



Social and Civic Engagement for Newcomers and Immigrants

Mentorship Toolkit

References and resources for searching for, self-starting, and running mentoring opportunities regarding voluntary leadership positions on boards, committees, tables and councils.

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As you're looking to self-start a mentoring relationship with a professional, we want you to be conscious of 3 key things: Research, Approach, and Relationship.

- **Research:** It is important for you to learn about the people you'd like to have as mentors before you reach out.
- **Approach:** We'd like to make sure that the professionals that you're reaching out to understand your experience and the reason you're looking for this opportunity.
- **Relationship:** Setting expectations for both parties and a commitment agreement is necessary for establishing a successful mentoring relationship.

Research

How to look for the right mentor and how to know if you've got the right mentor.



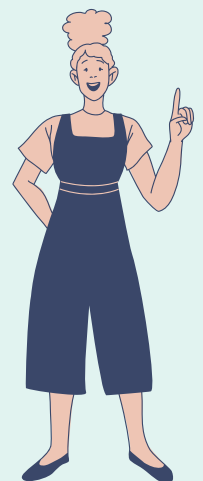
Approaching Potential Mentors

How to communicate your interest to professionals and self-start a mentoring opportunity.



Mentoring Relationship

How to make sure you create the best environment for the mentoring relationship and ensure that both parties have a complete understanding of each others' expectations.



Do Your Research

When you're looking for a potential mentor and are trying to decide if they will be a right fit for you (and if you will be a good fit for them) it is important to consider the following topics and questions. An effective mentoring relationship should provide you with knowledge and advice in areas that you might be struggling to progress in.

Finding a Mentor

You might struggle to find someone who you think could be a mentor at first, but start with your own professional network.

If you're looking for people outside your network you can search on LinkedIn or look at Board of Directors or Team pages on organizational websites and reach out to someone you might feel inspired by.

Their Time (And Yours)

Professionals might find it difficult to commit their time to a mentoring role. For this reason it is very important that you consider and deeply value their time.

Similarly, as a mentee your time is extremely valuable and you have the right to keep a mentor accountable for their commitment.

Their Work

- Think about your next few career goals and look for people who match, preferably people you know personally or could easily meet.
- Think about the career-path you'd like to take and find people that could mirror that and provide you with guidance.



Ask Yourself

- What are your priorities in meeting with a mentor?
- Which aspects of their job or career do you want to know about most?
- What areas are you hoping to improve in?

Remember that being a mentee is not a passive role and that you should define your own goals before entering into a mentorship.

Are they the right mentor?

The answer to this question will rarely be clear at the beginning of your research.

Before asking them to be your mentor, make sure you approach and discuss subjects of your goals and your trajectory during an **informational meeting**.

Approaching Potential Mentors

Finding a person who will be a right fit as a mentor and will volunteer their time to provide guidance in your career path is not an easy job. As we mentioned in the above section, it is important to Ask Yourself specific questions regarding your needs and expectations for mentorship and remember that this is a two-way relationship.

Initiative

Stay focused on developing yourself, whether it is your knowledge, skill or experience. A mentor will be sharing their experiences, providing advice, being a role model, offering their knowledge and sharing their perspectives with you. This is a mutual process and you should have the initiative to start this process.

Write a compelling Ask

- You might want to connect with them over LinkedIn or approach them at their company email
- Explain what you want to get out of the mentorship, why you want the person you're asking to be your mentor, and why you want a mentor in the first place. Let them know that their career mirrors your would-be career path, and you think you could learn a lot from them
- You will find examples of different situational emails in the next pages

An Informational Meeting?

Prior to making the mentorship ask, you should make the time to get to know your potential mentor in a different setting.

This is why we consider informational meetings extremely important. In these meetings you'll seek advice on career paths, the industry, and the corporate culture of a potential future workplace without necessarily asking them to become your mentor immediately.

More than one mentor?

It is important to consider that one mentor might not be able to help you achieve all of your goals. You can have different mentors for different areas such as: Leadership, Job Changes, Networking, etc...

- There is no right or wrong number of mentors as you progress through your professional career.
- Even after the formal mentorship ends, you may agree to continue the mentoring relationship to share any personal or professional achievements and continue to seek their advice.



