



# IECA Mentoring Manual





Thank you for your interest in IECA's mentoring program. IECA is the leader in educating independent educational consultants (IECs), and the mentorship program helps serve this goal.

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 one another.

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.

### **Benefits of a Mentoring Program**

Mentoring is found throughout successful businesses, professions, and organizations. It offers benefits to the mentor, the mentee, the profession itself, as well as the Association.

Mentors are experienced IECs 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 of 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.

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.

IECA also benefits from a robust mentoring program. Among the ways the Association is enriched by a mentoring program are the following:

- 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

### **The Process**

#### **Timeframe**

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.

#### **Mentoring Terms**

Establishing terms facilitates the process and allows for the sharing of advice and materials from the IECA office. There are three mentoring terms per year:

- Spring (February–May);
- Summer (May–August);
- Fall (August–November)

#### **Commitment**

You will be asked for a four-month commitment. How often the Mentor and Mentee meet is a decision the two of you will make together.

#### **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](http://www.IECAonline.com/mentor.html)

## Guidelines for Mentors

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

### Qualities of an IECA Mentor

- Appropriately convey professional knowledge
- 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

### Benefits for Mentors

- Broadens skills and knowledge
- Introduces a different dimension to his/her job
- Brings new insights to the Member
- Extends his/her professional network
- Provides a fresh outlook to current methods, approaches and concepts
- Promotes a team effort to open means of communication as colleagues



## Expectations of Mentors

As a Mentor, you should strive to:

- Initiate contact with your Mentee
  - Prepare for the first meeting by reading the Mentee application form
- Make contact at least once a month
- Share methods and strategies and give constructive and positive feedback
- Serve as a realistic role model and promote “best practices” without promoting yourself as the “ultimate authority”
- Assist in developing research skills and utilize IECA and other resources, as appropriate
- Encourage, support and confirm while helping the Mentee gain confidence and independence
- Avoid personal criticism
- Suggest a reassignment as needed

If you would like to become a Mentor or have any questions, call the national office at 703-591-4850 or email [membership@IECAonline.com](mailto:membership@IECAonline.com)

## Guidelines for Mentees

### 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

- Reflect on the profession
- Engage in open dialogue with his/her Mentor
- Share milestones, successes and new information
- Accept constructive input
- Embrace his/her role as an ethical and professional practitioner

### Benefits of Being Mentored

- Learn a new vision of a consulting practice
- Develop skills and good business practices
- Expand knowledge of resources and research skills
- Build professional and personal networks
- Utilize Mentor as a sounding board to think through issues and philosophy
- Smoothly integrate and transition into the Association and the field in a supportive environment
- Receive support and celebrate milestones
- Continue to build an understanding of best practices



### **Expectations of the Mentee**

- Desire to surpass current levels of performance and comfort
- Prepare for discussions ahead of time
- Conduct a reasonable amount of independent research, as appropriate
- Utilize IECA resources, as appropriate
- Show a willingness to ask questions that range from simple and practical to complex and conceptual
- Follow through with suggested resources and research
- Initiate contact with mentor as needed

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### **How To Make Mentoring Work**

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:**

- Establish the timing and frequency of contacts
- Exchange background information
- Identify areas of mutual interest
- Share methods of achieving goals

### **Suggestions for establishing and maintaining a positive mentoring relationship:**

- Utilize any combination of telephone, email, 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 email to check in
- Forward articles of special interest
- Acknowledge milestones with a call, card, or email
- Plan to meet in person at an IECA conference when possible

### **Connect at a conference!**

- Arrange to meet for a meal
- Discuss participation in upcoming IECA workshops, webinars, and other 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

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 email to Member Services at [membership@IECAonline.com](mailto:membership@IECAonline.com) and put "Mentoring" in the subject line.

The Mentee and Mentor applications are available online at: [www.IECAonline.com/mentor.html](http://www.IECAonline.com/mentor.html)