MENTOR CONNECTOR

INSPIRING | GROWING | INNOVATING

Mentor/Mentee
HANDBOOK

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Definitions & Mission

Definitions

men•tor [noun]
A wise and trusted person whose primary purpose is to teach, guide, provide advice and support to, and watch over and foster the progress of a mentee.

men•tee [noun]
An individual who is guided by a mentor. In this context, an individual who would like to have an established venue management veteran work with him or her to gain a better knowledge of the industry.

Missions

The Mentor Connector Committee's mission is to inspire, grow, and engage Mentors and Mentees in a supportive environment while providing opportunities for learning experiences, networking, professional growth, skill development and to gain peer recognition in the IAVM and the community. These skills will improve the quality of the membership and enable the association to enhance and innovate venue management.

Purpose & Objectives

Purpose

A mentoring relationship is designed to enable experienced professionals to share their knowledge, skills, and insights with mentees through a one-on-one relationship. Mentees benefit from gaining knowledge and support in achieving their professional development goals, while mentors sharpen their skills as they teach others and make a personal impact on the professional development of others and the strength of the industry association and its members.

Objectives

- To match mentors with mentees to facilitate the sharing of mutual knowledge.
- To facilitate networking among IAVM professionals through the creation of in-depth business relationships.
- To create SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely) goals for each partnership.
- To assess and recognize the success of each partnership relationship and the IAVM Mentoring Program.
- To increase participation in the CVE certification process by providing mentoring partnership opportunities to candidates.

Overview

The Mentor Connector Committee's charge is to promote IAVM's goal of becoming more inclusive and diverse through professional development opportunities, educational offerings, increasing awareness, and creation of a mentoring program.

IAVM's Mentor Connector was conceived and developed by the Diversification Committee and is managed by the Mentor Connector Committee with the purpose of providing members with the opportunity to:

- Experience meaningful and ongoing interaction with a diverse group of top professionals in the industry.
- Gain real world insight from experienced and successful professionals.
- Receive an insider's view of the association.
- Expand perspectives on a range of career opportunities.
- Establish a network of professional business contacts.
- Develop confidence through leadership and personal initiative.

IAVM's Mentor Connector Program was developed to foster learning and engagement specifically aimed at achieving professional development and improving the quality of the venue manager workforce worldwide. By building a stronger network of talented professionals skilled in solving the issues facing our industry, our association and members will become more valuable assets to their communities, their venues, performers and guests.

By pairing venue management professionals who have identified a professional development need with a member that has demonstrated competency in that area, tailored solutions can be designed to improve the skill set of the mentee and enhance their contribution to the industry.

Mentors and mentees will be selected from applications submitted to the program. All IAVM members and student members are eligible to participate.

Schedules

These schedules are approximate and may be revised as necessary at the committee's discretion.

Spring Program Schedule

Month 1	April	Matching & Orientation
Month 2	May	Partnership Agreement Due
Month 6	October	Progress/Informal Check-In
Month 12	April	Conclusion of Mentor Connector Partnership/Final Report

Fall Program Schedule

Month 1	October	Matching & Orientation
Month 2	November	Partnership Agreement Due
Month 6	April	Progress/Informal Check-In
Month 12	October	Conclusion of Mentor Connector Partnership/Final Report

Roles & Responsibilities

Mentor

Reports to: Mentor Committee

Term: 1 year

Qualifications:

- Must be an IAVM Member with documented experience/ achievement in industry
- Must be willing to actively work toward achieving mentoring relationship goals
- Complete Mentor Connector Online Mentor Application & submit a resume
- Attend Orientation Session with Mentor Connector Committee
- Sign a Mentoring Partnership Agreement
- Meet requirements listed in responsibilities section

Responsibilities:

- Drive the mentoring process by identifying SMART goals with mentee
- Meet with you mentee at regular/ agreed intervals
- Share experience and resources with mentee
- Listen carefully and objectively; encourage exploration and growth
- Provide appropriate information to help your mentee achieve professional goals
- Share feedback on progress with your mentee
- Document progress
- When appropriate, conclude the mentorship
- Evaluate the impact of participation on personal and professional development
- Complete form documenting completion of mentor/mentee goals

Roles & Responsibilities

Mentee

Reports to: Mentor

Term: 1 year

Qualifications:

