

Mentoring school leavers

Guidance notes for mentors (Washauri)



Education is key to improving the lives that we lead.

So The Red Rubber Ball Foundation provides scholarships so that Kenyan children who would otherwise not be able to do so, can complete their secondary schooling.

The aim is to develop well-rounded young people, able to earn a regular meaningful income, enough to support their family and contribute usefully to their community.

So our support continues after they have left school. Our Washauri help these young people to achieve this by providing friendship, guidance and encouragement.

Each Mshauri ...



- has a desire to help young people and see them succeed
- is willing to give up time to help their sponsored student - being in contact at least once each month. This might be a face-to-face meeting or by phone or online. You agree the best way between you to keep in contact
- is a role model for the attributes we are seeking to develop – responsibility, passion, vision, action, accountability
- maintains complete confidentiality of all issues discussed
- talks to their student about their hopes and aspirations
- listens – but actively; to probe and challenge where necessary for the student to get better understanding or greater clarity
- provides constructive feedback, praise, reassurance and a reality check
- encourages them to set goals and agree actions they can take
- holds them to account so they do what they say they'll do
- helps them learn from mistakes
- reviews progress and helps problem solve to overcome blocks, and
- provides reassurance that they can do it with hard work and effort.



Washauri serve as a friend, advocate and coach on personal, career and other issues. They have warmth, openness and patience. They listen, question, challenge, encourage and support. It is then for the student to take the action necessary to further their own ambitions.

Some of the roles you may take on are:

- **Teacher/trainer** - Providing learning opportunities and offering your experience as a guide.
- **Positive role model** - Demonstrating exemplary behaviour and offering values that will increase chances for success and happiness.
- **Social supporter/guide** - Providing encouragement to the mentee as he or she embarks on new experiences.
- **Resource supporter/advocate** - Helping the mentee access community resources.
- **Challenger** - Encouraging the mentee to maximize his/her potential.
- **Friend/companion** - Being consistently available and sincere; providing the mentee with a caring and unconditional friendship.
- **Introducer** - Making connections and introducing your mentee to people or organisations who can help.



The roles you play at any given time are determined by the mentee's needs, desires, and interests.

As a Mshauri you might ...

- share insights from your own life or work experiences. Talk about challenges you've overcome and the attitudes and actions that have helped you get where you are
- identify opportunities for work experience or suggest organisations to approach
- invite the student to your place of work so they can experience a working environment
- offer guidance on interview techniques or even carry out a mock interview
- take the student to a talk or business networking event to meet new people and learn from skilled presenters
- take a student to a coffee shop or café, a theatre or gallery, go for a walk or attend a sports event – these are all life experiences that the student may never have had. We wish to widen their horizons to new things that are possible for them.



Over time, your relationship will grow, and trust will develop. Here are some basic guidelines ...

1. Be reliable

Always try to visit your mentee when you say you will or call to cancel if there is a problem. Try not to break a date with your mentee. Trust is crucial in your relationship. Nothing undermines trust faster than broken appointments.

2. Be consistent

Short, regular contacts can often accomplish more than long, irregular ones. Contact can be by phone or message, not just face to face.

3. Focus on your mentee

Your primary relationship is with the mentee. Avoid including the mentee's family members except on rare occasions.

4. Respect the family

As much as your mentee's family may appreciate and need your help, there may be points of disagreement between you and the mentee's parents regarding what is best for the mentee. It is important to respect the parents' wishes; your role is not to replace them. You are not a mediator between the mentee and his/her parents. In addition, it is essential not to share with outsiders' personal information about your mentee and his/her family.

5. Praise your mentee

Take every opportunity to give positive feedback, where appropriate, to your mentee.

6. Be safety-minded

Be aware of your surroundings and dangers that may exist in your mentee's environment.

7. Use your imagination

Simple ideas are often the most fun and educational.



8. Respect cultural differences

Your mentee and his/her family may embrace different traditions and values than you. Be open-minded and understanding.

9. Set limits

Establish norms of proper conduct without being harsh. Feel free to reject unreasonable demands by your mentee. Discuss with him/her the basis of your differences.

10. Include mentee in developing plans

Ask your mentee to share in making decisions about your joint activities. Encourage creativity from your mentee.

11. Contact us if you have any questions or concerns