

# ATHLETE365 MENTORING

## POSITIONING YOURSELF FOR SUCCESS

Guidelines for Mentees and Mentors

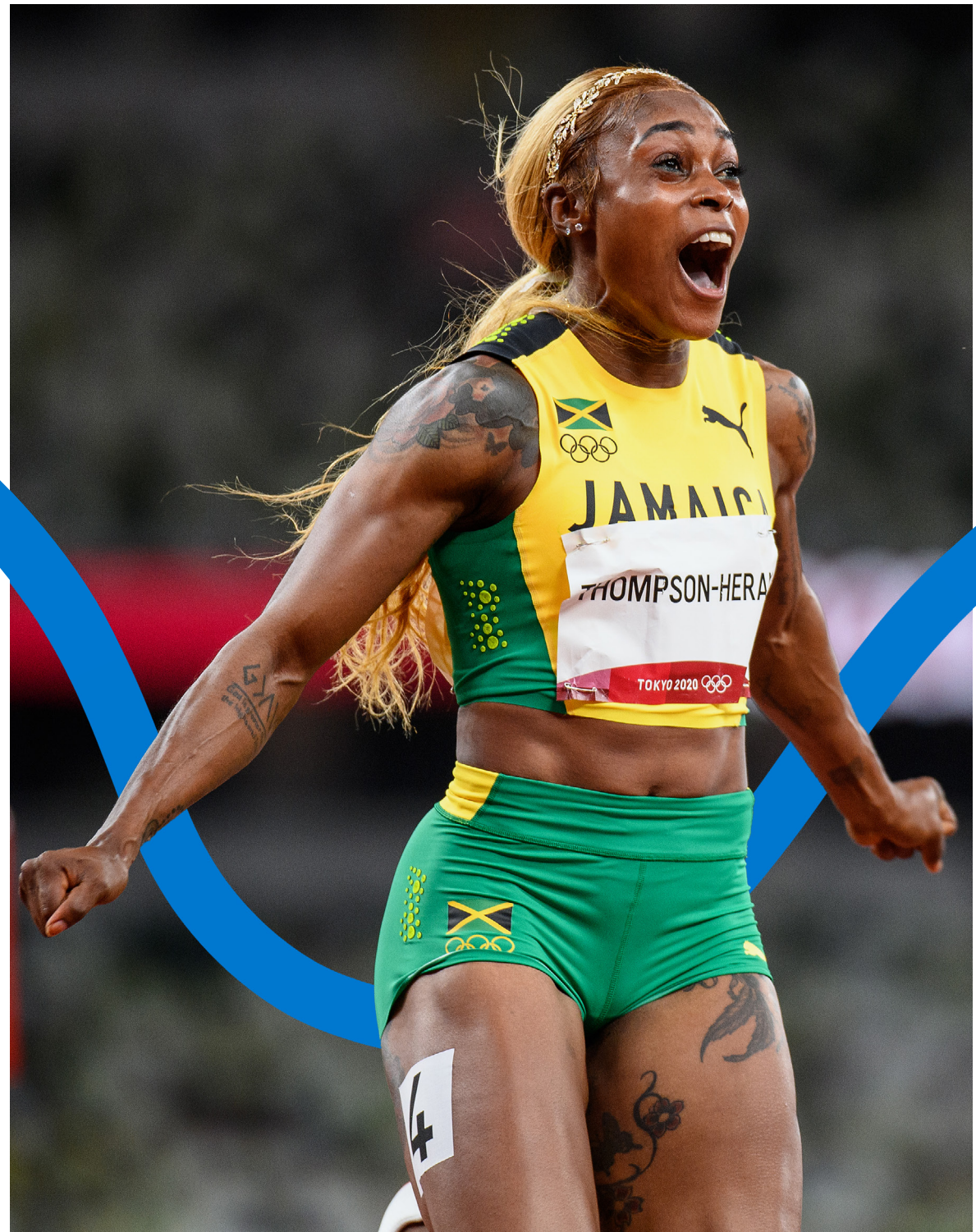


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# 1 INTRODUCTION



## 1.1 BACKGROUND

Welcome to Athlete365 Mentoring – an initiative aimed at bringing various stakeholders of the Olympic Movement together to support Olympians, Paralympians and elite athletes, and helping them thrive off the field of play.

Recommendation 3 of Olympic Agenda 2020+5, “Reinforce athletes’ rights and responsibilities”, includes a strong call to action to

### “INCREASE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLYMPIANS AND ELITE ATHLETES WITHIN THE IOC.”

As part of the implementation of this recommendation, the IOC has created the Athlete Employability Framework to increase Olympians’ and elite athletes’ professional opportunities for a successful career transition. Athlete365 Mentoring is an integral part of this framework and, together with the Athlete365 Business Accelerator and other training and employment opportunities within Athlete365 Career+, aims to empower athletes at all stages of their career.

The experiences athletes gain during their sporting career go far beyond the field of play. The benefits of sport include an array of competencies that are transferable from the world of sport to the world of work, including resilience, a sense of teamwork, discipline, the ability to connect with a community, leadership and, overall, a set of unique skills that make athletes a great fit for companies. Athletes bring passion to the workplace and have the powerful potential to become change-agents for good.

