

## Interacting with the Research Mentors

### Face-to-Face Etiquette

You will be matched with your mentor during a meeting in early November, at the end of the Qualification Phase. The following are suggestions on how to demonstrate **interest** and **respect** when working with your mentor, both during this meeting, and all future meetings or interactions:

1. **Eye contact** – Eye contact shows that you are interested in what the person is saying and that you are listening to them. It is a sign of respect.
2. **Speak clearly** – Avoid mumbling or talking softly, so that the person listening can clearly understand you. Practice with your Teacher and Teammates in advance.
3. **Be prepared** – Review in advance what you need to talk about and what ideas you plan to share. If you are meeting to talk about your model design or poster, make sure that you have specific questions and ideas to share, and a design ready to talk about or show off.
4. **Be gracious** – Always thank your mentor for taking the time to meet with your SMART Team.
5. **Be respectful** – In addition to saying thank you, call her or him by “Dr. \_\_\_\_\_” unless they tell you otherwise. Respect boundaries – mentors generally are not your close friends. It is not appropriate to share intimate details of your personal life with them. Act professionally and refrain from using slang.
6. **Show interest** – Show enthusiasm and motivation for this modeling program. Your mentors are volunteering time from their busy schedules to help you learn, so let them know this is time well-spent for you!
7. **Dress professionally/neatly** – Suits or a dress are not necessary. We ask that you dress neatly and cleanly. Overly-casual attire (ripped jeans, athletic pants, spaghetti straps, inappropriate slogans, etc.) is not appropriate for any SMART Team event. School-logo shirts are great!

### Email Etiquette

Email is a great tool for communication. This is especially true when communicating with busy people. Most of the same Face-to-Face guidelines above still apply when communicating electronically. Consider the following:

8. **Email communication from students to the mentor should be channeled through the Teacher, unless the mentor has told you otherwise. Teachers should proof all emails from students before sending to mentors.**
9. Be professional and courteous in all emails. Do not use slang, abbreviations or acronyms (like LOL, RU...) Address them by name, introduce yourself, be clear and concise, and end it with a thank you and your name. Example:
 

*Dear Dr. \_\_\_\_\_,*  
*This is \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ SMART Team. We are working on the \_\_\_\_\_ Task and have a question about \_\_\_\_\_ . We attempted to find the answer by doing \_\_\_\_\_ but were unsuccessful. Can you guide us where to look or help us better understand \_\_\_\_\_ ?*  
*Thank you,*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (name)
10. ALWAYS include a subject in your email. Include “SMART Team” in it so that your mentor recognizes it as an important email. Emails without subjects are often deleted to avoid spam or viruses.
11. Use a standard/formal/semi-professional name in your email address. For example, “callmebubbles@\_\_\_\_.com” is NOT an appropriate email address. Many mentors will ignore messages from emails like this. The name should be recognizable. If you don’t have access to one through school or home, you can get a free gmail account with your school name (ie: HartfordSMARTTeam). Or if permitted, use your teacher’s school email.