



Mentor-Mentee Guidelines

By learning from a Mentor a Mentee can avoid some of the common pitfalls made in business development and focus their efforts on productive & progressive activities. This program has been initiated to ensure that experts in the bio-based space share their experiences and knowledge with the budding entrepreneurs of the future.

Mentoring is a power-free, two-way, mutually beneficial learning situation in which the mentor provides advice, shares knowledge and experiences, and teaches using a low pressure, self-discovery approach. (Starcevich, Matt, 1999, "Coach, Mentor: Is there a Difference?" www.coachingandmentoring.com)

What does a mentor do?

- Coach... by providing examples of how to perform a task
- Facilitate... by creating opportunities for learners to use new skills
- Network... by referring the learner to others when the mentor's experience is insufficient

What a mentor is...

Coach

Facilitator

Listener

Guide

What a mentor isn't...

Saviour

Therapist

Servant

Omniscient being

The role of the Mentee is to learn from the knowledge and experience of their Mentor. The Mentee will devise a plan at the outset of the program and work with their Mentor to set goals and work out the steps necessary to reach those goals.

Do:

- Demonstrate your openness to coaching and feedback.
- Listen carefully to your mentor's advice and incorporate those insights that make sense for your business idea.
- Ask a lot of questions.
- Follow through on commitments.

Don't:

- Be defensive of your idea, constructive criticism can help.
- Feel "entitled" to your mentor's time.



- Be judgmental about your mentor's experiences or choices.
- Breach a confidence.

Mutual respect between Mentor and Mentee is essential. The Mentee should have a general plan when first meeting with their Mentor. This plan should be discussed and the first meeting should close with a set of goals set in place for the duration of the Mentorship. This plan need not be overly complicated and can be used as a roadmap to guide additional meetings and actions. Keeping in contact following the initial meeting to ensure steps are being taken will work towards sustaining the relationship with the end goals in sight.

Ultimately the Mentee is the decision-maker. As outlined above a Mentor can guide but will not dictate or take responsibility for making decisions around the idea or business plan. Mistakes are part and parcel of the learning process, Mentees will make them and learn from them during this process. The Mentor can simply advise and guide towards the next steps in the business plan.

When contacting a Mentor, the Mentee should be sure to have all their ducks in a row. They should have all questions documented and schedule enough time with the Mentor to get the required answers. Chances are the Mentor's time is limited and so having this activity carried out in advance will lead to a more productive meeting.

Attending all bio-enterprise academy activities and workshops will help you to develop your business skills around the bio-based sector and will also expose you to like-minded people in the space. Aside from the Mentor/Mentee relationship participants will get the opportunity to connect with other experts, entrepreneurs, academics and researchers.