We recognise this and want to see athletes integrated into the workforce, where they can directly contribute while benefiting from a successful dual career as they transition into the next phase of their lives. This is why an athlete’s job placement is at the heart of our activities.

In line with our vision, we believe there is strong value in bringing Olympic Movement stakeholders together with athletes to share knowledge – and this is where Athlete365 Mentoring fits in.

Our experience suggests that mentoring can be tremendously fulfilling for both mentors and mentees. The opportunity to mentor world-class athletes offers a great learning experience, allowing mentors to expand their horizons, boost their company culture, and gain a better understanding of today’s Olympic and international athlete communities. It’s the perfect partnership for success. Our mentees – all Olympians, Paralympians or elite athletes who have excelled in their chosen sport – and our mentors – experienced professionals drawn from leading companies across the Olympic Movement – can both benefit immensely from this opportunity. Being part of Athlete365 Mentoring could be a hugely powerful professional development experience for both mentees and mentors.

Starting in November 2022, Athlete365 Mentoring brings together interested staff from the Worldwide Olympic Partners (TOPs), the IOC and other Olympic Movement stakeholders as mentors; and Olympians, Paralympians and elite athletes as mentees, to engage in a mentoring experience aimed at spearheading athletes’ career development. We see this programme as a strong vehicle for engagement and connection, leveraging the thought-leading insight and experiences of various stakeholders within the Olympic Movement.



## 1.2 VISION

Our vision is to unite and connect athletes with different Olympic Movement stakeholders, building a global, diverse community around the mentoring programme, to create a pathway to success for athletes.

Athlete365 Mentoring will empower Olympians, Paralympians and elite athletes at all stages of their career and accelerate their personal and professional development.

**“THE ATHLETE365 MENTORING PROGRAMME GIVES ATHLETES AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT AND LEARN FROM PEOPLE OUTSIDE THEIR CURRENT NETWORK, GET EXPERIENCES THAT CHALLENGE THEM AND GIVE THEM ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO BE SUCCESSFUL BOTH IN THEIR SPORTING CAREER AND AFTER THEY FINISH COMPETING.”**

Sarah Walker  
IOC Athletes' Commission Second Vice-Chair



## 1.3 GOALS

Our goal is to implement a structured, tailored and measurable global mentoring programme that can be scaled and expanded over time, and which creates long-term impact for athletes. The objective is to support athletes worldwide with their career transition, boost their self-awareness and overall well-being, and increase their employability.

Athlete365 Mentoring will complement Athlete365 Career+ and is an integral part

of the Athlete Employability Framework, which aims to increase athlete employability by leveraging the reach and knowledge of the Worldwide Olympic Partners and other Olympic Movement stakeholders.

The programme will consist of cohorts (two per year) and aims to build a community and network of mentees and mentors, advancing a culture of inclusion and diversity in the mentors' organisations and strengthening their connection to the Olympic Movement.

# 2 ABOUT MENTORING



## 2.1 WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring is a relationship between two people with the goal of professional and personal development. The mentor is usually an individual who shares knowledge, experience and advice with a less experienced person, or mentee.

Mentors become trusted advisers and role models. They support and encourage their mentees by offering suggestions and knowledge, both general and specific. The goal is to help mentees improve their skills and advance their careers.

A mentoring partnership can be between two people within the same company, the same industry or the same networking organisation. When this partnership is formed, it should be based on mutual trust and respect, and offer personal and professional advantages for both parties. Mentoring comes from a place of truth and giving; a great mentor can support others in bringing out the best of themselves.



We believe the key qualities of an effective mentor are:

### GENEROSITY

Mentors need to devote time and attention to their mentees and be present throughout the mentoring sessions. Crucially, mentors encourage and praise, while being honest and sincere.

### OPEN-MINDEDNESS

Whether cultural, generational or gender-based, mentor and mentee differences can be far more enlightening than similarities. Mentors need to be receptive and open-minded, as their mentees are likely to be different in many respects. Mentors should allow themselves to be influenced by and see the value of others' ideas.

### PERSONAL INTEREST

Mentoring cannot be taken lightly. Mentors feel invested in the success of their mentees and are committed to helping them find success and gratification in their chosen profession. Overall, good mentoring must empower the mentee to develop their strengths, beliefs and personal attributes.

### PASSION AND PURPOSE

As role models for their mentees, mentors should showcase interest and enthusiasm for their own work. Demonstrating a deep connection – with passion and purpose – will be a great example for the mentees, as they thrive on their own personal development.

### GROWING FROM FAILURE

Mentors understand the value of growing from setbacks and direct their mentees to develop a strong sense of learning from these experiences.

### KNOWLEDGE-SHARING

This quality is strongly linked to generosity – great mentors are willing to share their skills and experience with mentees. One crucial value of mentoring is the learning component. Mentors and mentees should identify areas of interest for the mentee in which the mentor can provide support, and set a plan to include this within their mentoring sessions.

