



Mentoring Manual

Thank you for your interest in IECA's mentoring program. As a professional organization that values collaborative and cooperative professional development, IECA is committed to the success of its members. The mentoring program is an opportunity for members to share their knowledge and expertise with each other.

Mentoring is a supportive, professional relationship between an experienced IECA Member and a Professional or an Associate Member who is perhaps newer to the profession, new to IECA, or entering a new area of consulting. Mentors are matched with mentees based on shared interests.

The Process

Timeframe

There are three mentoring terms per year:

Spring (February – May)

Summer (May – August)

Fall (August – November)

The mentoring relationship lasts for four months. At that time, the relationship can be continued if the mentor and mentee agree to continue to work together. At the end of the four-month cycle, the mentee may request a different mentor to cover other areas of need for his/her practice.

Requesting a Mentor

You may submit your request for a mentor at any time and you will be matched with a mentor at the beginning of the next upcoming term. Introductions will be made by email from the IECA office at that time.

To request a Mentor, complete the mentee application online at:
www.IECAonline.com/mentor.html

Based upon your needs you may be mentored in the following areas:

School, College, Learning Disabilities, Therapeutic, Graduate and Professional School, International, Business Practices, or Counseling and Parent Communication.

The Benefits of Mentoring

For the Mentee:

Mentoring helps the Mentee gain perspective and focus. Mentors will encourage Mentees to trust and be guided by their own intuition and judgment. Mentees can expect direction and support with the goal of gaining confidence and independence.

- Introduces a new vision of a consulting practice
- Helps develop skills and good business practices
- Expands knowledge of resources and research skills
- Builds professional and personal networks
- Serves as a sounding board to think through issues and philosophy
- Transitions new members into the Association and the field in a supportive environment
- Gives support and celebrates milestones
- Builds an understanding of best practices

For the Mentor:

Mentors are experienced educational consultants who listen carefully, demonstrate empathy and patience, and are willing to share what they have learned to help those newer to the profession or entering a new area consulting.

Mentors need not be experts in all facets of consulting, but are enthusiastic about assisting mentees in developing confidence and problem-solving strategies in a relationship of trust. An IECA mentor is a professional colleague who acts as a confidential guide.

- Broadens skills and knowledge
- Introduces a different dimension to his/her job
- Brings new insights to the Member and the Association
- Extends his/her professional network
- Provides a fresh outlook to current methods, approaches and concepts
- Assists a new consultant to transition into the field in a positive and productive way
- Promotes a team effort to open means of communication as colleagues
- Strengthens each Mentor's commitment to the organization
- Assists in raising standards of the profession

For the Association:

- Opens doors to professional collegiality
- Improves communication
- Contributes to the development of group identity
- Facilitates networking
- Improves the transfer of learning
- Develops a sense of community
- Introduces new ideas, concepts, methodologies and directions

What to Expect

Possible Mentoring Areas of Interest:

- Building relationships with students, parents and families
- Collaborating with school-based counselors
- Researching schools, colleges, or programs
- Developing school, college, or program lists
- Brainstorming and critiquing essays

- Business issues such as business structure, documents and fees
- Marketing and social media
- Office practices such as client management or technology
- Financial Aid
- Career Advising
- IECA involvement and leadership
- Expanding into a new specialty area of practice (LD, international, etc.)

Qualities of an IECA Mentor:

- Appropriate professional knowledge and skills
- Interest in and enthusiasm for being a Mentor
- Friendly and approachable
- Encouraging
- Respectful of others
- Willingness to devote his/her time
- Open and non-judgmental

Skills of an IECA Mentor:

- Listens actively and effectively
- Asks questions that range from practical information to thought-provoking conceptual ideas
- Accepts alternative methods of practice and encourages creativity and new ideas

IECA Expectations of a Mentor

- Serves as a realistic role model and promotes “best practices”; does not promote self as the “ultimate authority”
- Initiates contact with his/her Mentee(s)
- Prepares for the first meeting by reading the Mentee application form
- Makes contact at least once a month
- Shares methods and strategies used in his/her own practice
- Utilizes IECA and other resources, as appropriate
- Challenges and supports, but does not dictate
- Helps the Mentee gain confidence and independence
- Gives constructive and positive feedback
- Assists in developing research skills to find information applicable to the field and to address specific issues
- Endeavors to encourage, support and confirm the positive aspects of developing and growing a practice
- Avoids personal criticism
- Suggests a reassignment if the relationship is not productive

