# American Association of Professional Landmen
# Advisory Landman Connection

## Being a Participant

[i]As a participant you can enjoy many benefits, including (1) gaining insight from your advisor's expertise, (2) receiving critical feedback in key areas, such as communications, interpersonal relationships, technical abilities, and leadership skills, (3) developing a sharper focus on what you need to grow professionally, (4) learning specific skills that are relevant to professional and personal goals, (5) networking, and (6) having a friendly ear with which to share frustrations as well as successes.

The following are some tips that will perhaps make your experience as a participant a success for both you and your advisor.

1. **It's your job, not theirs**. The focus of this program is on you, the participant. Don't expect your advisor to do all the work. His or her role is to facilitate your development, not do it for you. Take the initiative and follow-up on agreed expectations.
2. **Think commitment, not lip service**. Regular, ongoing contact is one of the most important building blocks for success of the program. Agree with your advisor to meet on a regular and ongoing basis and avoid cancelling appointments.
3. **Show up for the relationship**. Be prepared before your meeting with anything agreed upon and with an issue to discuss that's important to you. There is always something to discuss since events have occurred between the current meeting and the last one. The issue need not be monumental—sometimes simple things can lead to great discussions and insights.
4. **Give back and get more**. Advisor's don't usually ask how the participant has benefitted from the relationship. Take time to share examples and to say "thank you" on occasion, and you will often find that the advisor will give more without your having to ask. Sharing how an advisor has been helpful in the past gives the advisor guidance on how to be helpful in the future.
5. **Keep expectations realistic**. Unstated assumptions or expectations can easily derail a relationship. To avoid this, you and your advisor should both discuss your expectations of each other and the relationship. For example, discuss how often you will meet, or what areas you will work on. When there is a change in expectations, discuss this as well. Relationships grow and change and so do expectations, so those agreed upon early on may not be the same later. Have a periodic conversation to discuss your mutual expectations.
6. **It's risky, but it's healthy**. Your relationship with your advisor is not meant to make you comfortable with where you are. It should challenge you both professionally and personally. This cannot happen unless you are willing to take risks. What kind of risks? Whatever makes sense, but things like discussing your lack of confidence, challenging an advisor on an issue, trying something completely outside your comfort zone are all examples. Taking risks is an integral part of growth and well-being. So, by taking risks, you are actually getting healthier.
7. **Be yourself; we already have everybody else.** You do not need to act exactly like your advisor. You are a unique person. Recognize your uniqueness and resist the temptation to clone your advisor. Recognizing our differences allows us to remain who we are.
8. **Don't be afraid of your advisor's silence.** You are in a session and you seem to run out of things to say, and your advisor isn't helping because all she or he is doing is keeping quiet. This is a good thing. Your advisor's silence is inviting you to probe more deeply into what is on your mind, and it is an opportunity to share more deeply in the relationship. In this situation, pause and look inside yourself to try and get at what is of immediate concern or on you mind and share that with your advisor. The possibilities of what may happen are endless.

9. **The elephant will crush you.** Don't sit with an issue that you should discuss with your advisor; otherwise, it will severely impact and could derail your relationship. If something is not working in the relationship, chances are your advisor is feeling similarly, but neither one of you is taking the responsibility to deal with it. Here is an example: the relationship is not going well and you or your advisor frequently cancels appointments. Instead of discussing the issue, you both avoid it. Your relationship is doomed and probably will be a waste of time. Talking about the elephant in the room will remove the elephant and give you the opportunity to reframe your relationship in a positive way.
10. **Maintain confidentiality and trust**. Advisors and participants have a responsibility to treat each other with dignity and respect and to behave in an ethical manner. Advisors should not intrude areas the participant wishes to keep confidential until invited to do so. However, they should help the participant to recognize how other issues may relate to these areas. All advisors are expected and required to maintain high levels of confidentiality. Although opinions and issues such as skills building and self-confidence concerns that can be resolved over time should always be kept confidential, employee theft, divulging trade secrets to an outside third party or unlawful behavior are examples of situations where confidentiality doesn't and shouldn't apply regardless of whether it involves the advisor or participant.

---

[i] Management Mentors, Resources, The 411 on all things mentoring related.