- Must be an IAVM Member
- Must be willing to actively work toward achieving mentoring relationship goals
- Complete Mentor Connector Mentee Online Application & submit resume
- Attend Orientation Session with Mentor Connector Committee
- Sign a Mentoring Partnership Agreement
- Meet requirements listed in responsibilities section

Responsibilities:

- Be ready, willing, and able to devote your time and energy
- Drive the mentoring process by identifying SMART goals
- Seek new learning and commit to take action
- Meet with your mentor at regular/ agreed intervals
- Initiate meeting arrangements. Plan and present each meeting's agenda.
- Reply to emails and phone calls within two days
- Invest time to utilize resources suggested by mentor and implement strategies
- Share experiences and progress with your mentor
- Document progress
- Apply learning to improve growth
- Evaluate the impact of participation on personal and professional development
- Fulfill your commitment to your mentor and the mentoring process
- When appropriate, conclude the mentoring relationship
- Evaluate the program and your mentor at the conclusion of your partnership
- Complete form documenting completion of mentor/mentee goals

Partnership Agreement

Partnership Agreement

A link to the Partnership Agreement Form is included in your pairing email. Please "sign" and send back as soon as possible. If it is not returned within a month the partnership will be dissolved.

*Click below link to fill out and submit the Mentor Connector Partnership Agreement form.

Mentor Connector Partnership Agreement Form

Program Progress

Planning

The Mentor Connector Program is mentee-centered, which means simply that mentees are coached to take a leadership role in the mentoring process. Once a Mentor Connector Partnership Agreement has been signed, the mentee will initiate meeting arrangements.

Initial Meeting

Each pair will conduct an initial meeting. The meeting will cover the development of a communication plan, goal development and assessment measurements.

Tools to assist in the development of a communication plan include:

- Effective Communication Plan (Appendix 3)

Tools to assist in the development of partnership goals include:

- SMART Goal Development (Appendix 4)
- Goal Development Worksheet (Appendix 5)
- Partnership Goal Statement (Appendix 6)
- Mentee Action Plan (Appendix 7)

After the mentor and mentee develop a communication plan and goals for the partnership, copies of the forms will be retained by the mentor and mentee.

Meetings

It is the mentee's responsibility to plan each meeting's agenda. Tools to assist in meeting preparation and follow-up include:

- Call Prep Sheet (Appendix 8)
- Meeting Record (Appendix 9)

Assessment

Assessment

Recognizing that many barriers to success can be raised during a mentoring process due to other demands of work and personal life, each pair can reach out to the mentorship committee at any time to assist in the progress towards achieving the mentee's goals. Progress toward achieving the partnership goals will be monitored throughout the year by the mentoring committee. To facilitate the committee's monitoring of the partnership, mentors and mentees will utilize Informal Check-in Assessment Forms and the Formal Assessment Form at appropriate intervals throughout the year.

Each pair will maintain a running log of the progress of the relationship using the Meeting Record form. This sheet will provide a place to capture agenda topics, progress notes, open items, and action steps.

In Month 4 and Month 8, each pair will complete the Informal Check-In Assessment Form and submit it to the mentoring committee to monitor progress of the partnership.

*Click below link to fill out and submit the Informal Check-in Assessment Form

Informal Check-in Assessment Form

At the conclusion of the mentoring partnership, Formal Assessment Forms will be completed by mentors and mentees.

Final Report

At the conclusion of the inaugural year for the IAVM Mentor Connector Program, mentors and mentees will be asked to assess success and recommend enhancements for the future of the program. By measuring the success of the program, it is hoped that the program will increase in size and scope going forward.

*Click below link to fill out and submit the Final Report Form

Final Report Form

CVE Points

Policy

Successful participation* in an IAVM Mentor Connector Program Partnership for the period of one year will yield the following points in the “Teaching/Program Participation” area:

Mentor

5 points per partnership

Mentee

2 points per partnership

**Note: “Successful participation” is determined in the Formal Assessment Process*

Recognition

Venue Professional Magazine Profile

The Mentor Connector Committee Chair may select pairs of Mentor Connector Program participants for a partnership profile in the *Venue Professional Magazine*. Participation is encouraged to feature the strong relationships built through the Mentor Connector Program.

Concluding the Partnership

The final meeting between mentor and mentee should focus on bringing issues to a close. It is a good time to reflect on the mentorship and talk about the positive changes that occurred for each person. In no way does this mean that the professional relationship must end. Many mentoring relationships will continue on an informal basis for years to come.

