

Power dynamics and professional boundaries

This activity helps you recognize different types of boundaries in mentoring and practice handling situations where boundaries may be challenged. By mapping boundaries and responding to real-life scenarios, you'll strengthen your ability to maintain a professional and supportive mentoring relationship.

Process:

1. Boundary Mapping (10-15 min)

- Create a chart with three columns:
 - Types of Boundaries (e.g., physical, emotional, financial, time, professional).
 - Clear Boundaries – Things that should never be crossed (e.g., lending money, personal relationships).
 - Boundaries Needing Communication – Areas where expectations should be set (e.g., giving career advice vs. personal advice).
- Use post-its or markers to categorize boundaries with different colors (e.g., red for firm boundaries, yellow for flexible ones).
- In a group: Discuss key takeaways and any surprising findings.
- *Alone: Reflect on where you personally set boundaries in mentoring and write down your key limits.*

2. Boundary Challenge Scenario (10-15 min)

- Scenario: A mentee frequently asks for personal advice beyond the mentoring relationship. As a mentor, you need to guide them toward professional support while maintaining trust.

In a group:

- Role-play the situation and practice responding professionally.
- Share different approaches and discuss what feels comfortable and appropriate.

Alone:

- *Write down how you would respond in this scenario in a way that maintains your role as a mentor.*
- *Practice saying it out loud to build confidence.*

Reflection:

- What boundaries do you need to communicate more clearly in your mentoring relationships?
- How can you set boundaries without damaging trust with your mentee?
- What strategies can you use when a mentee needs support beyond your role?

By completing this activity, you'll feel more prepared to navigate power dynamics, maintain professional boundaries, and set clear expectations with your mentee.