### PATIENCE

Mentoring should send the mentees on a journey of self-discovery. To this end, mentors need to cultivate the patience to guide mentees towards finding their own right answers and pathway.

### CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

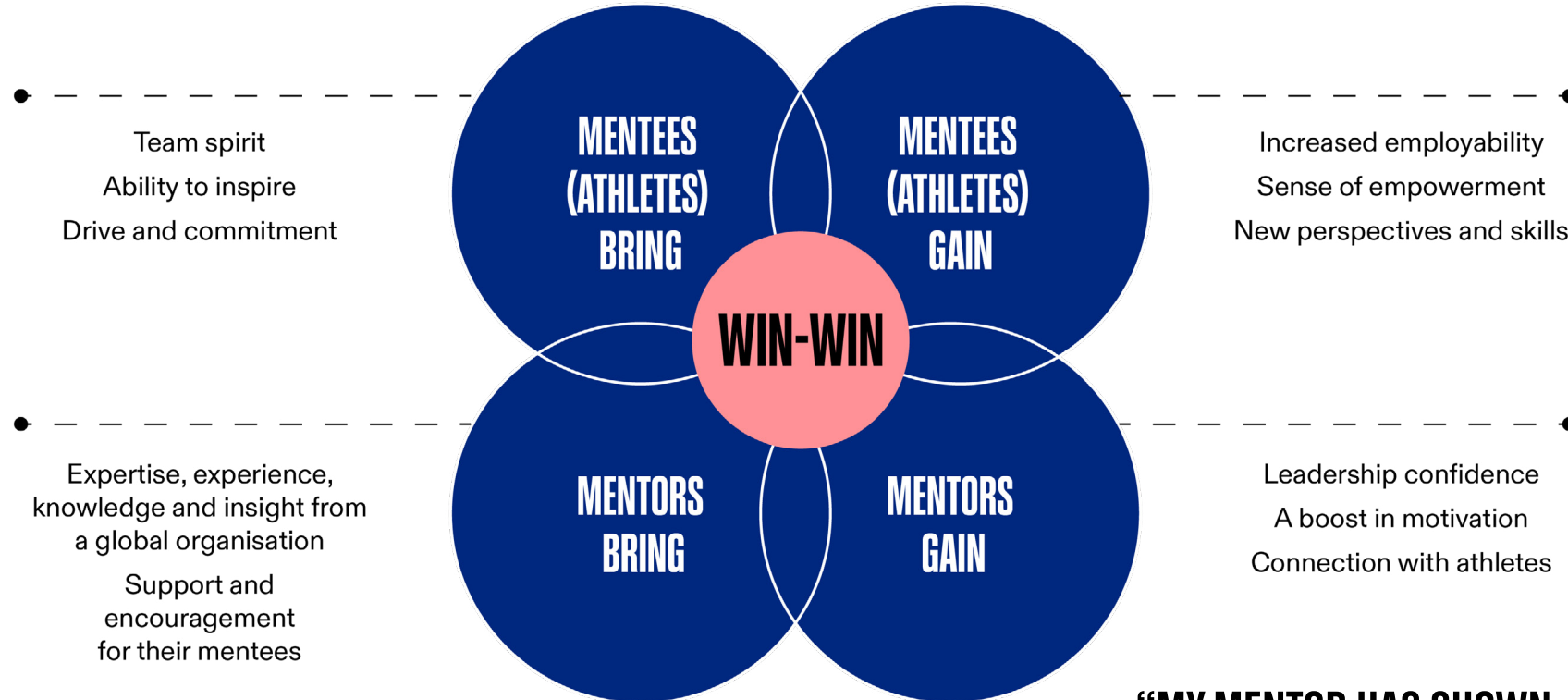
One of the key responsibilities of a mentor is to provide guidance and constructive feedback to their mentees. This is where the mentee will likely grow the most: by identifying their strengths and weaknesses and learning how to use these to make themselves successful in their endeavours.

### PERSONAL MASTERY

Being selected as a mentor is also a recognition of growth and personal development. Mentors are exemplary individuals who constantly seek personal mastery in their field of expertise and leadership development. This is a crucial foundation to build the respect and trust of their mentees, and also extends to respect to and from peers and colleagues.

## 2.2 STAKEHOLDER BENEFITS

By consistently performing in high-pressure environments, elite athletes bring transferable skills from their career that can benefit companies and professionals in the Olympic Movement. These skills include dedication, resilience and an understanding of the true meaning of performance.



**“MY MENTOR HAS SHOWN ME THAT I CAN TRANSFER THE MOTIVATION AND DRIVE I HAVE AS AN ATHLETE TO MY PROFESSIONAL JOB.”**

Tricia Downing  
Paralympian  
Shooting, USA





## 2.3 MENTEE BENEFITS

Research suggests that mentoring can be tremendously fulfilling for both mentors and mentees.

A mentoring programme supports mentees in their career transition and has many clear benefits.