In the final month, each Mentor and Mentee will complete the Formal Assessment Form. The mentor committee will use the informal and formal assessment forms to determine the success of the partnership and the program.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Mentor Information

Benefits

This is a strategic moment to invest in the future of a mentee. With the ever-increasing competition in the hospitality industry, IAVM is poised to play a major role in shaping the character of our association and the venue management industry for decades to come.

As a mentor, you can:

- Positively influence another individual by making productive use of your knowledge, skills, values and experiences.
- Gain tremendous satisfaction from contributing to the development of capable individuals and enjoy the satisfaction of seeing them succeed.
- Increase communication, leadership, and development/training skills for the association.
- Expand professional contacts through interaction with other mentors.
- Revitalize interest in your own work through connection to your mentee and their energy.
- Boost self-esteem through recognition from your mentee, peers and the association community.
- Invest in the future by giving back to the association.
- Earn CVE points for certification or recertification.

Expectations

To become a mentor, you must:

- Complete the Mentor Connector Program online application.
- Provide a personal profile or resume.
- Complete an Orientation with the Mentor Connector Committee Chair.
- Sign a Mentor Connector Partnership Agreement.
- Agree to fulfill the Mentor Connector Expectations and Commitments (below).
- Be ready, willing and able to devote your time and energy.

Mentors are influential people who significantly affect the lives of new and existing IAVM members through the people and things that they know. Successful mentors are those who embrace the art of give and take as John F. Kennedy said: “Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.” This means that mentors plan to learn from others in the industry and show leadership by sharing examples of lifelong applied and hands on experience.

As a mentor you are expected to:

- Invest time in yourself and your mentee.
- Discuss with the mentee, any expectations you have regarding levels of contact or content of exchanges.
- Communicate respectfully and responsibly with your mentee, fostering a relationship based on mutual trust and support.
- Value the member's time as if it were your own.
- Be available, meeting with your mentee within respectful time intervals.
- Reply to email messages and phone calls from your student within 2 business days.
- Fulfill your commitment to your mentee and the mentoring process.
- Evaluate the relationship and the program at the conclusion of the mentorship.
- Contact the mentor committee with any concerns regarding your mentoring relationship or the overall program.

Guidelines for Effective Mentoring

One of the most difficult tasks a mentor must prepare for is to let the mentee take the initiative and practice leading. That role reversal may feel somewhat awkward at first. Two ways to feel more comfortable about this role reversal are to

- Acknowledge that you are spending time helping to shape the future, of the association and
- Reflect on a past mentor of your own, remembering what worked best when you spent time together.

These thoughts may set the tone for a potentially dynamic outcome.

Discuss topics on business and career. Mentees are responsible for being prepared to cover these areas:

- Career changes
- Educational path
- Continuing education
- Leadership Role in IAVM
- Challenging events, pivotal or peak experiences
- Future plans, role models

Respond directly to questions. When someone asks a question that seems too personal or out of context with the professional conversation, simply say, "I would rather not discuss it." Some people prefer to take a passive approach or adopt an avoidance method. In general, however, everyone benefits from genuine, direct and honest answers, especially when practicing how to say "no."

Probe to find common interests. Some mentees may be shy and uncertain about themselves while talking with seasoned leaders in the industry. If a conversation, particularly in the first or second meeting, feels stilted and uncomfortable, then it is most appropriate to veer away from the prepared agenda and probe for more common interests. Sometimes, just finding out that both people share a mutual delight in golf or reading eases tension. Once that sense of shared interest exists, a real exchange of ideas can result.

Components of Effective Mentoring

Guidance:
Mentors are guides through the learning process, helping mentees understand and integrate into their own life knowledge, skills, character and relational abilities – qualities that are essential for success in the meetings industry and within IAVM.

Vulnerability:
Mentors are selected because of their expertise and character. Therefore, sharing your own development and experience is essential, as is fostering a relationship based on mutual trust and support. Be willing to have your mentee observe your life and career, and allow the mentee to benefit from the fruit of your failures as well as successes.

Discussion:
Stories, dialogue, questions and even role play can be vital components in the learning process. Listen to and learn from mentees and discern ways to provoke and encourage their growth. Learning to ask the right questions is as basic to growth as discovering answers. Pose questions and challenge mentees to help them make their own decisions. Act as a sounding board or coach.

