

Understanding mentor motivations to effectively target your recruitment message

Understanding mentor motivations is another way to segment your potential pool of applicants and target each of them effectively. We will identify some motivations that currently drive potential mentors to join a mentoring program, provide sample messaging for these motivations, and address any potential pitfalls that may exist. This and more is covered in greater depth in the iMentor Academy Course: Communicating with Potential Mentors (#linkneeded).

Looking for more examples to segment your recruitment pool? Check out [Segmenting your mentors and targeting your message](http://partners.imentor.org/help/segmenting-your-mentors-and-targeting-your-message) (<http://partners.imentor.org/help/segmenting-your-mentors-and-targeting-your-message>) .

Values

Definition: To express humanitarian and pro-social values through action

Tailored Messaging:

- “Young people need your support.”
- “Mentor a child: It’s the right thing to do.”
- “Make the world a better place one kid at a time.”
- Share a lot of information about the progress of their mentees and highlight long-term impacts of the program.

Career

Definition: To explore career options and increase the likelihood that a particular career path can be pursued

Tailored Messaging:

- “Mentoring a child opens a world of possibilities, for both of you.”
- “Mentoring: creating skilled communicators for over a decade.”
- Providing group activities, networking time or ongoing mentor trainings can be a great way to get mentors talking to each other and provide opportunities to practice skills applicable in the workplace (i.e. problem solving, communication).

Understanding

Definition: To gain greater understanding of the world, the diverse people in it and oneself

Tailored Messaging:

- “Life happens when you connect with others.”
- “There’s a generation gap. Close it by mentoring a student.”
- Ongoing training, discussions, or reflection activities provide mentors with the opportunity to discuss how the mentoring experience has helped them grow and how they can apply their knowledge.

Protective

Definition: To distract oneself from personal problems or to work through problems in the context of service

Tailored Messaging:

- Don’t let a young person make the same mistakes you did. Share what you know.”
- “Did you need someone to care about you when you were that age?”
- Share your observations about the mentor’s own growth if appropriate. Let them know that your program is part of their system of support, too.

Potential Pitfall: Mentors should be participating in the program to support a young person, not to work through their own issues. It’s great if mentors have been able to overcome challenges and share their insights but you’ll want to be careful when screening to ensure that mentors have moved past any issues and are ready to focus on what’s in the best interest of the student.

Social

Definition: To satisfy the expectations of friends and close others

Tailored Messaging:

- “Women dig men who mentor.”
- These volunteers are likely to find value in recognition targeted at specific people.
Ex: Recognizing corporate mentors in their company’s newsletter or info session; involving their friends and family with an opportunity like a mentor/mentee picnic.

Potential Pitfall: There’s nothing wrong with mentors who want to be acknowledged for their efforts but you’ll want to look out for mentors who are solely motivated by the desire for recognition or personal advancement. One of the most successful recruitment strategies we’ve seen is when a more senior member of an organization endorses iMentor. This usually piques the interest of his or her team or direct reports and encourages them to participate in the program. However, we have screened out mentors who indicated they were only participating to make a good impression or to be noticed by their supervisor.