



# The inspirer



**MENTORSHIP**

4<sup>th</sup> Edition

November 2023



# The Inspirer

## MENTORSHIP

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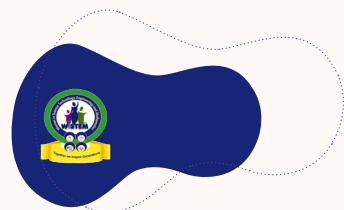
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# EXECUTIVE WELCOME MESSAGE

*Dear WiSTEM Community, Friends and Readers,*

We are delighted to welcome you to yet another special volume of The Inspirer, dedicated to the powerful theme of Mentorship. At WiSTEM, we have always believed in the profound impact of mentorship in the lives of students, faculty, the entire academic community, corporates, and industry, as well as aspiring and accomplished women in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

Mentorship is not merely a relationship; it is a journey of growth, inspiration, and transformation. It is a "two-way street." Throughout our lives, we meet exemplary individuals who become guiding lights, offering us insights, knowledge, and wisdom. At the same time, many of us find immense fulfillment in paying it forward, by mentoring the next generation of women in STEM and future leaders. This edition of The Inspirer highlights the importance of these connections, as we dialogue with remarkable women who mentor and who have been or are being mentored.

In the following pages, you will find some enlightening stories, experiences, and insights from individuals who have dedicated their time, effort, and expertise to mentorship. These conversations highlight the power of nurturing talent while fostering personal and professional growth. They are a reminder

that, while the journey to success can be challenging, mentorship can be catalyst in helping women achieve their dream and fullest potential.

Mentorship is a circle of empowerment. As we learn from those who came before us and impart our knowledge to those who follow, we create a legacy of women supporting women. It is a journey that connects us across generations and inspires us to reach new heights.

We encourage you to read, reflect, and draw inspiration from the experiences shared in this edition. It is our hope that you can garner lessons from the conversations and apply them to your own mentorship journey. Whether you are a WiSTEM member or an ally, STEM enthusiast, a seasoned mentor, mentee, or a believer in the power of mentoring women, we hope these documented experiences can spark new ideas, connections, and new projects.

Thank you for joining us on this journey of mentorship and growth. Together, we can continue to unleash the power of mentorship, prepare the next generation, and shape a brighter future for women and girls in STEM in Ghana and beyond.

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***Prof. (Mrs.) Ibok Nsa Oduro***

***Prof. (Mrs.) Ainuke Olusola Adebajji***

***Dr. (Mrs.) Mercy Badu***

***Dr. (Mrs.) Augustina Angelina Sylverken***



# EDITORIAL

## BY PROF. MARIAN ASANTEWAH NKANSAH

Since the United Nations declaration on Gender Equality as part of international human rights law, followed by its adoption by the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948, issues of women have received marginal attention over the years.

Some gains have been made due to the few women who were able to defy stereotypes and break the glass ceiling in order to excel in male dominated fields and, generally, in the public space.

The past two decades have seen a leap in the participation of women in all spheres of life. When young girls see people like themselves doing great things, they are encouraged to do same.

This edition of the INSPIRER is focused on MENTORSHIP. Stories of women who have been mentored and have also mentored others in some instances are shared with readers.

There are eight compilations with a good mix of women at varied levels in their careers and coming from the private and public sectors as well as, academic and corporate sectors, in the Ghanaian Community.

There is something new to learn irrespective of where you are in your professional journey.



The editorial team has been inspired by these profound stories and wish that readers will find the stories inspiring as well. Enjoy!!

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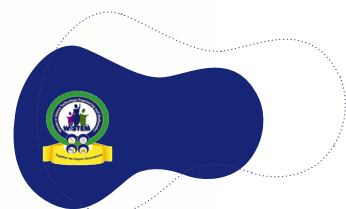
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# LAWYER MARIAM AGYEMAN GYASI JAWHARY

MANAGING PARTNER OF  
MESSRS TOTOE LEGAL SERVICE

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## Please tell us about yourself

I am Mariam Agyeman Gyasi Jawhary. I am the Managing Partner of MESSRS TOTOE LEGAL SERVICE, a Kumasi-based law firm. I have served in this position since September 2007.

My practice areas are typically Land/Immovable property, Family Law/Estate and Civil Litigation. My firm also handles commercial, tax and criminal matters as well. I was called to the Ghana Bar on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1991, and have been in private legal practice since then to date. I also on a purely volunteer-basis served as the first Administrator for the FIDA-GHANA (FEDERACION INTERNACIONALE DE ABOGADAS-INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS) Kumasi Legal Aid Centre from 1997 to 2003.

I held this position alongside private legal practice. I also taught on a part-time basis at the Ghana School of Law-Kumasi campus from

2010 till 2021 when on account of changed personal circumstances and increased parental demands, I resigned. I have served in various positions with the Ghana Bar Association both at the regional and national level. I have also served on a couple of boards of public/constitutional bodies.

## What is your understanding of mentee and mentor?

In my considered opinion, the mentor-mentee relationship is one in which the mentor guides the mentee to achieve personal and professional objectives. The mentor provides constructive feedback and the mentee actively listens so they could learn at the highest capacity. The mentor must be a skilled teacher and should serve as a positive role model. The mentee approaches the mentor on the basis of specific skill sets. The mentor serves as a role model, teacher, counselor, advocate and ally. It is a transference of knowledge from the mentor to the mentee. It is vital that the mentor familiarizes themselves with the mentee's learning style and be adept at creating learning opportunities that correspond to the latter's learning style.

## Have you been mentored before or have you been a mentor before?

I have had the opportunity of mentoring a number of people but I always go back to the



very first. It was quite a satisfying experience. It involved a young lady who had abysmally failed her GCE 'O' Levels and had settled into an office assistant employment. Through my engagement with her, I found her to be quite efficient in the performance of her duties. She also demonstrated an ability to take initiative. However, she appeared to have given up on further pursuit of education. I encouraged her to retake the 'O' Level exams. She did so and passed well. I spurred her on to study for the 'A' Level which she did and also passed well at her first attempt. She went to pursue a degree in Publishing Studies at KNUST. She eventually got employed with one of the well-established banks in the country. She had a listening ear and allowed herself to be guided.