Affirmation:
We learn best in contexts of support and encouragement. As a mentor, seek to enable the professional development by encouraging the progress of the mentee.

Application:
The best mentoring enables specific application in small steps. Mentees need to be given the opportunity to put immediately into practice what they are learning from a mentor.

Appendix 2: Mentee Information

In today's marketplace, the value, if not the necessity, of being proactive in securing knowledge and advice from industry professionals has never been greater. Every mentorship experience is beneficial.

Benefits

- Gain from the mentor's knowledge, skills, values and expertise.
- Grow through greater awareness of challenges and opportunities.
- Receive critical feedback in key areas, such as communications, interpersonal relationships, technical abilities and leadership skills.
- Develop a sharper focus on what is needed to grow personally and professionally.
- Learn specific skills and knowledge that are relevant to professional and personal goals.
- Gain knowledge about the IAVM culture and unspoken rules that can be critical for success in the industry.
- Earn CVE points for certification or recertification.

Expectations

To become a mentee, you must:

- Complete the Mentor Program online application.
- Provide a personal profile or resume.
- Complete an Orientation with the Mentor Connector Committee Chair.
- Sign a Mentoring Partnership Agreement.
- Agree to fulfill the Mentor Connector Expectations and Commitments (below).
- Be ready, willing and able to devote your time and energy.

As a participant in the Mentor Connector Program, you are a representative of your respective company, therefore, held to a very high standard of conduct.

As a participant, you are expected to:

- Initiate contact to schedule meeting(s).
- Research the business, organization and individual.
- Plan and present each meeting's agenda.
- Open and close each mentor meeting.
- Meet with your mentor at regular intervals.
- Reply to email messages and phone calls within two days.
- Fulfill your commitment to your mentor and the mentoring process.
- Evaluate the program and your mentor at the conclusion of your mentorship.
- Contact the mentor committee with any concerns regarding your mentoring relationship or the overall program.

Learn & Share

As in most endeavors, the more you put into the program, the more you get out of it.

Find out about your mentor: In addition to the personal profile you receive, do research the mentor prior to the visit. Look for boards on which they serve, awards received, or recent newspaper articles about their company.

Research the mentor's company, function and industry. Mentors represent a wide group of companies, functions and industries. Prepare yourself by researching the intricacies of each of these areas. The better prepped you are, the more you will understand during mentor meetings.

Communicate respectfully and responsibly. Clarify your expectations. Discuss with your mentor any personal expectations you have regarding levels of contact or content exchanges. The better you communicate your interests before the relationship begins, the more you and your mentor will get out of it.

Ask the right questions. Give thought to questions you will ask before you meet with your mentor. You can start with the list provided and/or come up with your own. Make them strategic for your own growth and adjust as the mentorship progresses.

Be flexible. Mentors are busy, so be flexible regarding places and times to meet with them. When geographically feasible, you may want to offer to meet for coffee or talk on the phone. Be considerate of and show appreciation for your mentor's time. Mentors are volunteers!

Accept a subordinate learning position. Don't let ego get in the way of learning. Trying to impress the mentor with your knowledge or ability will set up a mental barrier between you both. It will prevent you from receiving what your mentor is giving.

Bring in current news or propose discussing a hot topic in the industry. Discussing a real- life business situation will increase the impact of the visit. Creating active dialogue around a hot issue is an interesting way to learn about the way your mentor approaches business decisions.

Leave time for Q&A. Make sure you build in enough time for a Q&A session at the end of each meeting.

Appendix 3: Effective Communication Plan

1. Find out what time of day works best for both of you and schedule accordingly.
2. Try to set a regular day and time in advance. Avoid rescheduling as much as possible.
3. Use all forms of communication as much as possible, e.g. phone, face-to-face, email, Facebook, Skype, etc.
4. Focus on the quality of your meeting rather than the quantity. However, don't let more than two weeks go by without any contact.
5. If feasible, try to schedule periodic face-to-face meetings at least 1-2 times during the program.
6. Always set an agenda for the meeting and end each meeting with a review of Action Items & Responsibilities due for the next meeting.
7. As much as possible, make yourselves available for phone and email contact between regular meetings.
8. Remember that both mentoring partners are responsible for making time to meet.
9. Work to make sure the time you spend with your partner is productive and moves the relationship towards the partnership goals.

