setting - Discuss with you their goals. Assist your mentee in defining their goals; break down what they need and map out step by step how they can achieve them. Instructions are in the Goal Setting section of the appendix in curriculum guide.
3rd Meeting	Leadership Lesson - You & your mentee will be given the first monthly Leadership Lesson. Discuss articles/videos that highlight a specific leadership theme or aspect; all material and thought provoking questions are provided to facilitate discussion.
4th Meeting	Goals: Revisit - Discuss her progress on her goals.
Ongoing	The 5th meeting will be back to your Leadership Lesson. Every meeting afterwards will alternate between monthly Leadership Lessons and revisiting Goals. Personal Relationship Building – This is done throughout the course of your mentoring relationship. Designate time to check-in with each other and discuss what ever topics arise.

- ❖ **Mentors and mentees are allowed to use the curriculum materials in other contexts, however we kindly ask you to reference Wedu when you do so.**

Your First Meeting

Your first meeting is where mentor and mentee get to know each other and structure and align their expectations. In this session, spend your time to fully understand the needs and the expectations of your mentee as well as share your own expectations for the next 8 months. (more information please see Curriculum Guide).

Mentees should be leading the conversation. Walk through the guidelines in the Curriculum Guide together, and remember, your first meeting may feel uncomfortable at times, but recognize that there is always discomfort in new relationships and like any require trust, respect and understanding.

Goal Setting

Goal setting helps the mentee to articulate and achieve their goals.

Instructions:

STEP 1: First, help your Rising Star create her long-term BIG personal and professional goals. What does she want to do with her life (or over, say, the next 10 years), and identify the large-scale goals that she wants to achieve.

STEP 2: Then, assist her to break these down into smaller targets and short term goals that act as a stepping stone to reach her long-term BIG goals.

STEP 3: Finally, help her establish “Next Steps” and a plan to achieving her goals. Once content with the Goals & Plan, she can begin acting on the steps to achieve her goals.

Reminders when Helping your Mentee Set Goals:

1. **Focus on Next Actions** – Help your mentee talk through what next action-oriented steps she can take towards her goals. They do not have to be big steps; and can be as simple as reading an article on a specific topic once a week. As her mentor it is not your responsibility to define the path for her, but to help her find it for herself.
2. **Be Specific and Purposeful** – When setting goals, make sure that they are clearly communicated and concise.
3. **Use Affirmative Language** – Set these goals using affirmatives. This will give the impression that the goals are truly attainable. Example: I have presented my idea to my professors and have received support from three of them.
4. **Set Realistic Milestones** – Once the next actions are identified, set a realistic timeline for them so that the actions are tied to a specific date, which keep your mentee accountable.
5. **Be Flexible** – Life is fluid and sometimes goals can change along with it, so be flexible and adaptable as situations allow.

Goal Setting (*continued*)

Goals must be SMART!

SMART goals are:

Specific **M**easurable **A**ction-Oriented **R**ealistic **T**ime-Based

Specific: Define what exactly they will be able to do. Specify how this will be accomplished.

Measurable: Establish criteria for how a goal is to be achieved. Measurable does not refer to a timeline; it means determining a way to measure the mentee's success in completing the long-range goal. Describe how they will know when the goal is achieved.

Action-oriented: Identify how to acquire the means to achieve the goals. Mentees should be proactive in taking action that will result in reaching the desired goal.

Realistic: Strive for attainable goals, considering the resources and constraints relative to the situation.

Time Based: Allow reasonable time to complete each goal, but not so much time the mentee loses focus or motivation.

Example Goals:

BIG GOAL:

Become a Social Entrepreneur to give my community alternative income options so they no longer will get into the drug trade.

Timeline: After becoming an expert in the field, in 10 years from the moment I obtain my Bachelors, I would like to create my own social enterprise.

SHORT-TERM GOALS:

1. Be able to read the newspaper with full comprehension and no dictionary so I can improve my English to be able to effectively communicate in school and broaden opportunities internationally.

Timeline: Read 1 newspaper back to front per week. I will circle every word I do not know and compile a list of words I do not know. I then will research the definition in the dictionary.

2. Successfully complete an internship with a social enterprise dealing with the same issue I wish to work on for at least 1 year.