### **Were you in a structured mentorship programme or otherwise? Describe it.**

I have also been a beneficiary of mentorship relationships even though they were not structured ones. I was mentored by my father MR. I. K. Gyasi (a retired educationist), an uncle of mine MAULVI ABDUL WAHAB BIN ADAM (of blessed memory), three senior colleagues, two of whom are female and a male one being THOMAS ASAMOAH TOTOE ESQ. my senior in Chambers who is the deceased Head and Founder of the law firm I now head. My senior female colleagues were MISS MARIAN ADDO-KUFUOR (also of blessed memory) and MRS REBECCA OSEI-MENSAH. I also need to mention a paternal aunt of mine MS. SAKEENA AKUA KONADU (a retired public servant) who virtually introduced and initiated me into the women's empowerment agenda and goals. As a matter of fact, I confidently state that my late boss painstakingly groomed

and nurtured me for my present position as Head of Chambers. These family members and senior colleagues literally held my hand while allowing the luxurious opportunity of forging my own professional path and encouraging my personal development and capacity- building, prodding me into taking on challenging opportunities while making themselves available to answer all my nagging questions and provide emotional as well as logistic support.

### **What do you think about people's perception that women don't mentor other women or girls prefer male mentors?**

I think the question should really be seen in terms of human nature and not to focus on gender stereotyping. It is in the nature of some people to exhibit negativity where the upward mobility of other persons in terms of personal and professional development. The level of toxicity in behaviour that is engendered by feelings of jealousy, envy and feelings of inadequacy is not confined to women. A person may sometimes for reasons of lack of confidence, not even realise they have the ability and capacity to mentor other people. Some need to be prodded to assume such roles. I, therefore, do not subscribe to the notion that women don't mentor other women. The mentee must identify what they desire to achieve from the mentorship relationship and actively seek out mentors accordingly. Structured mentorships facilitate identification of prospective mentors and opportunities are created for prospective mentees to be matched up and nurtured.



### **How should an ideal mentor-mentee relationship look like?**

A mentor should provide guidance and support, while a mentee should be coachable and willing to learn. A mentee should also have an open mind, be respectful and be able to take feedback positively. Most importantly both should maintain confidentiality. The relationship should be built on trust, mutual respect and a shared commitment to learning. Both should equally be invested in the success of the mentee. It is important that the mentee listens actively in order to take away important lessons, apply and tailor them to their own peculiar and other unique circumstances. It is also important that the mentor defines the relationship through the sharing with the mentee of actionable items based on what they need to learn. There is also a need to ensure meetings are held on a regular basis in order to maintain the continuity in the relationship. The mentor should challenge and encourage the mentee to aspire to attain optimum personal and professional development targets and be a unique version of themselves rather than mirror images of their mentors. I must mention that it is important that the mentor and mentee share core values as this fosters development in the relationship.

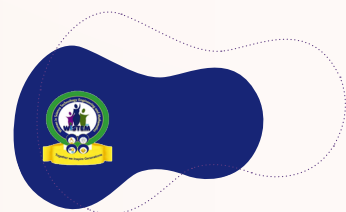
### **Should mentors be friends with mentees or should mentees be friends with their mentors?**

For me friendship is about a relationship between people in which exists, trust, affection, confidentiality, mutual respect, compassion, empathy, honesty and support.

Friendship is developed over time and does not occur as an event. Should friendship develop over time through the mentorship relationship, I do not hold a personal opinion against the same. It is, however, the case that on account of the very nature of the mentor-mentee relationship invariably, there exists in a significant number of cases, a vertical relationship where the mentee might be so awe/star-struck by the mentor's stature such that the superior/subordinate relationship might not really engender a real friendship on the sense of two individuals relating to each other on an equal footing. In deed if the mentor-mentee relationship evolves into one of a friendship lasting or otherwise, so be it.

### **Should mentors be afraid of mentees becoming competitors?**

I ascribe to human development and the harnessing and nurturing of optimum quality human resources. Ultimately society should strive to create and achieve better versions of contemporary and succeeding human generations. If a mentor becomes afraid of their mentees becoming competitors, then such mentors need to take a step back, reflect and re-orient their thinking. Fear of competition should have no place in such relationship. Competition, in my humble considered view, should be seen as a stimulant and catalyst for mentors to become more productive, acquire more skill sets and foster personal/professional growth. We should aim at providing future generations with enduring legacies and foundations for their survival and growth. I believe healthy competition drives success.







# MS. GRACE ASANTEWAA TWUMASI

POSTGRADUATE STUDENT

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## **Please tell us about yourself**

My name is Grace Asantewaa Twumasi, a 28 years young lady, currently residing in Thailand and undertaking my PhD studies. I am also managing my starts-ups in Ghana. I read Food Science and Technology both at the Undergraduate and Postgraduate level at KNUST and love to educate people on healthy eating and personal grooming.

## **What is your understanding of mentee and mentor?**

A mentee is an individual with specific goals and aspirations who seeks guidance and support from a more experience person (Mentor) to help him/her develop personally and professionally. A Mentor uses his/her expertise, insight, experiences, knowledge and lessons to provide guidance and offer support to the Mentee to help achieve his or her goals and aspirations.

## **Have you been mentored before or have you been a mentor before? Tell us about the experience**

Yes please! I have been mentored before and also mentored others. Being mentored literally opened me up to a lot of insight and exposure I may have used years to learn by personal experience. It was a season my life changed for the better. There was so much sacrifice, commitment to learning and dedication toward

this cause. On the other hand, in my one year of mentoring others, I have learnt that the commitment of mentees to be mentored are of different levels. Some love what they see but are not determined to put in the sacrifice and commitment to learning.

## **Were you in a structured mentorship programme or otherwise. Describe it**

My own mentorship was not a structured type. I was determined to learn from the best and that drew me close to my Mentor so I can learn better. However, I run a yearly structured mentorship for young ladies which focuses on 4 modules; spirituality, relationship, business/ career development and personal grooming.

## **What do you think about people's perception that women don't mentor other women or girls prefer male mentors**

I guess that is from the old time misconception that "Women are their own enemies". We left that school of thought years ago. People who are still thinking like that are the only ones in that school (hehehe...just kidding). It is okay for women/girls to be mentored by male mentors, however, in my perspective, their experiences and knowledge will be limited. Most likely limited to professional development, character development, and other few areas but

exposure to other sides like family life balance, personal grooming etc can only be learnt from a female mentor.

