

Engagement Strategies

Strategies to use NOW

Writing strategies:

- Attend writing workshops offered at and near your institution or online by professional societies.
- Arrange a peer review group through your Postdoc Association- establish a peer review committee with an 'editor' and 'reviewers'.
- Form or join a writing group on campus.
- Tell your mentor that you are interested in reviewing manuscripts.
- Tell your mentor that you are interested in preparing manuscripts for publication.
- Tell your mentor that you are interested in preparing and submitting a grant application.

Speaking strategies:

- Attend communication workshops offered at and near your institution or online by professional societies.
- Tell your mentor that you are interested in acting as a lab ambassador or campus escorts to visitors.
- Tell your mentor that you are interested in meeting with visiting scientists.
- When attending a conference or meeting, identify three individuals you want to meet and prepare questions to ask them.
- Volunteer to be a judge for poster sessions.

Presentation strategies:

- Attend and participate in journal clubs and seminar series.
- Tell your mentor that you are interested in delivering formal introductions for seminar speakers.
- Arrange a peer group for practicing presentations.
- Use an app like, Orai or Speeko, to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Craft and prepare to deliver a scientific elevator speech.
- Ask to rehearse for your mentor before conferences.

Strategies to use in the FUTURE

Writing strategies:

- Peer review—appoint a peer review committee with an 'editor' and 'reviewers' (go beyond the co-authors)—this is good practice for everyone.
- Ask for summaries of articles you don't have time to read. This will give them practice in summarizing, paraphrasing, and expressing opinions.
- Ask for written critiques of articles or conference presentations. Explain to them what should be in a critique, and provide and discuss a sample of a critique.
- Allow them to upload a manuscript to a journal to get experience and appreciation for the process, and to feel like a part of the process.

Speaking strategies:

- Remember to acknowledge mentees when they speak up!
- Draw mentees out in discussions by asking low-risk questions such as, "Jinhai, would you like to add any thoughts?"
- Ask your mentees to make a point of asking at least one question in every public presentation they attend.
- Add "round robin" elements to lab meetings in which everyone has to address a given question.

- Ask a mentee who doesn't speak as much to explain something to the rest of the group or mentor a more junior student.
- Have a "what's new" moment at the beginning of meetings in which mentees mention a recent article, science news item, blog post, etc.
- Informational interviewing (with or without provided script**). You can encourage mentees to do this at national conferences, requesting 15 minutes over coffee with prominent investigators.
- Have mentees act as lab ambassadors or campus escorts to visitors.
- Set up mentee-oriented meetings with senior visitors and encourage all mentees to participate.

Presentation strategies:

- Journal clubs, incorporating strategies for both presenting and speaking.
- Formal introductions of guests in front of an audience (see Handout Packet, p. 5).
- Presenting science to community groups, other students, science nights, etc.
- Scientific elevators speeches or 3-minute theses.
- Ask mentees to rehearse together (even without you) before conferences. Seeing someone else present and giving them constructive feedback helps the observer develop their own skills.

**See binder resources for a copy of the mentee instructions for informational interviews.