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# MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

*Volunteer Handbook*



# YOUR SCHEDULE

Every Mentorship relationship is different. There are some which remain consistent on a weekly or monthly basis and there are some which are more flexible. It is understood that both the mentor and mentee will have other commitments and therefore open communication should be had in order to figure out what is best for both of you.

Here are the first three steps:

1. You will be introduced to the mentee at the Centre by one of our staff. You will get to know one another.
2. You will exchange contact information.
3. You will set a time and a place to meet next. Public places such as cafe's, libraries etc. are encouraged.

Eligible Mentees will be either Permanent Residents, Convention Refugees, or Live-In Caregivers

# WHO ARE THE MENTEES?

Just as a mentor is more than a teacher, a mentee is more than a student. A mentee, as a bright and motivated individual, is the future of an organization. Mentees represent a wide range of individuals in terms of age and work experience. A mentee can be described as a “diamond in the rough” someone who has potential but needs to be polished in order to shine.

Most people imagine a mentee to be new to the working world; however, there are two types of mentees.

1. The first type is the unexperienced mentee who will need to learn the basic skills of entering into the workforce in Canada.
2. The second type of mentee is the seasoned, sophisticated person who has an ample amount of work experience and skills but lacks the necessary networking opportunities or knowledge of Canadian workplace culture.

# NETWORKING

One of the main elements of mentoring is a concept called networking. Instead of using a vague dictionary definition of networking, I prefer to explain it by saying networking is “discovering the opportunities around you”. I believe that this basic concept serves as the foundation for the program. As a mentor, your job will be to help the mentee see the opportunities around them and realize their true potential.

A mentor facilitates personal and professional growth in an individual by sharing the knowledge and insights that have been learned through the years. The desire to want to share these "life experiences" is characteristic of a successful mentor.

If you are able to show your mentee your workplace environment or introduce them to other professionals in your field, that will be greatly beneficial to the mentee.



**NETWORKING**

# COMMUNICATION

Together, the mentor and mentee share mentoring experiences that, over time, can build a successful and enriching relationship. Of course, the success of this relationship depends on both the mentor and the mentee. Both you and your mentee must want the relationship to work. You must cooperate with each other to make the most of the experience.

Reach out to the mentee when you haven't heard from them in a while and ask them if you can be of any assistance. Sometimes, the mentee will be shy to ask for help in fear that they may be burdening you so please take the initiative to make contact first and follow up as well.



# A SUCCESSFUL MENTOR

## **Supportive**

A mentor is one who supports the needs and aspirations of a mentee. This supportive attitude is critical to the successful development of the mentee. A mentor must encourage the mentee to accept challenges and overcome difficulties.

## **Patient**

A mentor is patient and willing to spend time performing mentoring responsibilities. A mentor provides adequate time to interact with the mentee and knowledge and advice to help the relationship succeed. Time requirements are defined by both the mentor and the mentee.

## **Respected**

A mentor is someone who has earned the respect of others and is a positive role model in the community. A mentor respects the mentee and seeks to be a positive influence in their life.



# THE DO'S & DONT'S OF MENTORING

- Do:**
- Get to know your mentee. Try to really understand how things are for him or her now.
  - Be consistent, but flexible. Expect changes in plans.
  - Encourage, praise and compliment – even the smallest of accomplishments.
  - Be an active listener. Use language that's easy to understand.
  - Be patient, straight, honest and sincere (people pick up on falseness and shallowness).
  - Work with your mentee. Share your knowledge rather than giving advice.
  - Be enthusiastic and stress the positive – it's contagious.
  - Help your mentee use mistakes as learning experiences and help identify their strengths and assets.
  - Tell your mentee about yourself, especially when you were in their position.
  - Help them identify the significance for their own lives of the information you are discussing (e.g., possible future profession, similar experiences, etc.) – tell them how they can use the information.
  - Have activities planned in advance & take the initiative. A mentor is usually the one who will arrange meetings. If you're going to miss or be late for a mentoring session, let the mentee know ahead of time.

