



Youth Centered Work Guide

Creating a Mentorship

INDIVIDUAL APPROACH

DO

Create a foundation of mutual respect so that both parties are willing to learn from each other



Enable youth to exercise their intellect in unstructured spaces

What Adults Can Do
Project Mapping ¹
Focus Groups pertaining to issues that are affecting youth ²
Unbiased Intergenerational Dialogue ³
Articles Written by Youth on current events ⁴

Protege will develop a sense of trust and respect for their mentor that will eventually lead to a dynamic team that thrives off of mutually reciprocated and accepted constructive criticism.

DO NOT

Establish an authoritarian power structure

=

Youth will feel as though the adults are dismissing their perspectives, thus they will not be incentivized to contribute to the work

Adult Re-Think

Rationing that the youth are 'too naive' to actively contribute to the topic at hand.	→	Recognize that youth have had experiences with the topic & have witnessed varying opinions through different outlets (social media, parents, peers, teachers, etc.) → they are trying to flesh out/fortify their own opinions within a safe space.
Continuously lecturing to them without consideration of their perspective on an issue	→	Listen to the youth's opinion on an issue → recognize their stance → offer alternative <i>solutions</i> that could resolve some of the conflicts.
Inflexible meetups that <i>only</i> cater to the Adults' schedule, forcing the youth to feel like the mentorship is a chore rather than an opportunity for growth.	→	Set aside a time when <i>both</i> parties are free → actively & timely communicate schedule discrepancies or changes to then reschedule.



Youth Centered Work Guide

Welcoming the Youth into the Community

COMMUNAL APPROACH

DO

Establish a non-threatening and power-sharing environment



Youth must feel welcomed to ask questions and shadow the organization workers to understand the intricacies of the space.

What Adults Can Do

Offer different Leadership opportunities that are subsidiaries to the organization⁵

Referencing Youth for current events and alternate modes of function (i.e. social media and programs)⁶

Introduce employees as a resource for Youth so they may inquire about the employee's general experience with the organization and relevant advice about addressing community issues⁷

Youth will develop confidence within their duties, *modus operandi*, and general work structure to then proceed into more advanced projects for the organization.

DO NOT

Expect perfection from Youth within their introduction to the Organization Work

=

Youth will feel as though they do not have the opportunity to grow and learn within a new position

Adult Re-Think

Chastise youth for *initial* mistakes



Know that learning is a process that must be welcomed and developed in any situation, but *especially* in the case of a youth's introduction into organization work.

Overload youth with work without thorough explanation or with inadequate timing.



Communicate with youth about personal and academic schedules so that they may realistically and optimally complete tasks.



Youth Centered Work Guide

Establishing Structure Between Youth and Organization

COMMUNAL APPROACH

DO

Have all of the people in the work environment value Youth perspective that parallels the mentor-protege relationship



Youth must be included in active collaboration and evenly distributed work-load with organization members

What Adults Can Do

Enlisting a seasoned employee to guide the youth in the introduction phase to the organization⁷

Enabling youth to lead community events that are specific to their expertise and/or interests⁸

Facilitating open, honest discussions between Youth and other adult organization leaders so that they may establish a dynamic and routine that is most beneficial for the whole group¹

Youth are able to reinforce their independence among organization leaders and older people which will hone their leadership skills.

DO NOT

Enable authoritative power structures to form between other adult organization leaders and the Youth.

=

Youth will feel powerless in communicating with the adult members which results in a loss of potential youth-lead community programs and degeneration of confidence within the organization.

Adult Re-Think

Adults designating unproductive, strenuous work to Youth as a means of a scapegoat.



Reinforce the Youth's position within the organization as a viable, respectable member of the work environment *and* the adult employee's duties that cannot be passed along.



Youth Centered Work Guide

Allowing Youth to Rely on Organization Leaders for Future Career Resources

DO

Reassure Youth that you are willing and able to provide recommendations, referrals, or general professional expertise if they decide to pursue a different path.