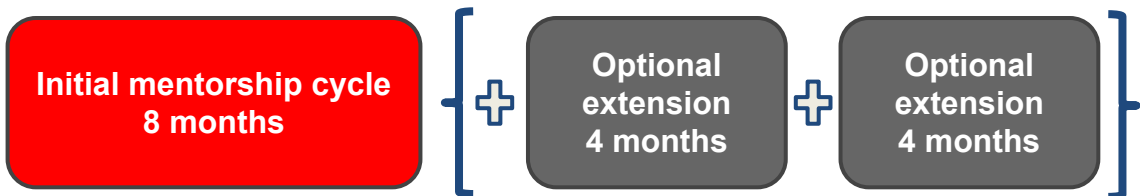
Timeline: Apply to 10 internships for month of May 2015 and begin an internship in June 2015.

3. Complete Bachelors degree with a GPA of 3.5 or higher to be competitive for Masters.

Timeline: Graduate BA degree with a 3.5 by 2016.

Mentorship Cycle

- Each pair is matched for an initial, standard eight months.
- Pairs may choose to be rematched after eight months, or to extend their relationship for another four to eight months.
- This allows for flexibility within the meaningful minimum and maximum relationship length we have found through research and our own data.



Leave of Absence

Wedu understands that our mentors might have other life engagements besides the mentorship program. Therefore, it is possible for our mentors to take a **Leave of Absence** for a period of time, and later re-engage in the program when they are ready again. Mentors would need to discuss their decision to take a Leave of Absence with his/her mentee, as well as to let Wedu know of their decision. The mentee will then have the chance to also take a Leave of Absence or be rematched with another mentor.

Reflection & Redefining your Mentoring Relationship

Reflection Conversations

Reflection conversations about your relationship with your mentee and her growth should be discussed every 6 months. Naturally, if you begin to notice shift and transition in your relationship, take note of it and go through these proceeding steps to identify if redefining your relationship is necessary. Please inform the Mentorship Coordinator/ Leadership Development Advisor if you both feel you need to be rematched or if you need support initiating this conversation with your mentee.

Determine if you both are ready to transition.

Look for signals:

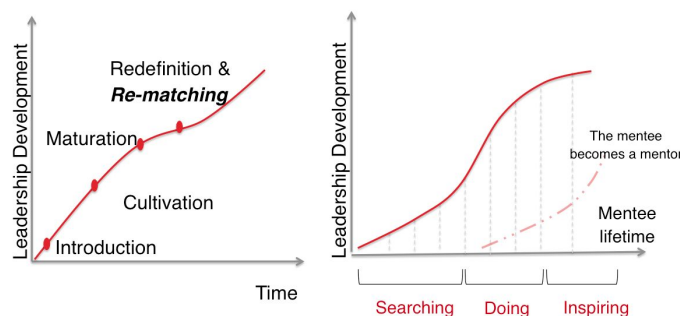
- Do you both know what to expect from each conversation? Are conversation topics dwindling?
- Has the learning for both slowed?
- Are there areas you are no longer able to advise her on? Do you feel she would benefit from another mentor with different skills than your own?
- Do you feel you both have learned all you can from one another? Is there more to learn?

Be aware if you recognize signs that the relationship may be transitioning. Check your perceptions and assumptions when the first indicators appear. What you think you see may be a reflection of your own anxiety, fear, or hope.

Rematching

Rising Stars are provided lifelong development and mentorship. As the mentee progresses and identifies new mentoring needs and goals, this will require you both to reflect & redefine your mentoring relationship. Once you have been matched for 8 months, there is an option for your mentee to be rematched with the guidance of someone new. In turn, you would also be rematched and providing your skills to another deserving woman. This rematch does not mean the relationship is ending, it is just re-defined.

Lifelong development



Each mentoring cycle → Lifelong development

Take the opportunity to understand her needs and intentions.

Reflection & Redefining your Mentoring Relationship (continued)

Redefine her Goals:

- With the momentous mark in your mentoring relationship with your Rising Star, this calls for re-evaluating her Goals. Some questions to think about:
- What Goals has she achieved? CELEBRATE IT! Let the Wedu Family know and we would love to congratulate her!
- What barriers are in the way of achieving her goals?
- Does she struggle with the execution of her goal? Why? What can she do to continue her achievements or overcome barriers?
- Does her Goals make sense for her BIG vision goal? Is there anything missing?
- What can she do to rejuvenate her original Goals and rekindle the passion of the past?
 - If she has achieved her goal too easily, suggest she make her next goal harder.
 - If the goal took a dispiriting length of time to achieve, suggest she make the next goal a little easier.
 - If she or you learned something that would lead her to change other goals, suggest her to do so.
 - If you noticed a deficit in her skills despite achieving the goal, decide whether to set goals to fix this.