Appendix 4: SMART Goal Development

SMART Goals

Specific	Must answer the questions – Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?
Measurable	Concrete criteria to measure progress and success.
Attainable	Plan steps to develop the attitude, ability, skills, and financial capacity to achieve the goal.
Realistic	Any objective you are both willing and able to work toward.
Timely/Tangible	No time frame = No urgency. Someday won't do. Should be experienced with the senses (taste, touch, smell, sight, hearing).

Example of a SMART Goal:

To increase exposure for the IAVM Mentor Connector Program, I want to write an article for Facility Manager Magazine about Mentoring Partnerships that is 2000 words in length and have it done by July 1. I'll commit to writing two hours each week until I reach completion.

Appendix 5: Goal Development Worksheet

These questions are designed to assist you in “fine tuning” your goals, aspirations, objectives in an effort to develop a clear path to success. Think “outside the box” and think big!

If you could achieve anything you desire, what would it be?
What do you want MORE of in your career?
What do you want LESS of in your career?
What changes would you make?
What areas of your job or career would you want to improve?
What do you want to learn to improve your skills (think Core Competencies)?
How can you convert these items into SMART goals?
What is the first step toward achieving each goal?
What are the action items you can do to help advance toward this goal?

Appendix 6: Partnership Goal Statements

Mentee:	Mentor:
Preferred Communication:	Preferred Communication:
Preferred Phone #:	Preferred Phone #:
Email Address:	Email Address:

Establish 1-5 SMART goals to be achieved through the Mentoring Partnership.
Specific • Measurable • Attainable • Realistic • Timely

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Appendix 7: Mentee Action Plan

Purpose: To create an action plan and timeline to guide improvement and facilitate implementation.

Directions: Use this form as a template to formulate an action plan for each of your desired goals.

Goal: _____

Potential Obstacles: _____

Tasks What will be done?	Responsibilities Who will do it?	Resources People, Materials	Timeline Deadline (Day/Month)	Status In Progress/ Done

Proof of Progress (Benchmarks and milestones that indicate progress)

_____

Measurement of Success (Benchmarks and milestones that indicate success)

_____

Improvement Strategies

_____

Results/Accomplishments

_____

Appendix 8: Call Prep Sheet

Mentee Name:

Mentor Name:

Date:

Progress since last meeting:

Outstanding Items/Intended to Accomplish:

Current Challenges:

Current Opportunities:

Direction for Next Session:

Action Items (to be completed before next session):

Appendix 9: Meeting Record

Mentor Name	Mentee Name
Goals 1. 2. 3.	
MEETING RECORD	
Date	Phone / Video Call / Face to Face / Conference
Discussion Topics / Action Items	
Results from Prior Action Items	
Open Items/ Action Items/ Topics for Next Meeting	
Challenges / Assistance Needed	
Next Meeting Date	Phone / Video Call / Face to Face / Conference

Appendix 10: Creating a Successful Mentoring Relationship

These tips can help you and your partner start out on the right foot as well as continue to keep the relationship running smoothly. You can use these in preparation for, as well as during your first meeting together. You also should revisit them regularly to ensure that you are fully benefiting from your mentor-mentee relationship throughout the program.

Setting and Managing Expectations

Be open and honest about your expectations from the very beginning. For example:

- How do you want to communicate, e.g. meetings, phone, email, or a combination?
- What do you expect to be responsible for bringing to each meeting and what do you expect your partner will be responsible for in return?
- How will you know that you're making progress together?
- Ask yourselves these questions regularly – make this kind of a check-in a part of each agenda.

MENTORS: Ask your mentee to outline personal and professional goals for the year-long period of the program. Work together with your mentee to create program goals and how you plan to achieve these together.

MENTEES: Identify the issues/goals you want to address during the program. Come to meetings prepared with questions. Share your successes and freely discuss any less than satisfactory results. Ask you mentor, "What do you know now that you wish you'd know "then"?"

TOGETHER: At every meeting review your goals and progress against your action plan. Discuss how the mentoring program has helped (or not) you achieve your goals. Use the mentor committee to identify other resources if needed. Let the committee know if the program isn't working for you.

Don't cancel or put off a meeting just because there is no urgent to-do list. Use the time to address bigger questions about professional development/career paths rather than focusing on the day-to-day issues. Take advantage of each other's backgrounds and experiences.

Plan effective communication.