Sample Emails

We want you to have the confidence to reach out to professionals that you consider to be representative of your desired career-path. For that, we want to provide you with a few sample guidelines which you can use for contacting them in different occasions. In this page, we will outline the first approach.

Remember:

- Once you've looked at a potential mentor's career path, or skills and find that they're a good candidate, you should contact them in order to arrange an informational meeting.
- Remember that you should include your resume/linkedin in this email, in order to give your potential mentor an insight into who you are.
- Be flexible with your time and respectful with theirs. potential mentors are volunteering their time to speak with you, so show up on time and be prepared with specific questions.

Dear [Their Name],

My name is *[insert your name]* and I am a *[add a short description of yourself (your current work position, your qualifications, your area of expertise)]*. I really admire the work that you have done for *[a company, a cause, or a project/in a position]*. I have been part of MOSAIC's SCENE project (www.mosaicbc.org/scene), which consisted of providing newcomers and immigrants with the tools necessary to participate in voluntary leadership positions.

This project has given me the drive to expand my network and better my professional skills. I would love to learn more about your career and your experience working at *[organization or position]*. I'm hoping you might have 15–30 minutes to meet with me in the next few weeks over the phone or through online conferencing.

Please let me know if this might be possible, and what dates and times are most convenient.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

[insert your name]
[insert contact information]
[insert your LinkedIn profile]

Checking In

It is possible that after you've sent the email you are still waiting on an answer from them. Your email could've gotten buried in their inbox, or they could've forgotten to get back to you. Checking in about your inquiry in the following week is a good thing!

Remember:

- Persistence to get what you want can show to be a good trait. Sometimes you might need to reach out more than once to one person in order to receive a response.
- Reaching out to check in with them is not a bad thing, but remember to be brief and forward your previous email in order to not repeat your ask as a whole.
- If you do not receive a response after a second ask, you might have to find someone else who might be more willing to take your meeting request.

Dear [Their Name],

I hope this email finds you well. I am reaching out again in reference to arranging a phone or online conference meeting in order to learn more about your career and the steps you have taken. As someone who aspires to *[what are your aspirations, do they relate to your mentor's work?]* I would appreciate to discuss this with you.

I look forward to hearing from you and I'm hoping we'll be able to talk for 15–30 mins.

Best Regards,

[insert your name]

[insert contact information]

[insert your LinkedIn profile]

After Informational Meeting Email

Whether you have decided that this person would be someone that you'd like to learn more from or if you have decided that you would not like to have them as a mentor, it is important that you reach out to them and thank them for their time.

Remember:

- In the process of reaching out to someone and speaking with them at an informational meeting, you might notice that they're not the right mentor for you, but it is important that you still email them after the meeting in order to thank them for their time. Making connections and expanding your network is important.
- Make sure to take notes during your meeting to bring up in your email. In your email you can detail some of your biggest take-aways from your meeting with them.

Hello [insert name],

I hope this email finds you well. I wanted to thank you for taking the time to speak with me on [insert the day you met]. It means a lot to me to be able to learn from people like you, who have successfully built a sustainable and inspiring career path.

Talking with you has given me a great insight into what I am hoping to achieve in the future and I hope that we can continue to talk in the future.

I want you to know that some of my biggest take-aways were:

- [bullet point 3 (or less) top things you discussed and learned from them]

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Best Regards,

[insert your name]

[insert contact information]

The Ask

So, you've had a few informational meetings with some people who you've learned about and you have gained a lot of knowledge from. Now it is time to decide which people you'd consider to be your top potential mentors and reach out to them.

Remember:

- This email will formalize your Mentoring Relationship. Use this email to outline the reasons why you think this relationship will be beneficial for the both of you.
- Make sure they are considering this mentorship as an option and not an obligation. We're all busy, and you should approach the ask fully aware they might say no. And that's okay! If they do say no, mention you admire their path and thank them for considering. That leaves the door open for a future relationship

Hello [insert name],

I hope this email finds you well. I wanted to thank you again for taking the time to speak with me on [insert the day that you met]. I really appreciated the knowledge and experiences you shared with me and I would like to know if you'd be interested in becoming a career mentor.

