

Dane County Bar Association Mentorship Program

This list of possible activities and discussion topics is not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, it is merely intended to jump start your creative energies and give you some initial ideas for possible activities and discussion topics. Each mentorship pair will design their own set of activities and topics to be discussed. The program is not meant to be a burden on either the mentor or the mentee. That being said, the single most important element of any mentorship relationship is commitment to getting together on a monthly basis. Without regular contact the year-long relationship will come and go with little being accomplished.

Things to Do with Mentor/Mentee:

1. Meet for coffee/lunch/drinks.
2. Attend deposition/hearing/closing.
3. Go for walk/jog/some similar outdoor activity.
4. Attend bar association events together.
5. Meet at mentor's/mentee's office.
6. Pre-planned telephone conference.
7. Litigation skills practice: opening and closing arguments; preparation of witness for deposition; practice direct and cross examination; how to deal with opposing counsel; discuss motion practice; etc.

Discussion Topics

1. Balancing work and personal lives.
2. Ethics, civility, and modern day practice of law.
3. Latest Wisconsin and U.S. Appellate/Supreme Court cases of interest.
4. What practicing law was like when mentor began her/his practice.
5. Mentee to explain what practicing is like currently.
6. Legal writing tips.
7. Strategies to impress employer.
8. Politics of the workplace.
9. How to effectively deal with difficult opposing counsel.
10. Starting a law practice.
11. The strengths and pitfalls of the billable hour and flat fee cases.
12. Law as a business.
13. Discuss personal/professional issues.
14. Relationship with support staff.
15. Deadlines and procrastination.
16. Collections.
17. How to best address politics in the office.
18. Mentor's best rules of practice.
19. Respect for the rule of law.
20. Judicial elections/state of judiciary in Wisconsin and beyond.