Mentoring Relationship Reflection:

Instructions: Each mentoring partner answers the questions below independently and then discuss individual responses. Afterwards, each time a mentorship reflection is completed, it is saved and used as a starting point for the next reflection conversation as follow up.

Meetings:

- When and under what circumstances did we speak?
- Generally when we got together, what did we talk about? (List subjects or topics)
- What objectives are we working on right now? What is our progress to date in achieving these objectives?

Relationship:

- What is going particularly well in our mentoring relationship right now?
- What has been our greatest challenge in our mentoring relationship so far?
- What do we need to work at to improve our mentoring relationship?
- What assistance could we use?

Learning:

- What are we learning about ourselves? Each other? The relationship?
- What is being learned? What are some of the conditions to promote learning?

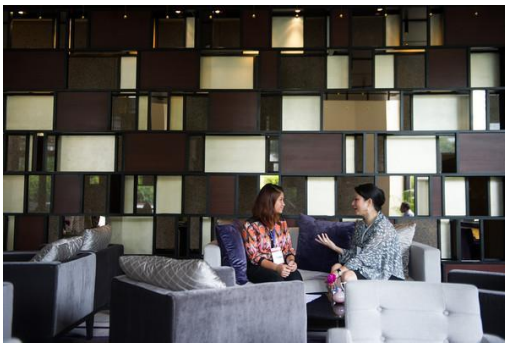
Mentorship Guidelines

Ethics

Confidentiality

Mentees may be unsure whether the information they disclose to their mentors will be passed on to others. Early in the relationship, mentors must provide reassurance that:

- Nothing that the mentee tells the mentor will be discussed with anyone else except the Leadership Development Team.
- If the mentor feels it is important to involve an individual other than the Leadership Development Team, it will be discussed first with the mentee.
- If there is the threat of physical harm to the mentee or others (this includes the threat of suicide), the mentor must break confidentiality and contact Wedu staff.



Creating a Positive Environment

Provide a safe space for your mentee to share – It can be difficult for a young woman to share her experiences or insecurities, especially with someone she doesn't know yet, or when the experience may be painful or scary for her to share. Acknowledge at the beginning that this is a safe and private space to share, and that you will be sharing your own fears and vulnerabilities as well.

“Check In” – This happens at the beginning of each meeting. A check-in has both the mentor and the mentee state their ‘presence’ level and share anything that might be bothering them so that everyone starts on the same page. Before diving into a discussion, share from 0-100% how engaged you feel and share what might be causing any low energy – such as a bad day at work has got you down.

Allow your mentee to come up with her own answer – Your goal is to help your mentee find her own voice within your discussion. You do not need to feel like you need to provide solutions. Encourage her thought process and guide her with support. The key is not to pass judgment or impose your own opinions, but to keep the conversation open.

Mentor Guidelines (*continued*)

Ethics & Professionalism

We trust in our mentors to converse with mentees about their lives and often times personal experiences. We want to be certain that our mentors are committed to their role as a mentor. This entails being able to appropriately advise the young women and have the mentees' best interest at heart for their overall well-being and success.

By being a Mentor you commit to:

- Respond to the mentee's learning and development needs as defined by the agenda brought to the mentoring relationship.
- Not exploit the mentee in any manner, including, but not limited to, financial, sexual or those matters within the professional relationship. The mentor will ensure that the duration of the mentoring session is only as long as is necessary for the mentee and Wedu.
- Understand that professional responsibilities continue beyond the termination of any mentoring relationship. These include the following:
 - Maintenance of agreed confidentiality of all information relating to mentees and sponsors
 - Avoidance of any exploitation of the former relationship
 - Provision of any follow-up which has been agreed to
 - Safe and secure maintenance of all related records and data
- Demonstrate respect for the variety of different approaches to mentoring and other individuals in the profession.
- Never represent the work and views of others as their own.

Privacy

Neither mentor nor mentee has to share their phone number, address or any other personal information with the other. Though these information can be shared based on mutual trust, there is no obligation to do so. Both sides should respect each other's privacy if a mentor or mentee does not wish to share such information.

Harassment

Wedu does not tolerate any form of harassment. Harassment is any offensive behavior intended to disturb or upset an individual. Variations of harassment include: psychological, racial, religious, and sexual. Forms of harassing language, action or advances is never condoned or permitted. If any of the above circumstances occur, Wedu will immediately remove the offending participant permanently from the program and/or take additional actions as appropriate.