### BY PARTICIPATING IN ATHLETE365 MENTORING, MENTEES CAN BENEFIT AS FOLLOWS:

- Increase their employability and employment.
- Understand themselves and their potential better.
- Increase their sense of empowerment, ability and confidence to step up and play a significant role in the workplace.
- Boost their well-being.
- Develop stronger bonds and support networks that help them reach self-sustaining change.
- Explore the types of careers that may suit them.
- Enhance leadership skills.
- Devise career strategies.
- Improve interpersonal skills.
- Resolve career challenges.
- Learn new problem-resolution skills.
- Develop new perspectives and expand possibilities.
- Build their network and skills, and prepare for a future in the workplace.

#### TIP:

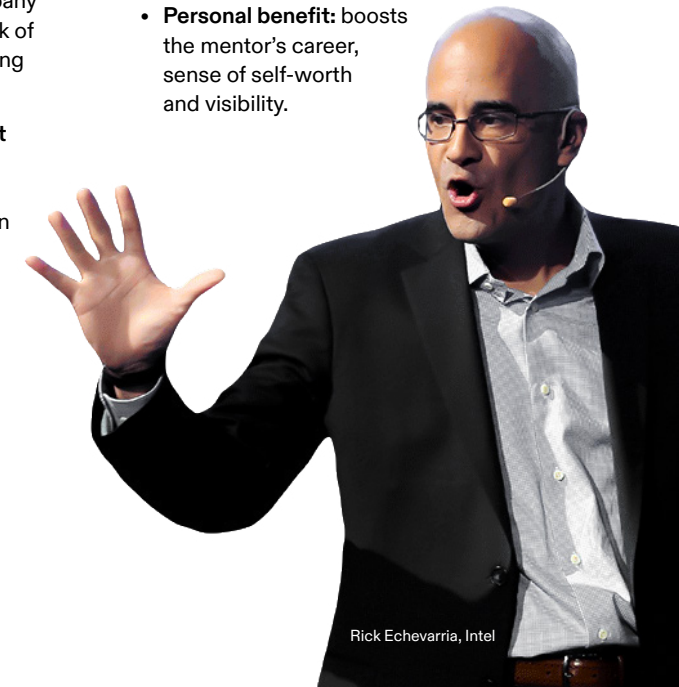
Additional tips and mentee and mentor guidelines are also available through [PushFar](#)

## 2.4 MENTOR BENEFITS

Mentors report gaining greater leadership identity and new skills, as well as more confidence in leading projects as their mentoring journey progresses.

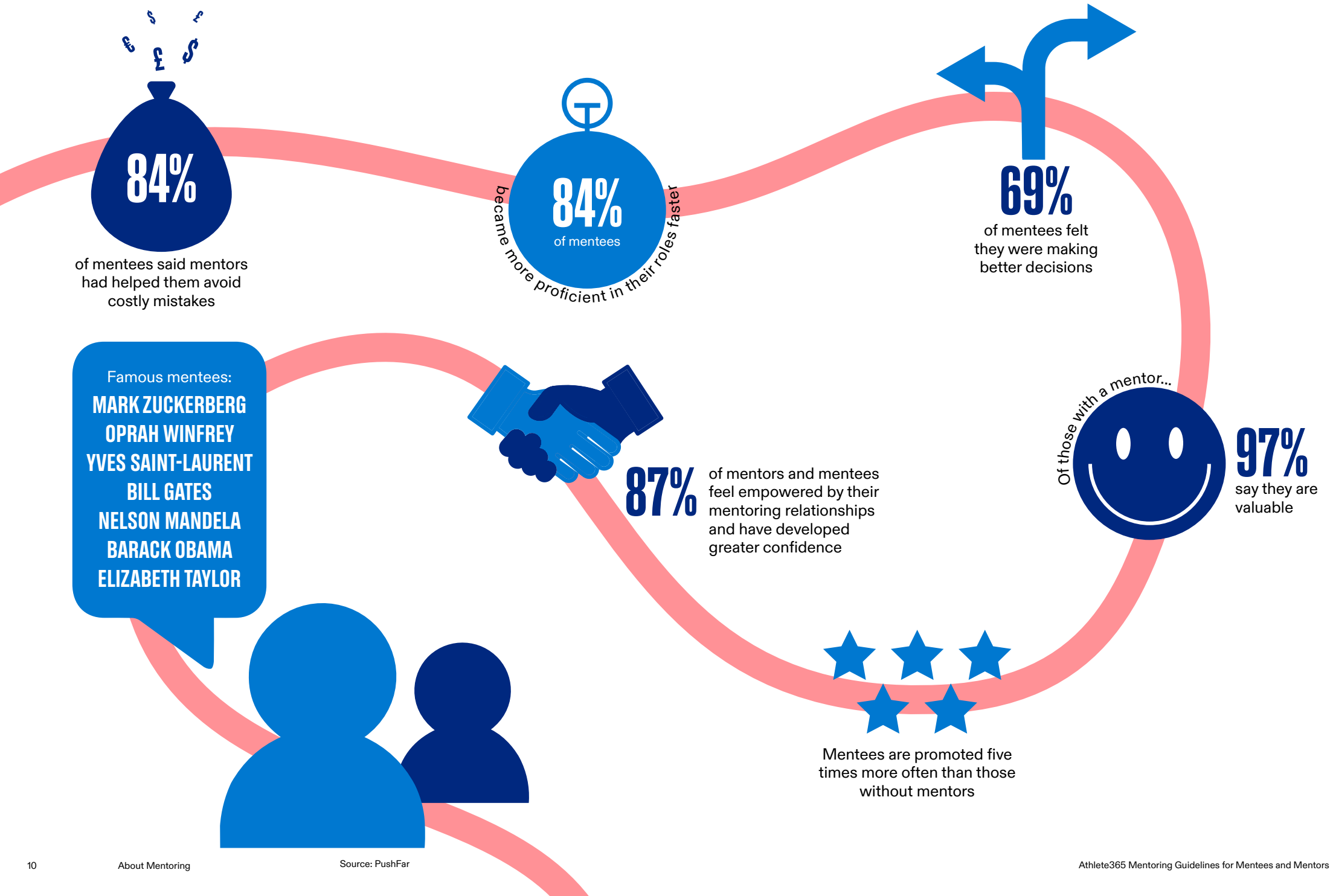
### BY PARTICIPATING IN ATHLETE365 MENTORING, MENTORS CAN BENEFIT AS FOLLOWS:

- **Earn mentor recognition for skills and experience:** mentors are known as talent-builders and for developing others. The act of mentoring obtains visibility for those who are involved as mentors.
- **Expand professional network and strengthen interpersonal skills:** connecting with global contacts beyond the company and gaining exposure across a network of world-class athletes and people working within other sectors.
- **Enhance leadership and management qualities:** developing skills that relate to peers as well as mentees, while developing a global perspective and an understanding of cultural differences.
- **Promote independent thinking:** reinforcing self-study skills through engagement with mentees.
- **Improve understanding of wider impact:** enables the mentor to have greater awareness of other initiatives within their organisation and “give back” to the mentees and society at large.
- **Open new doors:** mentors engage in a volunteering opportunity, valued by their company's leadership.
- **Personal benefit:** boosts the mentor's career, sense of self-worth and visibility.



Rick Echevarría, Intel

## 2.5 MENTORING STATISTICS



## 2.6 AVOIDABLE PRACTICES IN MENTORING

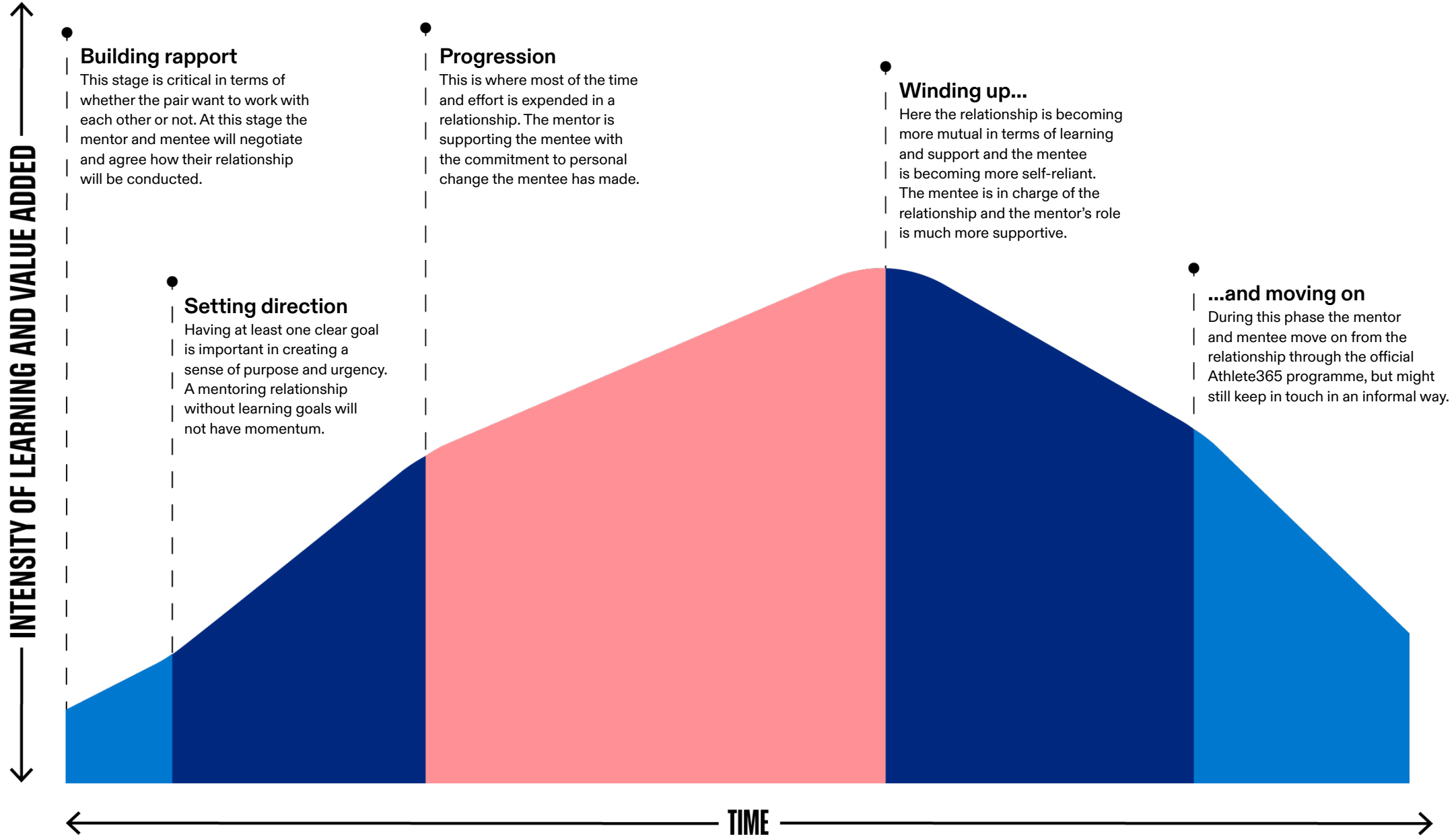
- ⊗ Don't expect to bond immediately. This will take time, trust and respect.
- ⊗ Don't avoid the truth or refuse to admit your own mistakes.
- ⊗ Avoid adopting an authoritative tone or acting with a parental approach towards mentees.
- ⊗ Avoid being all business and no fun.
- ⊗ Don't judge or impose values inconsistent with the mentee's life circumstances or beliefs.
- ⊗ Don't take it personally if a mentee does not always agree or take your advice.
- ⊗ Don't make promises that are not kept or commitments that are not fulfilled.
- ⊗ Don't prioritise your schedule in a way that affects agreed mentoring sessions.
- ⊗ Don't accommodate mentees' needs over your teaching responsibility.
- ⊗ Don't automatically give advice or criticism.
- ⊗ Don't violate confidentiality.
- ⊗ Avoid discussion of inappropriate subjects and forcing solutions when in conflict.
- ⊗ Don't lend money.