General Tips

1. By making yourself available and sticking to your scheduled meetings you demonstrate that you value each other's time and commitment to each other and to the mentoring program.

2. Take the time and energy to establish trust. Recognize that this doesn't happen overnight and takes effort on both parts. Remember that you are sharing vulnerabilities at times.

3. Share work samples with each other as appropriate while maintaining necessary confidentiality.

4. If feasible, make an effort to visit each other's work site and/or attend an event at each other's venue.

5. Maintain your curiosity. Ask questions of each other.

6. Remember that this is a two-way street – you both have the opportunity to learn from each other.

7. Don't lose sight of the big picture – it's all about developing a quality workforce for the venue management industry, staffed by the best professionals.

8. Don't lose sight of individual achievements as you work towards your goals.

9. CELEBRATE EACH SUCCESS NO MATTER THE SIZE!

Appendix 11: Tips for Mentees

Be prepared for your mentoring sessions. Be professional by being prompt, prepared, and maintaining a professional attitude. Preparation means coming to the conversation with a plan to include items you would like to focus on. Be punctual, well organized, and ready to give a brief update on your recent progress and developments and to propose an agenda for the conversation. You might email the topics to your mentor ahead of time, if you think the mentor would appreciate it.

Establish a mutually agreeable plan for mentoring sessions. Schedule sessions including length of time each of you will need and plan adequate time to prepare. Your mentor is a volunteer whose extra time is scarce. By establishing a time commitment and ensuring that conversations start and end on time, you will demonstrate respect and responsibility to your mentor.

Let your mentor know who you are. Share your hopes, fears, ideas and goals openly, even if your mentor has quite a different background or style. Share your professional experience and goals. Your mentor will then be able to put your situation in perspective.

Focus on the relationship. Your mentor's role is not to get another job for you. Be realistic in your expectations and focus on building a relationship.

Ask direct questions about what you most want to know. Since the mentee is the one who establishes the agenda for the conversation, you are in a position to set up the conversation in a way that provides the most relevance and value for you. Let your mentor know what is most on your mind and what would be most helpful to you to talk about. If the conversation strays, just prompt the mentor to return to the original topic. You are responsible for ensuring that the conversation meets your needs.

Practice learning from anyone. In the past, people believed that a strong personal connection was essential to a mentoring relationship. However, mentoring serves many purposes and most don't require a deep personal connection. Mentoring may be short- term, specific to a situation, focused on a particular area of development, or mentoring may turn out to be a life-long conversation. By recognizing that you can benefit from a variety of perspectives and styles – even those quite different from your own – you will open yourself up to new ideas, valuable information, and a wide range of perspectives. You and your mentor don't have to have everything in common to have a productive exchange.

Listen with an open mind. Often, we turn off our listening when we believe that the perspective being offered isn't pertinent or that the person speaking is "different" from us. Your mentor's experience – however distant in time or industry-specific it may be – will carry a nugget of learning for you. Challenge yourself to find the connection, rather than rule out the advice or perspective that you are hearing. Be ready to learn something new as a result of the conversation.

Ask curious questions. The most enjoyable mentoring sessions flow with a natural back- and-forth dialogue. Relax and enjoy getting to know another person. Don't be shy about asking curious questions, such as, "What was that like for you?" or "How did you feel at the time?" Ask a question or two at the start of each session to get to know your mentor's experiences, such as, "I'd love to learn about your career path…" or "What do you know in hindsight that you could share with me about how you achieved professional success?"

Take notes. It's difficult to remember key points and commitments after the meeting. Keep a notebook and jot down ideas and insights during the session, and in between sessions. Do capture the commitments that you and your mentor make to each other so that you are able to follow up appropriately.

Provide context and brief updates to help your mentor to understand you. While the mentor doesn't need to know every single thing about you, it's helpful to both of you if you use the first session to get to know each other. At the beginning of each session, provide a brief update on progress since the last conversation.

Respect your mentor's boundaries. The mentor's role is to support your development through regular conversation. Outside of the session, most mentors have very limited time to engage with mentees. Communicate respectfully with the mentor. Be careful not to inundate the mentor with emails or phone calls outside of the session. Respect the time boundaries of the session and do all you can to end at the agreed upon time.

Follow up on agreements. If you've committed to take a step as a result of the mentoring session, make sure you do so. It is discouraging for the mentor if you have made commitments that you don't act upon. You can also help the mentor to keep his commitments by sending a brief thank you note after a session that also lists any agreed- upon actions from either of you.