Mentor Guidelines (*continued*)

Cultural Competence ¹

Cultural Competence: A set of behaviors, attitudes, and practices that come together in relationships (interpersonal and professional) that empowers the individuals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

As a Wedu mentor, you have committed to invest your time and skills in young woman whose background and lifestyle may be very different from your own. Wedu expects you to understand that being open to diverse perspectives, values and experiences, which includes learning as much as possible about another culture, is necessary for having an engaging and effective mentoring relationship. An important exercise in preparing yourself to be a mentor is to examine your thoughts and beliefs about your own and other cultures.

You'll also find Country Briefs files under Program Materials for Mentors on our website.

Components of Cultural Competence

1. Learn about culture and important cultural components

Acknowledge cultural differences. Labels and stereotypes are unavoidable. Be aware of them and the way they influence us, especially in mentoring. There is never a superior or inferior set of values or way of thinking.

Components of Culture

Language & Communication Style

Family Relationships

Gender/Sexual Identity

Sexual Orientation/Sensuality/Sexualization

Race & Ethnicity

Religion & Spirituality

Class & Socio-Economic Status

Health Beliefs

Levels of Acculturation

Immigration Status

Perception of Political Power

Impact of Racism and History of Oppression



1. Armstrong, C. D. (n.d.). Cultural competence: Cross cultural mentoring [Online PDF]. Retrieved from <http://www.ktownyen.org/>

Mentor Guidelines (*continued*)

Cultural Competence¹

2. Understand your own culture & engage in self-assessment - Learn about your own culture through a process of self-assessment that includes examining your own culture's assumptions and values, and your perspectives on them.



A Thought Exercise on Privilege

- What are your values? What are institutional values?
- How are the “norms” decided upon in our institutions?
- Which groups have those rules favored?
- What groups or cultures play may have a different set of “norms”?
- How have groups been affected historically, socially, and economically by marginalization?
- In what ways, through which processes, have the “Norms” changed historically?

3. Acquire cultural knowledge & skills - Learn as much as possible about important aspects of your mentee's cultural backgrounds. It is your responsibility to educate yourself on her cultural and historical background. Don't be afraid to ask questions and actively listen.

4. View behavior of yourself & others within a cultural context

5. Be humble - You don't know, nor will you ever know, everything about your mentee's life. Don't over-identify with her. Your mentee realizes that you will never know exactly what she is feeling or experiencing, and may actually feel invalidated by your insistence that you truly know where she is coming from. Mentoring is never about “fixing” or “saving” your mentee. Your primary responsibility as a mentor is to honor her inherent worth and respect her cultural background and lived experience.

1. Armstrong, C. D. (n.d.). Cultural competence: Cross cultural mentoring [Online PDF]. Retrieved from <http://www.ktownnyen.org/>

Historic & Current Events

Our mentees come from vast areas of Asia where there are long-standing histories that resonate and influence the way societies function in those countries today. It is important to remain knowledgeable of the cultural and historical background of your mentees' home location and current location (where they may be working/studying). It is equally important to keep up to date with the current events that apply to the lives of your mentees.

Political instability and upheaval are something to be aware of and taken seriously. Some of our mentees have expressed their concern for their personal safety as they have been in the midst of political conflict.



What to do?

In situations like this, it is never your responsibility, nor are you expected to find complete resolution for your mentee. Wedu cannot provide official security advice, as we are not experts on the situation. As a staff and community, the advice we have informally provided is to have Rising Stars remain updated on the current situation.

A mentees' safety is a primary concern and if it is being threatened, it is important for mentees to take necessary precautions to make sure they are unharmed. Wedu and mentors can be of emotional support, general guidance and resource, but we are not experts. If situation arises where your mentees' livelihood is in danger, please let the Wedu staff know so we can assist in providing the best appropriate resource for her.

Discussing Sensitive Topics

Sensitive Topics

Sensitive topics should be discussed only when initiated by the mentee. Remember to never force mentees to talk about difficult topics, but be available to listen and support if they open the discussion in their own time and at their own level. These topics can be delicate and strongly affect the relationship. Confidentiality takes on greater significance with these topics. Although mentors should be adequately trained to deal with these issues on their own, they are encouraged to seek support and feedback from the Mentorship Coordinator when their mentee has brought issues such as these to their attention.

Trauma

It is important to view trauma not as a diagnosis, but as a life-changing event. Recovering from a traumatic event takes time, and everyone heals at their own pace.

It is important to be there for your mentee; offer support by listening to your mentee and let them talk about their experiences at their own pace. Often, friends and family of the person who has suffered from a traumatic event will feel a need to "problem solve" or offer advice. However, having company and support are usually more valuable.