## 2.7 THE MENTORING LIFECYCLE

Mentoring relationships tend to find their own duration in time, depending on several factors including the rapport and trust between the mentor and mentee, the intensity of learning,

the supportiveness of the mentoring environment, and the ease with which the participants are able to respond to the relationship. Most relationships move through these recognisable stages:



# 3 HOW IT WORKS



## 3.1 MENTEE APPLICATION PROCESS

Olympians, Paralympians and elite athletes can apply to be mentees by registering their interest for the programme via Athlete365. If eligible, they will receive an email with instructions for accessing the PushFar software. Please refer to the eligibility criteria for mentees (page 15).



Fill in the Athlete365 Mentoring form online (allow one week for verification)



If eligible, get your invite link by email to register on the mentoring software



Register and complete the matching criteria



Allow one month after applications close for the software to select and propose mentors



Get ready, join the introductory session and read the resources provided



Enjoy your mentoring relationship!

The programme management, including registration of mentees and mentors, is done centrally through the Athlete365 team, supported by a mentoring matching software.

**PushFar** will be the matching software for Athlete365 Mentoring, and provides a full-featured platform for registration, matching, managing and monitoring participants in a mentoring programme. The platform allows for goal setting and scheduling mentoring meetings and provides direct access to resources and support curated by the IOC.

PushFar makes the match between mentors and mentees once they are registered in the platform. The match is based on goals and preferences outlined by the mentee, including:

- Mentees' skills development areas of interests
- Industry, area of work, and career stage
- Additional interest and personality match based on keyword relevance.

**“TO KNOW THAT WE WILL STILL BE SUPPORTED AFTER WE’VE RETIRED WITH PROGRAMMES SUCH AS THIS IS REALLY IMPORTANT.”**

**Christina Jones**  
Olympian  
Artistic Swimmer, USA



The PushFar system provides a monitoring tool where mentors and mentees are paired together for a period of nine months, and can insert their agreed meetings (calls), set goals and provide feedback on how their relationship is working. Mentors volunteer their time and expertise and recognise the importance of supporting mentees (athletes) globally. The exchanges between mentees and mentors are confidential, and no third party has access to them.

Athlete365 Mentoring is designed to provide the necessary support and guidance to Olympians, Paralympians and elite athletes as they transition from sport to new career paths, or advance further to their post-sport profession.

## 3.2 MENTOR APPLICATION PROCESS

Professionals from selected Worldwide Olympic Partners (TOPs), IOC staff and the wider Olympic Movement interested to become a mentor will register on the PushFar software, indicating what areas they are able to support the mentees in.

Register on the mentoring matching software and complete the matching criteria

Allow one month after applications close for the mentees to request you as a mentor, or to be matched with a mentee

You will be informed by email if you are requested as a mentor or if no suitable mentee is found at the end of the matching process

Accept the mentoring request if you feel that you can support the mentee and if their goals are aligned with your experience

Get ready (read the resources provided and join the introductory session)

Enjoy the mentoring meetings (approximately one a month for nine months!)