To Become a Mentor:

If you would like to become a Mentor, complete the online application at:
www.IECAonline.com/mentor.html

If you're not yet sure and have any questions, call the national office at 703-591-4850

Qualities of an IECA Mentee:

- Desire to learn
- Professional introspection and growth
- Interest in and enthusiasm for being a mentee
- Respectful of others
- Willingness to devote time to the process
- Open and non-judgmental

Skills of an IECA Mentee:

- Reflects on the profession
- Engages in open dialogue with his/her Mentor
- Shares milestones, successes and new information
- Accepts constructive input

IECA Expectations of the Mentee

- Desires to surpass current levels of performance and comfort
- Prepares for discussions ahead of time
- Conducts a reasonable amount of independent research, as appropriate
- Utilizes IECA resources, as appropriate
- Shows a willingness to ask questions that range from simple and practical to complex and conceptual
- Follows through with suggested resources and research
- Initiates contact with mentor as needed

Making Mentoring Work**The Mentor/Mentee Relationship:**

Both personal interest and sincerity contribute to the mentoring bond between two professionals. This may include the mutual sharing of information, experiences and discoveries, seeking input, providing follow-up and initiating contacts. More than one mentoring relationship has failed because both parties waited for the other to call or e-mail.

While Mentors and Mentees should recognize the value of reaching out to one another for support and information, some of the most productive conversations can evolve from the simple act of calling just to say hello. Given the natural progression of such a relationship, both Mentors and Mentees become valuable resources for one another.

The expectations should be clearly defined by both the Mentor and the Mentee at the outset. Some recommendations are:

- Establishing the timing and frequency of contacts
- Exchanging background information
- Identifying areas of mutual interest
- Sharing methods of achieving goals

Since needs and circumstances change over time, it is always good to reflect on how the relationship is working

Suggestions for Establishing and Maintaining a Positive Mentoring Relationship:

- Utilize any combination of telephone, e-mail, Skype, social media, etc.
- Establish a level of comfort so that both the Mentee and Mentor feel free to contact one another
- Make an unexpected call to touch base or send an e-mail to check in
- Forward articles of special interest
- Acknowledge milestones with a call, card, or e-mail
- Plan to meet in person at an IECA conference when possible

Suggestions for Meeting at IECA Conferences

- Arrange to meet for a meal
- Discuss participation in upcoming IECA workshops and events
- Attend a workshop or two of mutual interest together
- Share materials, book lists, ideas, innovations and resources
- Participate on a tour of mutual interest
- Introduce the Mentee to others at conferences, particularly to those who may have similar interests

An Example of Making Mentoring Work

Although mentors and mentees have worked together successfully using a variety of formats, we offer the following as an example:

The mentor and mentee are introduced by email from the IECA office. The two schedule their first meeting to be held by phone a week later. In the meantime, both read through the mentoring manual, IECA resources, and the mentee's application form.

At their first meeting, the mentor and mentee get to know each other and decide how they want to communicate—by phone, e-mail, Skype, or a combination. They also decide what days of the week work best for both and how often they will be in contact. The pair opts for regularly scheduled Skype meetings twice per month, and email as needed in-between. They also connect on Facebook to share professional articles of interest.

The mentee makes a list of questions and topics that (s)he wants to discuss and emails these ahead of time to the mentor. This gives the mentor time to reflect on the issues raised. The mentee also conducts a bit of background research as needed.

During their ensuing discussion, the mentee makes notes and keeps them so that (s)he can refer back to them over time. If there are follow up questions, the mentee emails the mentor for clarification. Retaining the information in this way frees up the participants to discuss additional topics, and to return to the original topic if necessary, in a richer, deeper way.

At the end of the mentoring term, in May, the pair arranges to meet in person at the IECA conference to socialize and reflect on the mentorship.

The Education and Training Committee is responsible for the IECA Mentoring Program. We encourage all new members and members adding an additional specialty to their practice to take part in the Mentoring Program. If you have questions about the Mentoring Program, call the IECA National Office at: 703-591-4850, or send an e-mail to Member Services at membership@IECAonline.com and put "Mentoring" on the subject line.

The Mentee and Mentor applications are available online at: www.IECAonline.com/mentor.html



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