Examples of sensitive topics:

- Sex
- Peer pressure
- Hygiene
- Behavior
- School performance
- Self-image/personal insecurities
- Identity issues: class, cultural and sexual
- Religion
- Politics



Discussing Sensitive Topics (*continued*)

Know your limits of your ability to help

Please know your limits of your ability to help. Mentors may want to provide additional support to their mentee. Some may be anguished, and feel that they need to “fix” problems of their mentee. Understand that you are one of many individuals supporting the young person at this time. You cannot help the mentee if they take on too much of a burden, no matter how well intentioned.

Remember to take care of yourself. You may find that you are experiencing some grief as well. Pay attention to your feelings and take care of yourself. Talk to program staff if you begin to feel overwhelmed.

Issues of Concern

Issues of concern are those that may have lifelong implications for the mentee. Determine if your mentee is in harm or danger, if so, *the mentor needs to report them to a Wedu staff member.* These issues do not necessarily require direct intervention as these issues may be part of ongoing situations and conditions that mentees face. Mentors need to be informed and supported to understand and accept these aspects of the mentees’ lives without judgment. Mentors should not focus too much on changing the mentees’ behavior when issues such as these arise. Nevertheless, by staying aware of the challenges their mentees must face, they may be able to help mentees ameliorate these problems over time.

Crisis Requiring Intervention

Crises involve issues of grave concern that generally require direct and immediate intervention. Determine if your mentee is in harm or danger, if so, *the mentor needs to report them to a Wedu staff member.* Some of these issues may require a referral of a direct intervention by the mentor program. In addition, many of these issues require collaboration with families of mentees, and the Mentorship Coordinator should handle this.

MENTORS SHOULD NEVER BE EXPECTED TO HANDLE ISSUES SUCH AS THESE ALONE.



Discussing Sensitive Topics (*continued*)

Tools for Discussing Sensitive Topics

Put the mentee at ease

- Let mentee know that you are glad she came to you.
- Reassure mentee that her confidentiality will be honored.
- Use tact, but be honest.
- Allow mentee to talk at her own pace—don't force an issue.
- Do not pry or ask leading questions—allow mentee to bring up topics she is comfortable with.
- Instead, engage in open questions to get to the root of a problem.
- Avoid judgmental statements such as, “Why would you do something like that?” or “I think you know better.”
- Be honest if you are getting emotional or upset.
- Do not provide discipline.

Honor the mentee's right to self-determination

- Focus on the mentee's feelings and needs rather than jumping to problem solving.
- When issue has been talked about, ask, “What do you think you would like to do about this situation?” “How would you like me to help?”
- If you are not comfortable with what the mentee wants to do, ask yourself why before you decide whether to say so.
- If what the mentee wants to do is not possible, explain so gently and apologize.
- Ask what alternative solutions would make the mentee comfortable.
- Encourage critical thinking through questions and reflections.
- Use the words, “I don't know...what do you think?”

Develop a resolution and offer resources

- Know your appropriate role as a mentor.
- Be honest with mentee if confidentiality does not hold.
- Suggest that your Mentorship Coordinator may have some thoughts if you don't know what to do.
- Ask mentee if she would like to talk to the agency with you if necessary.
- Provide information if mentee is unaware of resources or options.
- Brainstorm with mentee and be creative in finding a solution—there is usually more than one way to handle a situation and this process is educational for the mentee.
- Offer to accompany mentee if she is uncomfortable with something she has decided to do.
- *Follow through with any and all commitments.*

Mentor Support

Wedu's Leadership Development Team will support your mentoring efforts in a variety of ways throughout the tenure of your relationship with your mentee.

Wedu's Role in the Program

- Facilitate the introductions between mentors and mentees
- Provide leadership curriculum with conversation guides
- Step-in to mediate conflict, and re-match pairs if necessary

The Leadership Development Team strives to assist you with any problem you may be having. In order to do that, every mentor and mentee receive a survey every 3-4 months from the Leadership Development Team to better understand the progress of both your growth. Moreover, mentorship Coordinators and Leadership Development Advisors are available for check-in calls every 2 months with mentors and mentees to solve any issues that may have come up during the mentorship program.

If you would like to reach out to us with any questions, challenges or feedback, Wedu's Leadership Development Team is always available via mentorship@weduglobal.org.

Wedu highly encourages exchanging contact information with other mentors so that contact can be made for purposes of support, sharing, and organizing group activities - join the [Facebook group for Wedu Mentors](#).