## 3.3 MENTEE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Olympians, Paralympians and elite athletes who are aged 18 or over can apply for Athlete365 Mentoring as a mentee.

To be eligible for the programme, athletes must complete the online application form on Athlete365 in full, and:

1

Have competed at an elite level as defined by the IOC and International Paralympic Committee (IPC), including at one of the following competitions:

- Olympic or Paralympic Games
- World Championships
- World Cup
- Continental Championships.

2

Not be currently serving sanctions for a contravention of the Olympic Charter or the IPC Handbook, any doping-related rule violation, or any other act against the integrity of sports competitions (e.g. match-fixing).

3

Be committed to the mentoring programme and leading the relationship with their mentors, including setting the agenda and meetings and being available for the introductory session.

4

Places in the programme are limited and mentees will be admitted based on their interest and motivation expressed in the application form. Good English working knowledge is a strong asset.

**TIP:**

For more information please contact [athlete365@olympic.org](mailto:athlete365@olympic.org)



## 3.4 MENTOR ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Mentors can be any professionals from the Olympic Movement who fulfil the below criteria:

1

Minimum five years working experience.

2

Positive role models with a global perspective.

3

Motivated individuals keen to learn.

4

Committed to a minimum of 10 hours of support to the mentees and available for the introductory session.

**TIP:**

Olympians, Paralympians and elite athletes who want to give back to the athlete community and have a minimum of five years' working experience can also apply as mentors.

## 3.5 MENTEE EXPECTATIONS

All mentors are volunteers, and mentees are expected to assume the lead organisational role and maintain contact throughout the programme.

Mentees are encouraged to have a positive mindset and approach the mentorship with the goal of establishing a meaningful rapport with their mentor. Mentees should speak openly and honestly regarding career paths and future plans, share experiences that have shaped them, and be open to disrupting their perception of what success looks like.



**“GOAL SETTING ARE THINGS THAT I’VE DEVELOPED AS AN ATHLETE AND HAVE BEEN REALLY HELPFUL FOR FRAMING MY FUTURE DIRECTION AFTER SPORT.”**

**Brodie Summers**  
Olympian  
Freestyle Skier, Australia

### MENTEES ARE EXPECTED TO:

- Be motivated and proactive and show commitment to the programme.
- Take the lead in organising all mentoring exchanges, making a concerted effort to complete 10 mentoring sessions over the course of the nine months.
- Record progress by completing programme evaluations.
- If you have questions or concerns regarding the mentoring experience, or for some reason the programme is not meeting your expectations, please be proactive in contacting the Athlete365 team at [athlete365@olympic.org](mailto:athlete365@olympic.org)

### HOW TO BE A GREAT MENTEE

1. When selecting the mentor, make sure you reflect on the key reasons why you are seeking the support of a mentor.
2. Take time to reflect on your needs and be open about them with your mentor.
3. Prepare an agenda for meetings, lead the organisation of the sessions and make sure you meet at regular intervals.
4. Set actionable goals and register them in the mentoring software to keep track of progress.
5. Listen carefully to the feedback from the mentor, be available and avoid being defensive.
6. Be inquisitive and open-minded, own your learning journey and have fun.