### **What should an ideal mentor-mentee relationship look like**

An ideal mentor-mentee relationship should be characterized by trust, mutual respect, clear goals and expectations, effective communication, mutual support, commitment to learning and growth, accountability and a long term relationship. Trust of the individual parties should be the foundation of a mentorship since the mentee will be exposed to certain areas of life of the mentor and the mentee as well will be sharing confidential information with the mentor. The mentorship should start off on an expected goal to give clarity of direction. There should be an agreed platform of communication for guidance and support, mentees need to be committed to growth and be accountable. The relationship has to be long term.

### **Should Mentors be friends with their mentees or should mentees be friends with their mentors**

I will say "Yes" but it also depends on the maturity of the mentee. The mentor needs to thoroughly observe whether being friends with the mentee will still make the mentorship effective and the mentee also needs to know his/her boundaries in the friendship.

### **Should Mentors be afraid of their mentees becoming a competitor?**

Answer: Hahahaha! Answering this from a Christian perspective, I believe, naturally, there can be a tendency for fear because greatness can be perceived even if it is 2000 miles away. However, if we know the eternal

goal of our mentorship (which I sometimes call "Discipleship"), we will never allow fear to distract the work of Mentors. Actually, if you mentor a lady or gentleman, you don't know from Adam, chances are that your grand/great grandchildren may benefit from that mentorship. It is important that we know that every armed robber came from a family in which mentorship went wrong and if we want to live in a world of peace, mentorship of all and sundry should be our goal no matter the possible future competition.

### **Should a mentor on seeing the potential in a young one offer to mentor the fellow or wait for the fellow to approach?**

I believe that the "will" of people is very crucial in mentorship. A mentor may draw close and through constant communication offer an unofficial mentorship to a young person with potentials without announcing officially to have him/her as a mentee. If the actions of the mentee show that he/she is determined to learn and grow from your experience, they will draw closer and you can now structure the mentorship, other than that, Mentors may willingly offer to mentor "young people with potentials" but if they are not willing to be mentored, the mentor may be casting his/her pearl to "pigs."

### **What should a mentor do, so to bringing out a mentee's uniqueness but not a mirror image? In your own experience.**

Uniqueness of a person is best expressed when the individual has a healthy self-identity (knowledge and awareness), self-esteem and self-confidence. Mentors should not in their process of mentoring kill these



qualities through words (something I call “indoctrination”). Knowledge, expertise and experiences should be shared and mentees should be allowed to apply these lessons to their personal adventure.

**What will be your take away message either to a younger person seeking to be mentored or to a senior person who is a potential mentor?**

I always have a part I add on to the phrase “Experience is the best teacher”. What I add is “But the lessons can bring eternal scars”. On this note, I will tell young people to be determined for growth and not replace growth with “hustling”, because growth will help you replicate your success no matter what happens and mentorship is the way to grow faster than you can imagine. It literally makes you stand on the shoulders of giants to achieve the unimaginable as compared to learning by yourself to achieve similar feet. To a potential mentor, you don’t have to grow to get millions or get to a professor status in your career before feeling worthy to mentor. Where you are currently, there is a young person or even an older person, who wants to get there, help them I believe, the hope of a dying world lies within an active mentoring of the young, to be well groomed personally and professionally.



*An ideal mentor-mentee relationship should be characterized by Trust, mutual respect, clear goals and expectations...*







# PROF. GORDANA KRANJAC-BERISAVLJEVIC

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

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## **Please tell us about yourself**

My name is Gordana Kranjac-Berisavljevic. I am a professor of Agricultural Engineering with the Faculty of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences, University for Development Studies. I have been working with the UDS since 1995 and the University of Ghana from 1991. I started my career in 1985 as a research assistant and assistant lecturer at Belgrade Agricultural University, and later with the ILRI, Research Institute in the Netherlands before coming to Ghana. Therefore, I have been an academic with my profession starting from the lower ranks, then climbing gradually until my current position as a full professor with the University for Development Studies. I am also a mother of two, a daughter and a son, with two grandsons, which means I have tried to balance my professional life with private life as much as possible with a lot of understanding from my family.

## **What is your understanding of mentee and mentor?**

My understanding of the relationship between mentee and mentor is such that both sides benefit and also learn from one another. In my view, the mentor has to learn as much as the mentee, because the young person's mentor is supposed to work with his/her new fresh ideas, and the business of the mentor is

to shape them in such a way that the person can progress academically and be successful. Whereby, if not for the mentee, mentor wouldn't be able to see how this young person thinks, and how this person maybe having innovative look at the things in the profession. So, both sides stand to benefit from one another and their relationship should be successful for both of them

## **Have you been mentored before or have you been a mentor before? Tell us about the experience.**

During my time as a young professional, I am sorry to say that I didn't receive much mentorship. Because I am an Agricultural Engineer, there were hardly any female role models for me to emulate. I said I started in 1980s in an agricultural university in my country, Serbia as a young professional. There were mostly men, quite elderly within my department and not much attention was given to being mentored by them. You had to fight your own way to find your own level. I am very happy to see that things have changed and that we are now paying much more attention to the young professionals coming out. We start the process of mentoring before they even finish the first degree and then hopefully continue through masters and PhD. Yes, I have mentored a number of young people, mostly



young men, because with my profession there are not many females to mentor. It is of late that it is becoming more popular to see female Agricultural Engineers but most of my previous students were male. I think our experiences were mostly positive and I can say that I've brought up quite a number of professionals both in academia and generally, in the engineering profession in Ghana.

### **Were you in a structured mentorship programme or otherwise. Describe it**

I have actually not been a part of a very strictly structured internship programs. Most of it has been tailored towards an individual who I had to supervise and find what his or her talents are and how best to bring them forth without any structural support

### **What do you think about people's perception that women don't mentor other women or girls prefer male mentors?**

About gender roles with their mentoring, I don't really have an opinion whether it is a man or woman who has to be mentioned. To me that is a young person or rather I would say a young talent to be mentored, because everybody has his own or her own area where they can shine. I have generally mentored a lot more males than females due to the nature of my profession but I also have very brilliant young women and now even not so young women who have passed through an experience of mentorship with me. Some of them are working in the country, others are working abroad and with most of them I maintain a professional relationship. So, it is

not the gender, it is the intellect of the person I'm looking at and how I can best bring the qualities of that person forward through the mentorship process.

