



AIA CLE Mentoring Guidelines

The role of the mentor

A mentor should take the initiative to make initial contact with the mentee (as soon as the match is made) and elicit the mentee's goals and expectations. A mentor listens carefully to his or her mentee's goals, strengths, and struggles. Based on those goals, the mentor supports the mentee in meeting his or her goals through questioning, providing guidance and feedback, sharing her or his own experiences, and possibly connecting the mentor with other individuals or groups who could help. Every mentoring relationship will unfold differently based on the individuals involved, but the purpose of mentoring is not to tell the mentee what to do, but to help the mentee make his or her own informed decisions. The mentor should be supportive, not critical or negative, and should remember that everyone's experiences and priorities are different.

The role of the mentee

A mentee communicates his or her goals and professional situation clearly to the mentor. He or she listens critically and objectively to the feedback and guidance received, keeping in mind that the mentor is speaking from his or her specific experience and priorities. It's up to the mentee to ensure that the relationship is beneficial by keeping in contact, clearly communicating expectations, actively addressing problems, and asking for help when needed.

Setting goals, expectations, and boundaries

Both the mentor and the mentee should start by discussing their expectations for the mentoring relationship. A mentor should ask her or his mentee about what the mentee's goals are and what he or she is looking for from the relationship. Mentees should be clear about what they hope to get out of the mentoring relationship, particularly with respect to goals, which will form the foundation of their work with the mentor. Issues like frequency of meetings, availability, and modes of contact should be agreed upon from the start.

Mentors and mentees are suggested to be in contact at least 5-6 times during the year that they are working together. However, contact can be more frequent or last longer than a year if this is mutually agreed upon.

Ways to keep in contact

The mentor and mentee should establish together which mode(s) they prefer to use to keep in contact:

- In-person
- Phone
- Email

The AIA office may provide a convenient venue to meet in person, if desired, just check with Mary Helen to ensure it is open and available.

Confidentiality

Given that the mentoring relationship requires trust, communications between the mentee and mentor should be kept confidential.

If things are not going well

Occasionally, a mentoring relationship doesn't work out. This can be a result of bad fit, a mentor or mentee who doesn't actively participate in the relationship, or communication issues. If this happens, the best way to approach it is to first address the issue with the mentor/mentee. If this does not rectify the problem, contact the AIA CLE Mentoring Program Administrators, Jack Bialosky Jr., jack@bialosky.com or Hallie DelVillan, hdelvillan@bialosky.com and they will seek to help or make alternative arrangements.

Annual Review

At the end of the year or mentoring period, the mentor and mentee will be asked to complete a survey evaluating their experience with the mentoring program. After this point, the mentoring relationship can continue informally, so long as both parties agree.