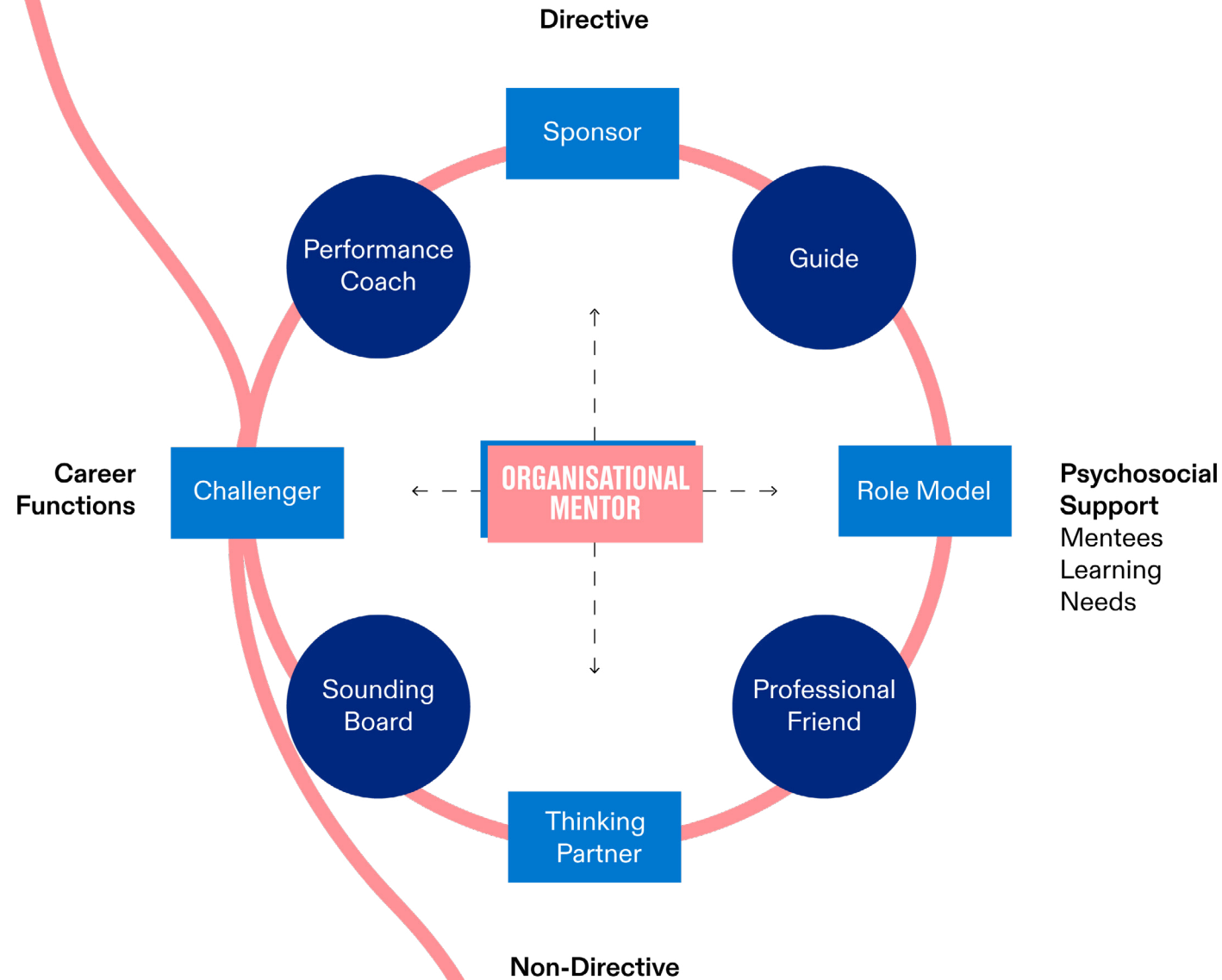
## 3.6 MENTOR EXPECTATIONS

### MENTORS ARE EXPECTED TO:

- Provide guidance to mentees on navigating career goals and aspirations.
- Support mentees in developing realistic steps to achieve their goals.
- When possible, provide opportunities to refine networking and relationship-building skills.
- Help mentees polish CVs and improve interviewing skills, if needed.
- Document progress by completing programme evaluations.
- Be proactive in contacting the Athlete365 team for support or with questions.

### HOW TO BE A GREAT MENTOR

1. Finding the right match: if you receive a mentoring request from someone who you do not feel able to support, or whose goals you feel are not aligned with your experience, then it is okay to decline the request.
2. Set expectations with your mentee in order to ensure they know what level of support you are willing and able to offer them.
3. Encourage and help your mentee to set goals and ensure the goals are practical and useful and recorded in the mentoring software. Inspire your mentee to tackle challenging goals.
4. Set time aside to be available and responsive during the meetings with your mentee. Ask questions and actively listen to develop a clearer view of your mentee's aspirations.
5. Offer experience-based guidance and advice; it is okay not to have all the answers, and you can let your mentee know. Recommend tasks and resources that can provide answers.
6. Encourage your mentee to be confident and independent and set the foundation for self-motivated, ongoing growth that your mentee can sustain after your mentoring relationship.



# 4 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- It is the responsibility of both parties to agree on a mentoring schedule.
- Each mentoring partnership will last approximately nine months; should the mentor and mentee wish to stay in contact following this period, they can do so outside the mentoring software.
- The number of hours is determined by the availability of the mentors and the needs of the mentees. Ideally, a mentoring partnership would cover 10 to 15 hours in total.
- The mentoring sessions are expected to be online. However, in-person meetings between mentor and mentee can be arranged if feasible.
- The programme is done on a voluntary basis, for both mentors and mentees.
- All mentors and mentees must attend the compulsory introductory training session, the date of which will be indicated for each cohort on Athlete365 and by email. An additional workshop or networking session might be organised for each of the cohorts, and participation in these is strongly recommended.

**9  
MONTHS**

Each mentoring partnership will last approximately nine months

**10-15  
HOURS**

A mentoring partnership would cover 10 to 15 hours in total



Sessions are expected to be online



## 4.1 CONTACT & SUPPORT

To find out more about the Athlete365 Mentoring Programme, please refer to the Athlete365 website below:

[olympics.com/athlete365/mentoring](https://olympics.com/athlete365/mentoring)

You can also contact the Athlete365 team and programme manager below:

[athlete365@olympic.org](mailto:athlete365@olympic.org)

[Pavla.Foley@olympic.org](mailto:Pavla.Foley@olympic.org)

These guidelines are adapted from a document developed by The Adecco Group for the athlete career mentoring initiative. These guidelines include the input and recommendations of Athlete Employability Working Group members, which include representatives from the following organisations: Allianz, Deloitte, Intel, LA28, Vestas and the IOC. We thank them for their valuable contributions.

# THANK YOU