### **What should an ideal mentor-mentee relationship look like?**

An ideal relationship between mentee and mentor should be such that, as I mentioned before, both sides stand to gain. What it really means is that there should be trust and openness on both sides. People should share ideas. Everybody should bring their best qualities into this process until a successful end; which means either conducting joint research and writing papers together, or maybe inducing a development in the younger person's career and so on. Those should be the gains that will be obtained for both mentor and mentee.

### **Should mentors be friends with their mentees or should mentees be friends with their mentors?**

Yes! I think that mentors and mentees can be friends, can be working colleagues and can successfully work together. Because when we nurture a person to a next level, mutual trust will propel them to attain higher ranks. I have many people I have mentored in the past who now my working colleagues. Some of them I am doing joint work with, others I publish together with. Yet others are in other countries but we maintain the relationship across the continents. So successfully mentoring people also means widening your professional cycle and getting new colleagues and new team members you can work with successfully in the future.



### **Should mentors be afraid of mentees becoming competitors?**

No! I have never been afraid of my mentees becoming competitors, because I always say where I get my ideas from if anybody wishes to copy or emulate them there is a lot more of those ideas where it originally came from. It is not limited to one or two people, it is also not limited that I should be the only person in my field of specialization. The more we are, it becomes easier and better to work together. In the latter part of my career, where now I have a lot of younger colleagues who have come through the process of first undergraduate and graduate studies, and eventually became my colleagues, I am now able to have a much larger group of professionals to work with and we still successfully work together. So, if a mentee, has a brilliant idea and he or she also wants to work together with me, I'm so open to that. Hence it is a relationship that is not competitive but rather complementary, helping and assisting one another in the professional career

### **Should a mentor on seeing a potential in a young one offer to mentor the fellow or wait for the young fellow to approach?**

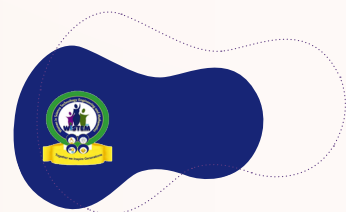
It works both ways because if the mentor spots a person who is talented and has potentials, they could be approached by the mentor and nurtured by him or her. Also, if the mentor is approached by a person and there is no reason to refuse or not to pay attention to that person, why not? So, it can work both ways in my view.

### **What should a mentor do, so to bringing out a mentee's uniqueness but not a mirror image? In your own experience.**

Well in my own experience, everybody has talents and they are all different so it is the job of a mentor to look for that unique quality of the person that he or she is mentoring. I have had several mentees who have gone ahead and achieved the things that I could have never achieved by myself. But I have believed in them and their talent, and I must say, they are doing me proud. Some of them are now heads of institutions, others have several international jobs, while yet others are writing and excelling in their profession. They are all doing things that I don't think I could have ever done. But that initial experience, trying to get the best out of your mentee and believing that mentee can do it, is what they need at their initial stage. So yes, not to make a person a mirror image of yourself but look through the person's qualities and bring them forward and trust that the person will actually excel in his or her own unique way, is what I think is the job of the mentor.

### **What will be your take away message either to a younger person seeking to be mentored or to a senior person who is a potential mentor**

My message to young persons will be: believe in yourself and your talent, and also trust that you can achieve the highest heights. So, look at your mentor as a person who will guide you and help you on your way to achieve your highest potential. Thank you.







**With farmers,  
Ghanaian and  
Dutch students**





## MS. ALIMATU ZAKARI

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT

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### Please tell us about yourself

I respond to Zakari Alimatu, a 22-year-old who hails from Dzodze in the Volta Region of Ghana. I had my second cycle education at Kumasi Academy and currently pursuing an undergraduate programme in Business Administration (Marketing) in the noble institution of KNUST.

As a young, enthusiastic, hardworking, and innovative lady with a keen eye for success, I am reliable, hardworking, and self-motivated. Zig Ziglar once said "if you light a lamp for someone else, it goes a long way to brighten your path". This forms part of my core beliefs and also makes me a great fan of collective effort and winning together.

### What is your understanding of mentee and mentor?

A mentor is someone who gives time, interest and emotional support to a junior colleague or person over an extended period to help them grow holistically. A mentor knows the way, leads the way, and shows the way, while a mentee is a diligent follower. The mentor, however, does not force his will on his mentee, rather leaving it up to the mentee to decide whether to follow the carved path.

It has been my privilege to be mentored by two great women, Prof. Mrs. Ibok Oduro,

Immediate Past Provost of the College of Science, KNUST, and Mrs. Victoria DeGraft, Head of Counselling Unit, KNUST. These women have played major roles in my life since we met each other. They have contributed so much to my emotional, spiritual, academic, and psychological growth over some periods now. Prof. Mrs. Oduro has contributed immensely to the growth of JOYLAND, a community engagement project I have been working on for two years. JOYLAND is a medium-term strategic project which commenced in 2021. By the year 2024, the project is to locate young ladies who have been unable to further their education for some trivial reasons, either to secondary school or tertiary school, and to cloth, feed and help these women grow holistically through the development of entrepreneurial ideas, unearthing potentials, increasing their confidence, and developing their financial capacity. The project also aims to make uniforms available to less privileged students in rural communities.

JOYLAND has been able to clothe 50 students from its inception with 70% being female. We are looking forward to register JOYLAND as an NGO in order to generate a lot of income to support these vulnerable women and children. While striving to reach the peak of my career goals, my mentors have been telling me to strike a balance between my academic,



social, and spiritual lives. The journey with my mentors has been super amazing, and I am hopefully looking forward to achieving greater heights under their supervision.

### **Were you in a structured mentorship programme or otherwise. Describe it**

I had an opportunity to be enrolled in a structured mentorship programme. In spite of their busy schedules, my immediate mentors usually made time for me whenever I requested to see them. Anytime there is a general WiSTEM program, they are always the first to give me a call to inform me about the meeting. Furthermore, we stay in touch via text and other social media handles. Over the years, my mentors have managed to create a friendly atmosphere where we can talk about everything also devise strategies for consistent growth.