FAQs and Answers

What is the Wedu Mentorship Program?

At Wedu we know that a small investment in a young woman can mean big things for her future and her future community. Through our mentorship program our mentors invest their time to contribute to the development of talented and inspiring young leaders to guide them on their journeys.

What is the role of a mentor?

The mentor-mentee relationship is a commitment made by a mentor to support the mentee's personal, career, and professional development. This includes the Rising Stars' leadership development, career development, and personal goals. As a mentor, you will act as a dedicated guide and confidante to the mentee.

What is the time commitment?

Commit a minimum of 3 to 6 hours every month to speak with his/her Rising Star twice a month.

When do I speak with my mentee? How do we schedule our mentoring sessions?

We ask that you meet with your mentee twice per month for at least 1 - 2 hours per session via phone call or Skype. It is understandable that both mentors and mentees have demanding work or study schedules, however, mentees & mentors are accountable for setting meeting dates and times. We suggest you set the first two months of meeting dates at the start, and continue to plan one month ahead.

What do we talk about?

You are required to do at least 2 sessions per month, one of them should be a Wedu Leadership Lesson and one of them should be a Goal Setting session. We also encourage mentors and mentees to discuss topics beyond Leadership Lessons and Goals.

Can we meet more than twice as month?

Yes, of course! Feel free to schedule more sessions with your mentee as you both see fit.

Can we do our sessions over email?

It is important for the leadership development of mentees that mentors actually speak with them over Skype to facilitate discussion, learning, and trust. Participants will enjoy the program more and build stronger relationships by actually speaking to each other regularly.

How does the mentorship program work?

1. **Relationship Building:** Develop personable relationships by designated time to check-in with each other and have casual conversations about whatever comes to mind on that day.
2. **Goal Setting:** Help mentees define their goals, deconstruct them into a step-by-step action plan and monitor progress towards achieving these goals.
3. **Monthly Leadership Lessons:** Discuss articles/videos that highlight a specific leadership theme or aspect; all materials and through provoking questions are provided to facilitate discussion.

FAQs and Answers (*continued*)

What if we just don't get along at the first meeting?

Ensure you work on this at the next meeting. What could you be doing differently as a mentor that would help your relationship? What are the areas that you seem to be disagreeing on and why? What can you both change to try and accommodate each other?

What if we have tried to tackle our differences but we still can't seem to get on?

Talk to the Mentorship Coordinator and explain the issues. Although we encourage mentors and mentees to work out problems before any escalation, we understand that there will be matches that are not as successful. The final result may be that you will be able to swap and/or suggest a better match for your mentee.

What if we are doing a lot of talking but not many actions are getting done?

You need to take a more forthright approach and discuss what you see, share your concerns and encourage the mentee to share their views. Mentoring is not just about meeting when you say you will and checking off tasks.

Can we meet with our mentee in person?

The safety of our Rising Stars is our first priority. We ask that mentors inform Wedu before arranging to meet with their mentees or any other Rising Star. It is our policy that meetings with mentees and Rising Stars occur within working hours (9am to 5pm).

Some things are being discussed, that are out of my comfort zone.

Refer to "Discussing Sensitive Topics". If discussions have continuously been cumbersome, please reach out to the Mentorship Coordinator. Mentors should never be expected to handle these issues alone. Remember to also re-explain your role to your mentee and what other help is out there. EX: Counseling, etc, if needed.

The mentee is looking for answers and I don't have them

You are not expected to know all of the answers, or give your mentees all of the answers. Your role is to ask them questions so that they can come up with their own options, choices and solutions.

This is having a significant impact on my time, is there any financial compensation for me doing this?

No. We ask for our mentors' commitment to the mentorship program to provide a vital source of support for a young woman's development, who may have not otherwise have had access to this opportunity. We know that you will benefit personally, through the satisfaction in having contributed to their development and seeing them grow.

Any other questions, please speak to the Leadership Development Team.

We Care About Your Opinion

Wedu is an evolving program, and we want to ensure an effective and positive relationship and experience with your mentee and our program. We are accepting suggestions and asking you to complete a survey through your course with our program to offer the best possible service.

Please do not hesitate to reach out via email, and we will attend to you as soon as possible.

Contact:

mentorship@weduglobal.org

*Thank you for all your
hard work and dedication!
You are playing a
remarkable role in the life
of a young leader.*



Tricia, Wedu Mentor
Acumen Global Fellow & Health
Consultant