Adults must recognize the youth potential is not set *only* for the work being done within the organization and must openly serve as a bridge if they want to pursue a different field of work

What Adults Can Do

Enabling Youth to explore speciality areas within the organization until they feel that they will be consistently suitable for the task^{5 & 8}

Organizing events specifically for youth that allows them to speak with people who work outside of the organization in a different field⁹

Allowing Youth to network with other organizations and guest speakers in the case they may want to pursue a related career path¹⁰

This will continue to strengthen the mentor-protege bond established while securing future networking opportunities in a variety of fields for the organization and future organization youth.

DO NOT

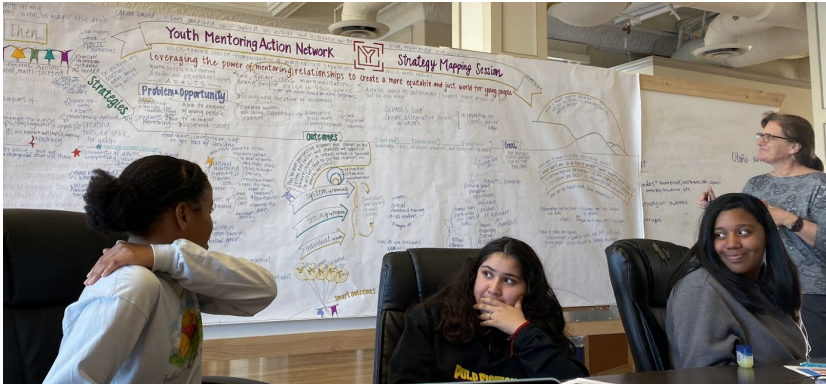
Attempt to confine the youth-employees to a singular field =

Adults must acknowledge that: though they played a role in the professional development of the youth-employee, Adults cannot dictate the eventual career path that the Youth wants to take.

Adult Re-Think

Take ownership of the work done by youth for the organization	→	Attribute work done by Youth to them and recognize that their skills and talents can be as useful in a variety of different fields
Adult Organization leaders giving the Youth an ultimatum between the organization and the interests they want to pursue	→	Appreciate the work that the Youth has done for the organization and trust that the advice & guidance given to them during their time with the organization will make them a more formidable worker in whatever career path they decide to take.

INDIVIDUAL APPROACH



1. Youth Mentoring Action Network proteges (From left to right) Cameron Adams, Sesha Real, Kayle Hadler discuss possible program strategies with data analyst Liz Newman. The feedback and ideas from the proteges has been used to improve existing programming, such as Organize the Inland Empire, and will be implemented in future programs. For more information about YMAN programs, click [here](#) or visit www.yman.org/programs

2. Youth Mentoring Action Network (YMAN) hosts a focus group for Black Girls (from left to right: Madia Wright, Dahrien Trotter) within the Inland Empire to discuss ways in which programming can be tailored to their needs. From the data gathered at this focus group, YMAN created the Black Girls (EM)Power Initiative which aims to increase the education and mentoring opportunities for Black girls in the Inland Empire region. For more information, click [here](#) or visit www.yman.org/blackgirlsempower



3. Youth Mentoring Action Network hosts an Intergenerational Dialogue between Black Women and Black Girls in the Inland Empire as a means for them to understand and relate to each other. This event is part of the Black Girls (Em)Power Initiative. For more information, click [here](#) or visit www.yman.org/blackgirlsempower

4. An article by YMAN Youth Program Coordinator, Jerry Feng, delves into the history of racism and xenophobia against Asian-Americans amidst the global pandemic. This article is featured in the Youth Mentoring Action Network Platform, Reimagining Youth Work. For more information, click [here](#) or visit www.bit.ly/ReimaginingYouthWork



Let's Learn From History: Scapegoating Doesn't Solve Issues

Imagine yourself, a nurse, a doctor, working shift upon shift, dusk to dawn, at a local hospital with an incessant...