Say "thank you!" Remember to thank your mentor after each session and give appreciation for specific insights or examples that helped you. This information will let your mentor know more about what you value and how he is making a difference for you.

Appendix 12: Tips for Mentors

Be fully present. Mentoring requires excellent listening and your full attention. Set aside your daily challenges and pressures during a mentor session so that you can devote your full attention to your mentee. Whether the mentoring session is in person, by telephone, or via email, this means making yourself unavailable to others during the mentoring conversation. By not allowing interruptions, the quality of your mentoring will be significantly more effective and productive for both of you.

Take time to make a personal connection at the start of the session. One of the pleasures of a mentoring relationship is the sense of connection between two people. Before launching into the focus area for the day, spend a few minutes to build your relationship with your mentee. “Small talk” often helps both people to relax and get ready for a deeper conversation.

Ask open-ended questions. In order to provide relevant perspective, the mentor must understand the mentee’s situation and concerns at a deep level. Rather than asking questions that can be answered with a simple “yes” or “no,” practice asking questions that call for a reflective response. Remember to ask early on why the mentee has sought a mentor and the intended gain from the experience. It is better to know some of the right questions than to have all of the answers. High-gain questions are open-ended questions rather than yes/no questions that typically start with “Who, What, When, How, Tell me more about…Give me an example of…” You will find a list of open-ended questions for mentors in our resources section.

Listen with curiosity, not judgment. Be conscious of your own listening and strive for deep listening coming from your own curiosity rather than problem solving. You will find that your mentee faces issues that you have also faced. However, each person is unique and comes to their present moment from a different path. Listen with the goal to learn more about the person. Catch yourself before judging and simply “follow curiosity” to learn more.

Try not to interrupt, unless there is a need to manage time or focus the dialogue. Paraphrase or “feedback” what the mentee says to confirm that your understanding is accurate.

Ask direct questions to focus the session. Mentoring sessions often go all too quickly. To focus the session, ask simple and straightforward questions at the beginning of the session to ensure that the conversation is focused on the topics that are “top of mind” for your mentee today. For example, you could ask, “What would you like to talk about today?” or “I’d love a quick update and then let’s choose a topic for today’s session.” Ask early on in the session: “What help do you need from me?”

Notice what has “heart and meaning” for your mentee. A good mentoring conversation involves much more than trading information and knowledge. By paying attention to the emotion and energy of your mentee, you will be able to observe what matters most to your mentee, as well as where he or she may feel discouraged or overwhelmed. Notice your mentee’s enthusiasms and areas of confidence and point them out to your mentee to help build confidence and connection.

Tell your story. People often learn best through storytelling. If you have experiences related to the challenges faced by your mentee, check to see whether your mentee wishes to hear the story of your experience. Make sure to focus on the aspects of your experience that are most pertinent. Telling your story should take no more than 10 minutes of a mentoring session, though it may lead to a rich discussion that links directly to the mentee’s situation. Try not to preach!

Share the conversation rather than doing all the talking. Sometimes, mentors mistakenly believe that their job is mainly to impart wisdom and expertise. If you find yourself talking at length, with little interruption or dialogue with your mentee, stop yourself and reorganize the conversation by asking questions about your mentee. Watch out for the tendency to “download” when someone asks the question you’ve been waiting all your life to answer!

Set and honor boundaries. Mentoring relationships work best when each person knows what to expect – and what not to expect. During the first session, establish the way in which the mentoring relationship will be set up. How frequently will you meet? Decide on the best form of communication (email, phone, Instant Messenger, etc.). How long will the conversations last? May the mentee contact you by email or telephone in between mentoring sessions? Be clear about how you would like it to work. Attention here early on prevents misunderstandings later on.

Follow through on your commitments. Inevitably, you will find yourself volunteering the title of a book, a referral to one of your contacts, to review or pass on a resume or some other small service to your mentee. Make note of your promise and make it a priority to follow through. Dropping the ball can lead to confusion and mistrust in the relationship.
Make commitments carefully, being realistic about what you can offer and by when you can deliver it.

Be encouraging and action-oriented. Recognize that the problem isn’t figuring out what to do – the problem is doing it!

Give helpful feedback. Provide constructive feedback that is specific, descriptive and non-judgmental.

