MENTOR MATCH PROGRAM
WORKSHEET B
INTRODUCTION TO THE MENTOR'S OFFICE

Worksheet B is intended to facilitate the discussion between the new lawyer and mentor with regard to the introduction of the new lawyer to members of the mentor's firm/office.

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- Discuss the importance of having support staff on your team and treating them with respect.

- Share suggested "do's and don'ts" of dealing with support staff, colleagues, and those more senior than the new lawyer.

- If the new lawyer has an assistant, secretary and/or paralegal, explain the types of task that are appropriate (and inappropriate) to ask each of them to do.

- Discuss the importance of asking for help before taking action about which you are not sure and of obtaining assistance when you have made a mistake. Give the new lawyer examples of problems you have encountered and tried to solve without help and discuss the consequences that occurred.

IN-HOUSE MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

- The new lawyer should be introduced to other lawyers and personnel in the firm/office. If the office/firm is large and it is not feasible to introduce the new lawyer to everyone, the new lawyer should be introduced to at least the partners or supervising attorneys, associates and staff in the division(s) in which s/he will work.

- Explain from whom the new lawyer should expect to get work. Do all assignments come through one person? Is the new lawyer responsible for checking in with a group of people to obtain assignments? To whom does the new lawyer report?

- To the extent possible, discuss with the new lawyer the working styles and preferences of those lawyers in the firm/office for whom the new lawyer will likely be working. If the mentor does not have this information, introduce the new lawyer to other lawyers in the firm who can share this information.

- Discuss office culture and administrative details, such as the following:

    - What time new associates are expected to arrive at the office and leave it and how flexible are work hours;
    - What type of social climate exists among staff; and
    - What type of office dress is appropriate.

- Discuss the types of tasks new associates should expect in their first three months, first year, and first three years. Explain how the new lawyer will obtain practical experience while employed in the firm/office. If there is a formal program for new associates with training over a period of time, explain the structure of that training.

- Discuss the relationship the mentor has to the new lawyer within their office. Make it clear if the mentor is responsible in whole or part for reviewing the new lawyer's performance. Discuss whether the mentor is the new lawyer's supervisor and if so, what that relationship entails.

- Distribute to the new lawyer the firm's policy manual and use it as an agenda for issues to be discussed.

OUTSIDE MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

- Introduce the new lawyer to members of the mentor's firm, including non-lawyer staff.

- Explain to the new lawyer each employee's role in the firm and each lawyer's area of practice.

- Share that which co-workers have accomplished that the mentor recommends emulating.

- Discuss activities in which the new lawyer can engage to obtain practical skills (such as litigation skills) that the mentor is prohibited from teaching the new lawyer while in an outside mentoring relationship. For example, the new lawyer could volunteer at a bar association to act as counsel for disciplinary cases, could get on a guardian ad litem list at the local court, or could sign up for criminal or probate court appointments, etc. Additionally, the mentor may be able to introduce the new lawyer to a colleague with whom the new lawyer could co-counsel a criminal case, or the mentor may be able to introduce the new lawyer to a judge who would appoint the new lawyer to second-chair a case with a competent, professional and experienced first Chair.

- Share the activities in which the mentor and/or his or her colleagues participated to obtain their practical experience at the beginning of their career.

- If possible, distribute to the new lawyer the mentor's office policy manual and use it as an agenda for general issues to be discussed.