# THE DO'S & DONT'S OF MENTORING

## **Don't:**

- Expect to have instant rapport with your mentee.
- Lecture, moralize or preach.
- Tell them what to do (instead, you should suggest, invite, encourage).
- Share personal problems unless it is to explain your current disposition.
- Make promises you can't keep.
- Be convinced that what mentees say is always what they mean.
- Get too personal. Mentees often wish to share only their professional background.
- Be afraid to admit that you do not know an answer or that you have made a mistake. Find the correct answer and learn together. It helps the mentee to see that you are learning too.
- Interpret lack of enthusiasm as a personal rejection or reaction to you.
- Be sarcastic or use excessive teasing.
- Lend money.
- Use foul language.

# MENTORSHIP SESSION GUIDELINES

Below are some guidelines you can use to guide your way through the Mentorship relationship. These guidelines are only suggestions and can be expanded upon through the use of other methods and techniques of teaching as you see fit:

## **1st Session (initial meeting)**

- The Mentor and Mentee will be introduced to each other by the Mentorship Coordinator.
- Everyone will introduce themselves and talk about their background
- Goals will be discussed and set by both the Mentor and Mentee (what is their one year plan?)
- Create a focused and targeted approach to working in Canada
- Exchange information and set up a day and time for next meeting

# MENTORSHIP SESSION GUIDELINES

## 2nd Session

- A focus should be placed on the resume of the Mentee to make sure it is up to par with other resumes in the field of choice, remove any unnecessary information and create a focused approach for a specific position in mind.

Here are some resume tips:

- o Condense the resume to one page, two pages max.
- o Include Canadian work or volunteer experience as much as possible
- o Proofread for any spelling or grammatical errors
- o Format the resume to look clean, consistent, and organized
- o It is best to create an industry standard resume rather than a generalized resume

# MENTORSHIP SESSION GUIDELINES

## 3rd Session

- Once a goal is set and the resume is complete, research of potential jobs can begin.
- Some useful job sites include [www.ca.indeed.com](http://www.ca.indeed.com) or [www.jobs.gc.ca](http://www.jobs.gc.ca) etc.
- Use different keywords to find a wide variety of jobs in the area
- It is okay to search outside the Niagara region to open up further opportunities
- Allow the mentee to conduct searches, research other job sites and search engines
- Discuss with the mentee their expectations

## 4th Session

- Evaluate which skills and educational requirements are needed
  - o For example: Any additional courses required? Certification?
- Discuss how these requirements can be met
- Refer the mentee to websites with more information on testing, exams, licensing etc.
- Ask for re-affirmation of knowledge (does the mentee understand the process)

# MENTORSHIP SESSION GUIDELINES

## 5th Session

- Check up on the progress of mentee (have they applied anywhere? Do they need help with anything? Cover letter? Resume?)
- Discuss Canadian workplace culture (what does the industry demand, basic etiquette etc.)
- Compare different workplace cultures and how they are similar as to allow the mentee to become more comfortable with working in Canada
- Discuss workplace lingo that is relevant for the mentee's specific field of interest

## 6th Session

- Try to provide opportunities for networking
- Networking dinners, meetings, work colleagues
- Try to find ways for the mentee to showcase their skills
- Possibly ask your work if they will allow the mentee to stop by the office in order to become immersed into a Canadian work environment

# MENTORSHIP SESSION GUIDELINES

## **7th Session**

- Help the mentee understand their transferrable skills
- Open the idea of how these skills can relate to another field of choice if interested
- Some fields are not in high demand, therefore, it is important to know what else a mentee can do besides what they have experience in or educated in

## **8th Session**

- Stress volunteering in the field of interest. This is a good way to immerse the mentee into the field and gain Canadian work experience (unpaid) but also Canadian references which is highly important.
- Research volunteer placements in the Niagara area.
- Prepare the mentee for the interview.

# MENTORSHIP SESSION GUIDELINES

## 9th, 10th Session & Beyond

- Be Creative. Give the mentee homework.
- At this point the relationship can also be aided by emails or by phone.
- Think outside the box and communicate with the mentee what their needs are.
- Feel free to send the mentee any articles or job postings you may come across.

Good Luck!

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