

# Leadership & Professional Growth in Mentorship

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**ISAPS® Mentor Program**

This resource is designed to support mentors and mentees in developing the **leadership mindset and professional skills** essential to excellence in aesthetic plastic surgery. Mentorship is not only about sharing technical expertise - it's about shaping future leaders who will uphold ISAPS standards and raise the bar for our specialty.

## LEADERSHIP THROUGH MENTORSHIP

Mentorship is a leadership act. Whether guiding a mentee through surgical principles or supporting professional decision-making, the mentor models how to lead with integrity, vision, and accountability. Likewise, mentees are encouraged to grow into leaders - confident, ethical, and committed to continuous improvement.

## LEADERSHIP FOCUS FOR MENTORS

As a mentor, you are already a leader in your field. The mentoring relationship gives you the opportunity to:

### Model Excellence

- Demonstrate professionalism in all interactions (with patients, teams, mentees).
- Uphold and share ethical standards and ISAPS values.
- Remain open about both successes and lessons learned.

### Empower, Don't Direct

- Guide mentees to think for themselves, not just follow instructions.
- Support decision-making through questions and reflection.
- Encourage autonomy, confidence, and resilience.

### Share Career Insights

- Offer honest reflections on your career journey - challenges, pivots, and defining moments.
- Support mentees in navigating clinical, academic, or entrepreneurial paths.
- Identify opportunities for growth: fellowships, presentations, committee roles.

### Coach Beyond Surgery

- Discuss business practices, work-life balance, team leadership, and stress management.
- Reinforce that leadership includes self-awareness and humility, not just authority.

## **LEADERSHIP FOCUS FOR MENTEES**

Mentees are emerging leaders. Regardless of training level, a proactive, reflective approach will help build essential leadership skills.

### **Take Ownership of Growth**

- Come prepared to meetings, follow through on action items, and reflect on feedback.
- View mentorship as a partnership, not a passive experience.

### **Ask for Feedback - and Use It**

- Seek out feedback on clinical and non-clinical performance (e.g., teamwork, communication).
- Use the Goal Setting Worksheet and Progress Log to track personal and leadership growth.

### **Observe Leadership in Action**

- Take note of how your mentor manages challenges, makes decisions, or leads a team.
- Ask questions about the “why” behind choices, not just the “what.”

### **Practice Leading in Small Ways**

- Lead a journal club discussion or take initiative on a small project.
- Mentor a more junior trainee or medical student in turn.
- Volunteer for ISAPS activities or local society involvement.

## **PROFESSIONAL GROWTH THEMES FOR DISCUSSION**

### **Use the mentoring relationship to explore:**

- Professional identity and values
- Work-life integration
- Private vs. academic career paths
- Research and publishing opportunities
- Speaking at conferences and joining expert panels
- Building a personal brand within surgery
- Patient trust and communication strategies



## ACTIVITIES TO FOSTER LEADERSHIP AND GROWTH

Activity	Purpose	Who Leads
Leadership Reflection Interview – Mentee prepares 5 leadership-related questions and interviews the mentor about their leadership journey (failures, defining decisions, lessons learned)	Inspire leadership development through real-life examples	Mentee
Shadow & Debrief – Mentee observes the mentor during clinic or professional engagements (e.g., staff briefing, patient consultation, team interaction), followed by a debrief to discuss what leadership looked like in action	Show leadership in real-time and allow reflection	Mentor
Career Mapping Exercise – Mentor and mentee sketch their career timelines and identify leadership milestones, opportunities, and future goals	Foster long-term thinking and vision	Both
Leadership Challenge Case Study – Discuss a complex leadership dilemma (e.g., team conflict, ethical decision, managing a difficult patient), exploring possible approaches	Develop problem-solving and decision-making skills	Mentor
Lead a Project or Presentation – Mentee leads a small activity such as preparing a journal club, conference abstract, or case presentation, with mentor support	Build confidence and real-world leadership skills	Mentee

## ISAPS L.I.F.T. PROGRAM; YOUR NEXT STEP IN LEADERSHIP

For mentees (and mentors!) looking to go further in their leadership journey, ISAPS offers the **L.I.F.T. Program (Leadership Insights For Transformation)**.

This program is designed to develop **strategic thinking, communication, collaboration, and global leadership skills** among aesthetic plastic surgeons.

**Find out more about the ISAPS L.I.F.T. Program:** <https://www.isaps.org/education/isaps-lift-leadership-program/>

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Mentorship is a catalyst for leadership. Every conversation, challenge, or reflection is a chance to grow as a clinician, collaborator, and global contributor to the future of plastic surgery. Whether you are guiding or being guided, step into your leadership role with purpose - and support your mentoring partner to do the same.