Honor confidentiality. Conversations between mentor and mentee must be considered private. It is a violation of trust to talk about the mentee's life and issues outside of the mentoring conversation without the permission of the mentee. Be careful about honoring your mentee's trust. Hold mentoring conversations in places where details shared in confidence will not be overheard by other stakeholders or interested parties.

Appendix 13: Tips for Mentors – Language

Have you ever felt judged by someone who you thought was listening with the intention to help you? When mentoring others, you can avoid giving this impression by avoiding the language of judgment. Here are some examples of what NOT to say:

- "You should…."
- "Yes, but…."
- "Either/or"
- "There's only one way to do it…."
- "What you need to do is…."
- "What I always do is…."
- "Your problem is…."
- "Actually what needs to be done is…."
- "If you don't….. you aren't going to…."
- "I wouldn't think about it that way."

For Mentors – Language that Encourages

- "You could…"
- "Have you considered….?"
- "What would happen if you…?"
- "What might be the consequences of not acting on this?"
- "Yes/and" rather than "Either/or"
- "There are many approaches that might work…"
- "One idea is…what do you think?"
- "What do you think needs to be done?"
- "How else could you think about this?"
- "What resources are available to you right now to support progress?"
- "When has this happened to you before? What did you do?"

Basic Beliefs of Good Mentors

- The mentee is naturally creative, resourceful, and able. Nothing is wrong or broken – no need to "fix" the mentee. Mentees are capable of finding and acting on the answers.
- The agenda comes from the mentee not from the mentor.
- The relationship is a designed alliance, not a top-down directed conversation

Listening: The Hallmark of a Great Mentor

Good mentors are empathetic listeners. They understand the benefit for the mentee of speaking aloud what is on his/her mind. The seasoned mentor does not focus on interpreting the mentee's story for problem solving. Instead, mentors seek to help mentees define the real issues. Mentors listen for the word choices, intentions, emotions, and nuances of the story. The mentor uses active listening and encouragement to connect with the mentee, while focusing on asking powerful, open-ended questions.

Mentors listen for:

- Goals and intentions
- The meaning behind the story
- Themes and recurrent words
- Resistance, fear, anxiety, hesitation, "BS"
- Progress
- Tone, mood
- Commitment and passion

Appendix 14: Checklist for Getting Started

These tips will help create a successful beginning.

For Mentees:

- Send your resume and a few brief paragraphs that describe your work and personal history to your mentor, along with a word of thanks for volunteering to be your mentor. (Electronically or via hard copy).
- Request your Mentor's contact information, including the contact information for his or her assistant. Enter it into your cell phone and other contact databases for easy access later on.
- Read up on your Mentor. Google your Mentor to read any news, published work, or announcements that are publicly available.
- Review IAVM's Mentor Connector Program Handbook.
- Get a journal or notebook which can be used exclusively for taking notes during your mentoring sessions and containing any related materials and bring it with you to the first session.
- Be ready at least 5-10 minutes early for the session and remember to plan adequate time to prepare for the session.
- Pay attention to time and bring the conversation to a close when you reach the time limit indicated by the Mentor.
- Follow up immediately after the first session with a note of thanks.
- Follow up immediately after the mentoring session with any actions to which you have agreed. Don't delay, as it is more likely to slip your mind as days pass.
- Confirm the date and time of your next mentoring session.
- Send an email one to two days prior to confirm that the Mentor is still "on" for the next session.
- Give advance notice to the Mentor if you are running late or must cancel or postpone a session

For Mentors:

- Review your mentee's bio and resume prior to the first meeting.
- Consider your own experiences and background in light of your mentee's career and life and reflect on areas of common interest and experience.
- After reading your mentee's communications, jot down a few curious questions that you can use as conversation starters in the first session.
- Review IAVM's Mentor Connector Program Handbook
- Identify options in your calendar for regular mentor meetings so you can offer dates and times for future sessions at your first meeting.
- Suggest a time for the first meeting, specifying both the starting and ending time for the conversation.
- Start and end your first session on time to establish a good boundary with your Mentee.
- Convey your enthusiasm and make a personal connection via the tone of your email or phone communication. This will help relieve the mentee's fears of inconveniencing you.
- Follow up after the first session with a warm note of encouragement.
- Follow up immediately after the mentoring session with any actions to which you have agreed. Don't delay, as it is more likely to slip your mind as days pass.
- Confirm the date and time of next mentoring conversation.