

Role of Mentors and Mentees

Mentors

- Mentors should follow RIBA recommended “Best Practices For New Beekeepers” document.
 - This will reduce the chances of the “ask 10 beekeepers, get 10 answers” issue that tends to be confusing for a new beekeeper.
- If an issue is found in the hive the mentor should explain what is seen, why it may be occurring and what some basic remedies are.
 - This helps eliminate the “my mentor said I had mites so I had to treat” or “my mentor told me to do it, but I don’t know why.”
- If a mentor is unable to decipher or diagnosis a colony issue they should guide the new beekeeper to an appropriate source.
 - They can also aid the new beekeeper in collecting the information needed (photos and notes) to present to another beekeeper for assistance.
- Mentors should not lead an inspection. They should observe the technique of the mentee and provide positive feedback and constructive criticism.
 - Things that should be evaluated are how a mentee handles a frame from start to finish. Were they slow, deliberate and gentle? Did they fully assess the frame accurately?
- Mentor should not be bringing their personal tools to mentee’s hive, to reduce chance of spreading disease. Gloves should be newly washed, or disposable preferably.

Mentees

- Understand that your mentor is volunteering their time and not a private tutor. Effort and research should be done to try to solve your issue first.
- Prior to the arrival of your mentor you should have your hive notes available, all your equipment in order for the inspection, and a plan (what you need help with or are concerned about).
- You should have your smoker and combustible materials ready to light when your mentor arrives. You should always have a lit smoker when opening a hive.
- The mentee should be receptive to feedback from the mentor and ask for additional feedback if needed.
- After the session the mentee should spend additional time following up by doing additional research and reviewing sources regarding topics that were discussed in the meeting.
- New beekeepers should make every effort to attend RIBA meetings. Each meeting provides the opportunity to meet with other new and experienced beekeepers. Also, educational presentations are given at each meeting.