I am looking for someone who might be able to provide their advice in [insert what you're looking for in a mentor, what your near-future career goals are, what you would like to get out of the mentorship].

I'd like to ask if you would be able to consider a mentorship request at this time and what might the mentorship commitment look like for you?

Looking forward to hear from you.

Best Regards,

[insert your name]

[insert contact information]

After Meeting Email

So, you've established a mentorship with someone and you've arranged for a formal meeting in which you will discuss a specific topic. Remember that after your meetings, you should contact your mentor to thank them for their time and set up your next meeting.

Remember:

- During your meeting: take notes of the things you learn from your mentor. You can use them in your email to tell them about the things that you've learned from them.
- After the meeting: think about when to meet next, depending on your mentor's time and your relationship with them this meeting could be in a month or a few months. We will go over how to establish these meeting expectations in the **Mentoring Relationship** portion of the document.

Hello [insert name],

I hope this email finds you well. Thank you so much for taking the time to speak to me and for such an engaging conversation. I'm glad that I am able to learn from you in this manner.

I wanted to share my main take-aways from today's meeting:

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-
-

In regards to setting a meeting for next month would [insert date and time] work for you? Please let me know if you have any other suggestions. We'll speak soon.

Best Regards,

[insert your name]

[insert contact information]

Mentoring Relationship

When building a mentoring relationship, both parties should be aware of the expectations and the commitment of the mentorship. In this section we'll outline some key aspects of mentoring relationships and in the next page we'll outline expectations and commitment setting.

Advice-Seeking

It is important that you understand that a mentor is someone you can get insights from, they're not your decision-maker. You have to come to your own decisions after listening to their advice.

Your Role

As a Mentee you'll be receiving a lot of very helpful formative information, make sure you:

- Share with your mentor the things you've learned
- Appreciate and thank your mentor for taking the time to help
- Take action on the advice you've been given

Your Career

- You should always be mindful when taking the advice you receive from your mentor and apply it to your own context.
- You will receive advice, but the decisions are yours. You decide your career path, and a mentor should support your choices and provide their feedback.
- Remember that sometimes it can be hard to take a compliment or look back and appreciate your own work. In the same vein, be open to hearing tough feedback.



Meetings

Before each meeting, send your mentor an agenda — a piece you may want to discuss with them, a new project you've worked on and want feedback on or indicate that you're trying to ask for a promotion or raise. This will help both of you in knowing what to expect for the meeting.

Meetings [continued]

Arriving at meetings early or adjusting your own schedule to make a meeting more convenient for your mentor can be a great way to build up your relationship with them.

Remember to take notes during your meetings and to follow up when you say you will. You want to make sure that your mentor stays invested by showing initiative.

Expectations & Commitment

Once you have reached out to someone and requested that they formally mentor you, you will have to have a meeting to set out expectations and commitment for the both of you. Considering each other's time and schedules as well as their ability to actively mentor you.

Length of Mentorship

Decide on an end date. Based on how long your short-term goals will take to achieve, decide how long you want the mentorship relationship to last. A good rule of thumb is usually four to six months or up to a year, with the option to keep meeting informally.

Meeting Frequency

When setting up your expectations figure out:

- How often you'd like to meet (i.e. once a week or once a month over four to six months)
- How long (i.e. half hour or one hour)
- How you want to meet In-person, over the phone or over video conference.

Decide whether you or your mentor want to send out calendar invites to protect the time you plan to meet.

Contact Outside of Meetings

You might need to get your mentor's advice outside of your scheduled meetings. Make sure that you have previously agreed that this method of communication is accepted and that you are aware of your mentor's schedule.

Meeting Time

When you're meeting your mentor, you should be prepared with problems you need advice on or inquiries to discuss, to show up on time and to treat this as a professional and respectful relationship. It is important that the meeting time is used effectively!

Communication

Be clear of your goals and why you think this person is the right mentor for you. Be up front about your time-commitment, what you're willing to put into the relationship and what you expect from them.

If you're clear about what you need from the start, communication will flow smoothly



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