### **What do you think about people's perception that women don't mentor other women or girls prefer male mentors?**

Ideally, a female mentee should be mentored by a female, likewise a male should be mentored by a male but since we all have different views and preferences, I think we should make room for individuals to select their mentors. Your mentor should be someone who shares your professional outlook and perhaps has even accomplished the goals you hope to achieve. In my opinion, the best way to choose a mentor is to find someone you admire, someone who has a professional style you want to emulate, or a skill set you want to develop.

### **What should an ideal mentor-mentee relationship look like?**

An ideal mentor-mentee relationship should be cordial. A mentor should not necessarily be your best friend. Your best friend loves you the way you are, but your mentor would see to it that you are becoming the best version of yourself. Just as a tree is pruned by its gardener, a mentor prunes and shapes the behavior of his mentee in order for him to become better.

### **Should mentors be friends with their mentees or should mentees be friends with their mentors?**

In my opinion, it should be a collective responsibility. Building and maintaining a relationship requires a lot of efforts from both sides. In our part of the world, it is very difficult for a mentee to befriend an older person but it is very easy for the mentor to come down to the level of the mentee to become his friend. Hence the responsibility lies on the mentee to give his mentor the maximum respect and comply to all the rules guiding their relationship.

### **Should mentors be afraid of mentees becoming competitors?**

Mentors should not be afraid of mentees becoming competitors. This is because, mentees would somehow be the mini versions of their mentors. In order for mentees to carry on the mentors' legacies once they are gone, mentors must pour out all their good qualities into them.



### **Should a mentor on seeing a potential in a young one offer to mentor the fellow or wait for the young fellow to approach?**

I strongly believe the mentee should be the one to make the first move by approaching the mentor to kindly request for his mentorship. Most often than not, mentors have a lot on their table, they have somehow attained so many heights in life and can perhaps do away without the mentee. Notwithstanding, these facts, they are at the liberty to choose to open up their doors to the younger generation. In view of this, it is quite expedient for the mentee to approach first.

### **What should a mentor do, so to bringing out a mentee's uniqueness but not a mirror image? In your own experience.**

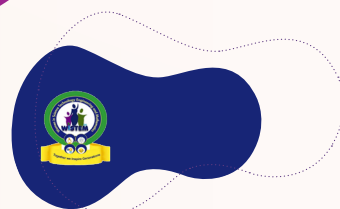
The mentor should make room for the personal growth of his mentee rather than imposing his will on him. Upon noticing the weaknesses of his mentee, he builds on that to mold him into a useful person who is of great benefit to society.

### **What will be your take away message either to a younger person seeking to be mentored or to a senior person who is a potential mentor?**

Mentors are teachers of wisdom to younger people who seek mentorship. A mentor sees your weaknesses before you experience them. Your mentor has been where you want to go, and he is the best person to tell you the pros and cons of the path you have chosen. I would therefore entreat you to humble yourself and learn from the best. Thank you very much to my mentors for always pushing me to break out of my comfort zone and become a better version of myself. I promise to make them proud.



*...Your mentor should be someone who shares your professional outlook and perhaps has even accomplished the goals you hope to achieve.*









## PROF. MARY BOADU

CHIEF RESEARCH SCIENTIST/ ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

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### **Please tell us about yourself**

I am the immediate past Director of the Radiological and Medical Sciences Research Institute of the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission.

### **What is your understanding of mentee and mentor?**

Mentee receives knowledge, guidance, skills from the mentor for his/her professional/career development. The mentor gives – directs, guides, transfer knowledge to the mentee. Mentoring programme encompass activities that allow for transfer of knowledge and skills from one person to others.

### **Have you been mentored before or have you been a mentor before? Tell us about the experience**

I have been mentored indirectly by my PhD supervisors. I have also informally mentored several professionals.

### **Were you in a structured mentorship programme or otherwise. Describe it**

No, it was not a structured mentorship programme. I sort of observed and learned their way of conducting their scientific and academic life, as I studied for the PhD degree.

### **What do you think about people's perception that women don't mentor other women or girls prefer male mentors?**

I'm not sure. The perception might be one of those stereotypes. A lot of women have and are mentoring other women.

### **What should an ideal mentor-mentee relationship look like?**

An ideal mentor-mentee relationship should be a special partnership between two people based on commitment to the mentoring process, set common goals and expectations, focus, mutual trust and respect. Both the mentor and the mentee give and grow in the mentoring process.

### **Should mentors be friends with their mentees or should mentees be friends with their mentors?**

I think mentors should not be friends with their mentees. The mentor-mentee relationship should be kept at professional or academic/career level. When friendship develops between the mentor-mentee the professional touch may be eroded and may lead to loss of focus which may not benefit both parties especially, the mentee.

### **Should mentors be afraid of mentees becoming competitors?**

No, mentors should not be afraid of their mentees.

### **Should a mentor on seeing a potential in a young one offer to mentor the fellow or wait for the young fellow to approach?**

The mentor can offer assistance to the young one, seeing the potential in the person. The mentor may also wait till the mentee takes the initiative and approach him/her. It all depends on the situation/circumstances.

### **What should a mentor do, so to bringing out a mentee's uniqueness but not a mirror image? . In your own experience.**

The mentor should ensure he/she transfers knowledge, directs, guide, skills to the mentee and allow the latter to use the information passed on with flexibility. No compulsion or putting pressure on the mentee.

### **What will be your take away message either to a younger person seeking to be mentored or to a senior person who is a potential mentor?**

The success of mentoring will depend on clearly defined roles and expectations in addition to both parties' awareness of the benefits of participating in the mentoring program. There should be some clearly defined roles which each party should play their part and expectations should be also managed well.



*The success of mentoring will depend on clearly defined roles and expectations in addition to both parties' awareness of the benefits of participating in the mentoring program*





# DR. CLAUDETTE AHLIBA DIOGO

PHARMACIST/ LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY CHAIN EXPERT

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## **Please tell us about yourself?**

I am Claudette Ahliba Diogo from the Republic of Ghana. I am a Pharmacist by profession, and a logistics and supply chain expert. I currently work with the Family Health Division of Ghana Health Service as the programme manager (Ag.) of the Family Planning Programme at the headquarters. I have over a decade experience in logistics and supply chain management, working within the public sector and with development partners in ensuring reproductive health commodity security and family planning programming and interventions across the Ghana Health System.