 Torie Weiston-Serda... • Covid-19 and ... • Apr 22, 2020



5. YMAN Youth Program Coordinator, Morgen Campbell, leads Digital Dreamers Academy. Digital Dreamers Academy is a STEM-focused mentoring and support program offered by YMAN that provides young musicians and artists in the Inland Empire access to professional equipment to create various forms of media such as music and cinema. For more information, click [here](#) or visit www.yman.org/mobilemusicstudio

6. After Youth (left to right: Dahrien Trotter, Madia Wright, Reginald Meeks, and Megan Domond) expressed that they wanted alternate forms of mental health access, YMAN partnered with Self-Care Boxing Lab so that the Youth were able to use boxing as a mechanism to cope with stress and anxiety. This event was part of Organize the Inland Empire, a subsidiary program of Youth Mentoring Action Network. For more information about YMAN programs, click [here](#) or visit www.yman.org/programs

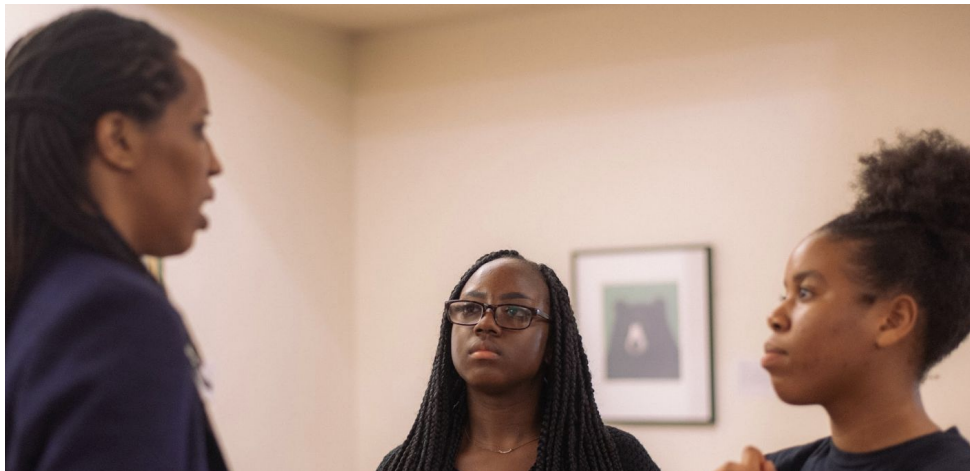


7. YMAN Training and Outreach Director, Cade Maldonado (middle), guiding YMAN Youth, Trenai Thomas (right) and Yahaira Herera (left), through the FAFSA process during College ABC Bootcamp. College ABC Bootcamp is a program offered by YMAN that provides high school juniors and seniors in the Inland Empire step-by-step guidance on applying and succeeding in college. For more information about YMAN programs, click [here](#) or visit www.yman.org/programs



8. YMAN Youth Program Coordinator and Community Liaison for Black Girls (Em)Power Initiative, Cameron Adams, speaks about the importance of Mental Wellness for Black Women and Girls at Black Girls Heal Event hosted by Wellness Clinician Wendy Whitmore (not pictured). The Black Girls Heal Event is one of many sessions for the Black Girls (Em)Power Initiative which is an YMAN program that aims to increase the education and mentoring opportunities for Black girls in the Inland Empire region. For more information, click [here](#) or visit www.yman.org/blackgirlsempower

9. Youth Mentoring Action Network (YMAN) invites Former Senator Kevin De Leon (far left) to speak with YMAN youth about political activism and government policy. This event is part of the subsidiary YMAN program, Organize the Inland Empire which teaches young people how to research, organize and sustain critical and collaborative youth movements to better their communities. For more information, click [here](#) or visit www.yman.org/programs



10. Youth Mentoring Action Network Proteges, Lyric Manley (middle) and Cameron Adams (right), speak with Dr. Bettina Love (left) after her lecture about being a co-conspirator for Black rights. This event was held for the Black Girls (Em)Power Initiative and Organize the Inland Empire Program. For more information, visit www.yman.org/blackgirlsempower or www.yman.org/programs