## **What is your understanding of mentee and mentor?**

A mentee is someone with limited experience and knowledge and/or who has no experience and knowledge in a particular area and/or field of profession, certain aspects of life and/or general practices of life endeavors and who seeks guidance, advice and understanding from a person who is rich in experience, knowledge and/or has the professional expertise and know-how in a particular field or area for growth and development (this could be career growth and development, marriage, leadership, relationship and understanding of certain life issues).

A mentor on the other hand is someone who is rich in experience, knowledge and understanding to provide guidance, direction, upbringing and leadership to a mentee towards helping to meet the expectations and objectives of the mentee (this could be achieving the mentor-mentee relationship long term goal)

## **Have you been mentored before or have you been a mentor before? Tell us about the experience**

Yes, I have been mentored and as well mentored others. It has been an interesting experience always having an eye on your mentees and ensuring they are always keeping pace and making progress in their respective areas of endeavors. You become fulfilled when your mentees make you proud by chalking some good success and extra ordinary achievement in life.

## **Were you in a structured mentorship programme or otherwise. Describe it**

No please



### **What do you think about people's perception that women don't mentor other women or girls prefer male mentors?**

It is an erroneous thinking. Unfortunately, a few have had unpleasant experiences and that has created such a picture. But it is not a general case

### **What should an ideal mentor-mentee relationship look like?**

It should be healthy and lively with the objectives of the mentor-mentee partnership being realized over the long run of the relationship. There should be effective communication and good feedback, mutual respect and the mentor-mentee connection at all times as well a working relation.

### **Should mentors be friends with their mentees or should mentees be friends with their mentors?**

Both ways are fine at the background of mentor-mentee relationship in focus.

### **Should mentors be afraid of mentees becoming competitors?**

I do not think so. Every master or leader wants to see their servants and/or protégés and disciples go higher and do better. In addition, no one person can all the time and/or forever on the stage. It is one of the reasons people are mentored and/or raised to take over and do better to make the mentor proud. Therefore, I think mentors should not be afraid of mentees becoming competitors, rather continuous engagement and learning at all times from the rich experiences and knowledge of mentors coupled with good acknowledgement of mentors would always bring more honor and none seen as a competitor.

### **Should a mentor on seeing a potential in a young one offer to mentor the fellow or wait for the young fellow to approach?**

Either ways are fine, however once a mentor identifies such a potential offering a mentorship opportunity to such a fellow is right to do unless such a person or fellow decline or willingly show no interest

### **What should a mentor do, so to bringing out a mentee's uniqueness but not a mirror image? In your own experience.**

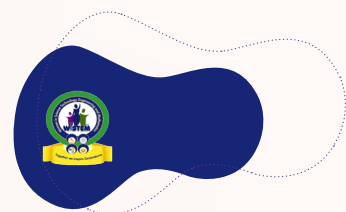
To mentor the mentee to become their own uniqueness.

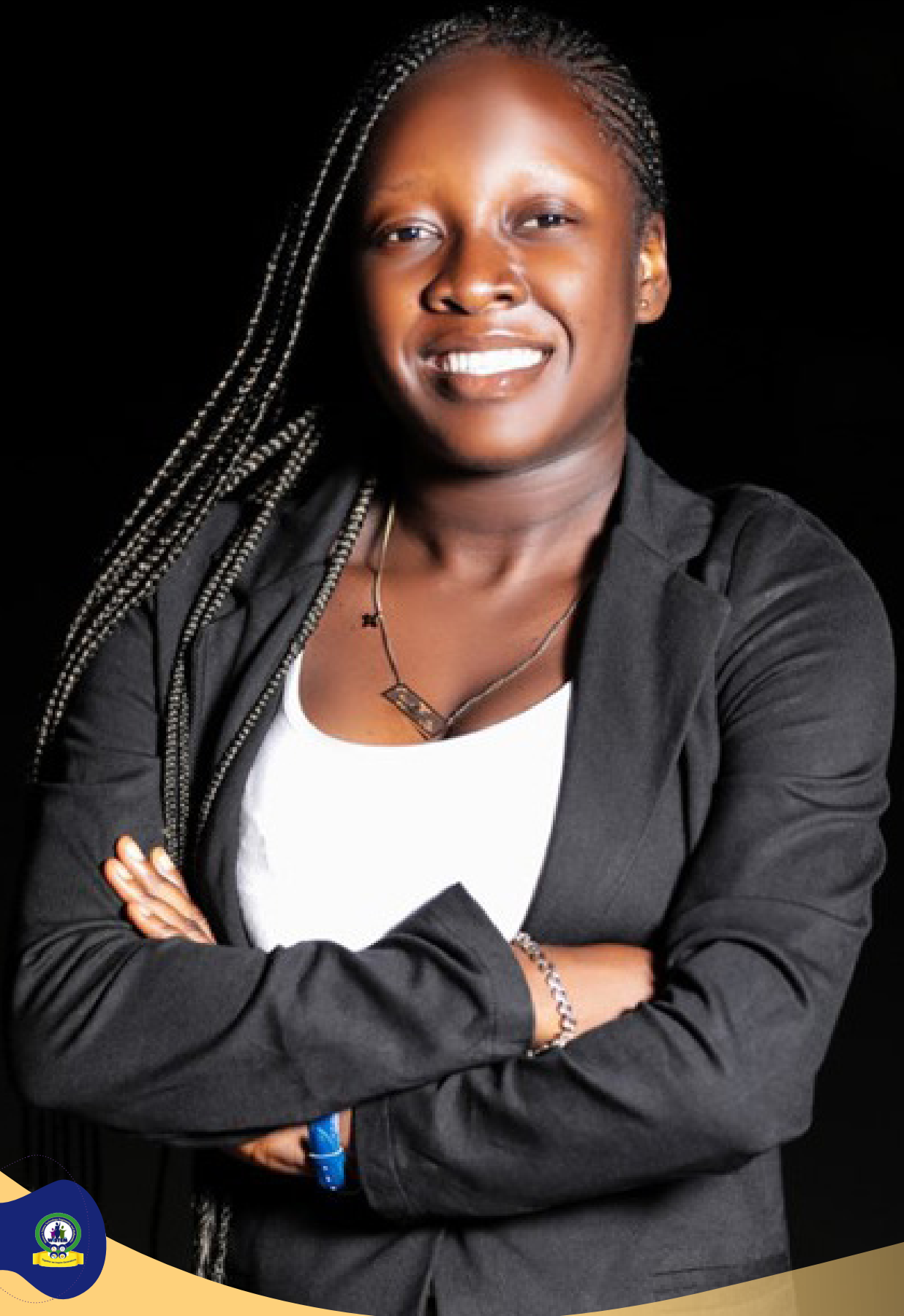
### **What will be your take away message either to a younger person seeking to be mentored or to a senior person who is a potential mentor?**

To the young person seeking to be mentored, he or she got to be prepared and ready to learn, follow and always learn relearn and unlearn in honesty and humility. Such person should always see the good in mentorship make their mentors happy and proud.

And to the potential mentor, mentoring someone is always great and fulfilling like your contribution to humanity because it has ripple effects from generation to generation. To end, I will say every mentee is also a potential mentor so the cycle of impact may not end. Therefore, let's not be weary of identifying potentials and mentoring them even if they do not approach us as their potential mentors.

Thank you







# MS. THERESA SEYRAM AGBENYEGAH

SOFTWARE ENGINEER, SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR

---

## Please tell us about yourself?

My name is Theresa Seyram Agbenyegah, a Software Engineer, Social Entrepreneur, a Christian Youth Leader and a Tech Community Builder.

## What is your understanding of mentee and mentor?

A mentee and a mentor are two individuals engaged in a mentoring relationship; a mentee is a person who seeks guidance, support, and knowledge from a more experienced individual, known as a mentor. The mentee is typically less experienced or knowledgeable in a particular field, industry, or aspect of life. They actively participate in the mentoring relationship to enhance their personal and professional growth or development, acquire new skills, gain insights, and navigate challenges. Mentees often set goals and work with their mentors to achieve them, benefiting from the mentor's expertise, perspective, and advice.

A mentor, on the other hand, is an experienced and knowledgeable individual who voluntarily offers their expertise, wisdom, and support to a mentee. Mentors have typically achieved a certain level of success or proficiency in a particular domain and are willing to share their experiences and knowledge to help someone

else grow. They provide guidance, share insights, offer constructive feedback, and serve as a coach for the mentee. Mentors may also assist mentees in setting goals, developing strategies, and making informed decisions.

The mentoring relationship between a mentee and mentor is typically built on trust, respect, and effective communication. It can take various forms, such as one-on-one meetings, virtual interactions, or group settings, depending on the context and goals of the mentoring program or arrangement. The ultimate aim of this relationship is to empower the mentee and facilitate their development, enabling them to achieve their full potential.

## Have you been mentored before or have you been a mentor before? Tell us about the experience

I have been mentored before and i'm still under mentoring that is i've a mentor and i also i have been a mentor before and surprisingly i'm still mentoring my mentee while i'm also going being mentored.

My experience for being a mentor is: currently I have two people that I'm mentoring. Checking up and reaching out to know what they're up to and sometimes I had meetings with them to discuss their progress and sometimes they also reached out and be like;



I have this going on and think I need your advice on it. And later it works. I feel like wow, I've also impacted someone's life. I'm also glad because I realize they're looking after me and I make sure I put in all my effort to gain more knowledge and share with them.

My experience being a mentee and a mentee is an awesome, amazing, insightful and motivating experience and I'm still getting their guidance which keeps me going.

### **Were you in a structured mentorship programme or otherwise. Describe it**

I was not in a structured mentorship programme. From what I know, where I stand and my level of experience I will say; many women actively engage in mentoring relationships with other women and I know that for sure and can testify to it. They offer guidance, support, and share their experiences to help other women succeed in their chosen fields. These mentoring relationships can be incredibly valuable, as women mentors can provide unique insights and understanding of the specific challenges and barriers that women may face in their respective industries.

### **What do you think about people's perception that women don't mentor other women or girls prefer male mentors?**

Regarding the preference for male mentors, it is worth noting that mentorship preferences can differ from person to person. While some individuals may prefer mentors of a specific gender, it does not mean that this preference is universal among all women or girls. Many women and girls find inspiration, support, and

guidance from mentors of various genders.

And one thing is; it is important to promote diversity and inclusivity in mentorship, encouraging individuals to seek mentors who can provide relevant expertise, insights, and support regardless of their gender. Recognizing the value of diverse perspectives and experiences can enrich the mentorship experience and contribute to a more inclusive and equitable society.

### **What should an ideal mentor-mentee relationship look like**

So, the ideal mentor-mentee relationship can vary depending on individual preferences, goals, and the specific context of the mentoring engagement. Flexibility, adaptability, and a willingness to learn from each other are essential for fostering a successful and rewarding mentor-mentee relationship.

But this is what I think it should look like; Trust and Mutual Respect, Clear Communication, Goal Alignment: The mentor and mentee should have a shared understanding of the mentee's goals and objectives. The mentor can help the mentee define and refine their goals, while providing guidance and support in achieving them. Clear goals help focus the mentoring relationship and measure progress.

Guidance and Support: The mentor plays a vital role in providing guidance, sharing insights, and offering support to the mentee. This can involve sharing personal experiences, providing feedback on specific areas of development, and offering advice based on the mentor's expertise etc.



Also, Constructive Feedback: Feedback is an important component of the mentor-mentee relationship. The mentor should provide constructive feedback to help the mentee identify strengths, areas for improvement, and opportunities for growth. The mentee should be receptive to feedback and actively seek guidance to enhance their skills and knowledge. Knowledge Transfer, Accountability and Commitment: Both the mentor and mentee should demonstrate commitment to the relationship. This includes honoring scheduled meetings, actively participating in discussions, and following through on agreed-upon action plans. Accountability ensures progress and maximizes the benefits of mentorship. Long-Term Relationship Building: An ideal mentor-mentee relationship can extend beyond the initial mentoring period. It may evolve into a lasting professional connection or friendship. Continued support, occasional check-ins, and maintaining the relationship can provide ongoing benefits to both parties.

### **Should mentors be friends with their mentees or should mentees be friends with their mentors?**

The question of whether mentors should be friends with their mentees or if mentees should be friends with their mentors can vary depending on the specific circumstances and the goals of the mentorship relationship and individuals. While the nature of the mentor-mentee relationship is typically professional and focused on learning, guidance, and support. But I will say Mentees can be their mentors but with boundaries set.

### **Should mentors be afraid of mentees becoming competitors?**

Mentors should not be afraid of mentees becoming competitors, this is because that is your investment. You have invested your time and resources in helping your mentee , so he/she is doing well . Don't see it as competition but rather growth, success and your achievement.

### **Should a mentor on seeing potential in a young one, offer to mentor the fellow or wait for the young fellow to approach?**

This question is deicing; a mentor involves a lot and being a mentee requires a lot from the mentee. But this is my take on it:

It can be appropriate for a mentor to proactively offer their mentorship to a young person if they see potential and believe they can make a positive impact. Taking the initiative to offer mentorship demonstrates a genuine interest in helping someone develop their skills and achieve their goals.

Waiting for the young person to approach may sometimes result in missed opportunities, as they might not be aware of the availability of a mentor or might feel hesitant to seek mentorship themselves. By offering mentorship, the mentor is taking an active role in identifying and nurturing talent.

But ultimately, the decision to proactively offer mentorship or wait for the young person to approach depends on the mentor's judgment, the specific context, and the nature of the relationship between the mentor and the potential mentee.



### **What should a mentor do, so to bringing out a mentee's uniqueness but not a mirror image? In your own experience**

Recognize and Value Differences, Listen and Understand, Provide Guidance, Not Prescriptions, Nurture Strengths and Passions, Support Self-Reflection, Encourage Risk-Taking and Learning from Failure, Promote Networking and Diverse Connections. And remember, the goal of mentorship is to guide and empower the mentee to become the best version of themselves, not a carbon copy of the mentor. By nurturing their uniqueness, you can help them cultivate their own authentic voice, make their unique contributions, and achieve personal and professional success on their terms.

But remember, the goal of mentorship is to guide and empower the mentee to become the best version of themselves, not a carbon copy of the mentor. By nurturing their uniqueness, you can help them cultivate their own authentic voice, make their unique contributions, and achieve personal and professional success on their terms.

### **What will be your take away message either to a younger person seeking to be mentored or to a senior person who is a potential mentor?**

My take away message either to a younger person seeking to be mentored or to a senior person who is a potential mentor is: A younger person seeking to be mentored should embrace the power of mentorship as a catalyst for growth and development. Seek out mentors who can guide you, challenge you,

and help you navigate your path. Be open to learning, ask questions, and actively engage in the mentorship relationship. Your unique journey awaits, and mentors can help unlock your full potential

A senior person who is a potential mentor should embrace the role of a mentor with enthusiasm and a genuine desire to support and empower others. Share your knowledge, experiences, and insights generously, and be open to learning from your mentees as well. Recognize and value the unique strengths and perspectives of each mentee, and provide guidance that nurtures their individuality. Remember, your mentorship can make a significant impact on someone's life and career, so approach it with empathy, patience, and a commitment to helping others thrive.

Also, Being a mentee requires time, energy, discipline and commitment and being a mentor requires dedication.



**the goal of mentorship is to guide and empower the mentee to become the best version of themselves**





## MRS. MERCY WELLINGTON

GHANA BROADCASTING CORPORATION

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### **Please tell us about yourself?**

Mercy Wellington is my name. 45years old, married for 16 years with 3 children. I am a Cinematographer, switcher and a technician with the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, Technical department.

### **What is your understanding of mentee and mentor?**

A mentor to my understanding, is a person who has the expertise in an area of specialization and passionately natures other people with same or similar interests to be their utmost best and a mentee is anyone willing to be impacted with knowledge from an experienced expert.

### **Have you been mentored before or have you been a mentor before? Tell us about the experience**

Yes, I have been mentored by my 2 of my lecturers in Film school (NAFTI) and in GBC by seniors I met on the job. Since my chosen field is male dominated, my lecturers Mr. Amishadai Sackitey and the late Kwamena Aboagye Ansah, took a very keen interest in my seeing the passion, love and dedication i have for photography and took me along on their private jobs, which included the shooting

of adverts for GTP, Vlisco, ATL and awards ceremonies. This gave me the opportunity to learn the rudiments of the job as compared with what they teach in the lecture hall. It was the same when I entered the industry after school with the national state broadcaster. I will forever be grateful and thankful to all these brave, selfless, passionate, firm and friendly men, who came as lectures and bosses to indirectly mentor me into the who I have become today.

### **Were you in a structured mentorship programme or otherwise. Describe it**

No. It was not a structured mentorship program but an act of kindness and compassion.

### **What do you think about people's perception that women don't mentor other women or girls prefer male mentors?**

Personally, through my experience, I have come to see and accept that females, due to our emotional structure, finds it competitive working with each other whiles men as a matter of pride struggles to accept a female mentoring them but a female finds it more

comfortable and receptive being mentored by a male.

### **What should an ideal mentor-mentee relationship look like?**

It should be a friendly, cordial and respectful relationship with each mindful of the boundaries.

### **Should mentors be friends with their mentees or should mentees be friends with their mentors?**

I believe that it will be best to maintain a cordial professional relationship, although at times I have come across mentees with such excellent human relations that it naturally opens up the relationship that continues even when the period is over. Some have become sons, daughters, brothers and sisters.

### **Should mentors be afraid of mentees becoming competitors?**

Mentors should never be afraid of mentees becoming competitors, we are all unique in our ways and only needs guidance to light up that fire. It is a very huge platform and our unique abilities makes it beautiful, easy and the best of our world. No need for competition.

### **Should a mentor on seeing a potential in a young one offer to mentor the fellow or wait for the young fellow to approach?**

This will depend on individual character and approach. A mentor can approach and be refused by a mentee and vice-versa. It is always best to study the situation before making a decision.

### **What should a mentor do, so to bringing out a mentee's uniqueness but not a mirror image? In your own experience.**

A mentor must be able to know the strength or unique qualities and abilities of the mentee and offer guidance in that direction freely while allowing them to make their own choices and mistakes as part of the growing process without making them into your image.

### **What will be your take away message either to a younger person seeking to be mentored or to a senior person who is a potential mentor?**

Be human as possible as your can, always acknowledge and appreciate others uniqueness and never impose your will on anyone. We can all light the candles of others and allow them to shine with us.













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