



FIRM *inMOTION*

Mentoring guide



Introduction

The purpose of the AICPA PCPS Mentoring guide is to 1) offer guidance and tools to firms interested in implementing a mentoring program and 2) offer guidance and tools to mentee and mentors to help them navigate the mentoring process.

Each tool provided can be customized to fit the needs of any firm. Whether you are looking to develop a formal mentoring program or just to share information, the tools offer helpful guidance on the mentoring process.

Navigate through this document by using the table of contents.

Disclaimer: The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the American Institute of CPAs, its divisions and its committees. This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information on the subject covered. It is distributed with the understanding that the authors are not engaged in rendering legal, accounting or other professional services. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

For more information about the procedure for requesting permission to make copies of any part of this work, please email copyright@aicpa.org with your request. Otherwise, requests should be written and mailed to the Permissions Department, AICPA, 220 Leigh Farm Road, Durham, NC 27707-8110.

Contents

Part I. Firm leadership guidance and tools

- 2 Why mentoring?
- 4 Mentoring policy and procedures document

Part II. Mentor and mentee guidance and tools

- 7 Finding the right mentor tip sheet
- 8 Mentor and mentee responsibilities
- 9 Mentoring assessment tool
- 10 Mentee profile form
- 11 Mentoring agreement
- 12 Initial meeting checklist
- 13 Meeting journal
- 14 Six-month review form

FIRM inMOTION

Part I: Firm leadership guidance and tools



Why mentoring?

As workforce demographics shift and technology continues to automate traditional workforce functions, having a stable mentoring program in place can help build a connective and communicative workplace. Mentors are more than just advisers, and can provide staff with the knowledge, expertise and support needed throughout their careers.

Mentoring can be beneficial not only for the mentor and mentee, but the firm as well. No matter what the generation or firm size, mentoring programs can be a valuable asset to firms, because they help to prepare the future leaders of the profession.

Benefits of mentoring

Motivate

**Boost
morale**

Inspire

**Build staff and
firm loyalty**

**Lead by
example**

**Develop
talent**

**Share
knowledge
and expertise**



| Benefits to mentors | Benefits to mentees | Benefits to firms |
|---|--|--|
| Gains satisfaction of sharing knowledge and expertise with others | Gains knowledge, feedback and perspective on their career path | Encourages retention |
| Learns more about other areas within the firm | Learns skills that are relevant to reach career goals | Reduces turnover |
| Affirms professional competence | Provides an opportunity to network with influential employees | Improves productivity |
| Provides an opportunity to build leadership skills | Gives exposure to diverse perspectives and experiences | Elevates knowledge transfer between employees |
| Provides an opportunity to gain insights from future leaders in the profession | Gains access to a professional network | Enhances professional development |
| Creates opportunities to strengthen knowledge base and improve communication skills | Increases self-confidence in technical and soft skills | Supports creation of a multicultural workforce by creating relationships among diverse employees |
| Creates new support networks with other professionals within the field | Encourages goal-setting, risk-taking and achieving at higher personal and/or professional standards | Creates a mentoring culture, which promotes employee growth and development |
| Provides satisfaction by helping emerging professionals develop potential | Provides a forum for professional issues and to seek and receive advice on how to balance new responsibilities | Enhances strategic business initiatives |
| Promotes the professional recognition of mentors for their commitment to developing the talents of future leaders | Reflects commitment to personal and professional growth | Breaks down the "silo" mentality |

Portions of this table were excerpted from Exhibit 1, "Mentoring Program Benefits," published in the March 2014 *Journal of Accountancy* article, "How to start and run a mentoring program" (journalofaccountancy.com/Issues/2014/Mar/20138640.htm). The source cited for the Exhibit 1 was Gatto, Pope & Walwick LLP.



Mentoring policy and procedures document

The following mentoring policy illustrates the importance of mentoring and offers a customizable policy that firms can implement into their day-to-day procedures.

Mentoring policy and procedures

Mentoring is an important part of the day to day activities of _____ . As a firm, we believe that a successful mentoring program will support the professional development of our staff and help build a connective and communicative workplace.

1.0 Mentoring program mission and objectives

1.1 Mission

The mission of _____ 's Mentoring Program is to promote employee growth and development, while enhancing the firm's strategic initiatives.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of _____ 's Mentoring Program are to:

1. Promote the professional growth and development of employees.
2. Enhance the firm's strategic initiatives.
3. Encourage employee retention.
4. _____
5. _____

2.0 Understanding mentoring

It is important that all mentors and mentees understand the difference between mentoring and coaching relationships.

| Mentoring | Coaching |
|--|---|
| • Long-term relationship between the mentor and mentee | • Short-term relationship between the coach and coachee |
| • Relationship-oriented | • Task-oriented |
| • Purpose is to develop the mentee | • Purpose is to improve performance |
| • Requires planning in order to determine areas of focus | • Can be conducted immediately |
| • Informal meetings with agenda set by mentee | • Formal meetings with agenda set by coach |
| • Mentors are typically self-selected | • Coaches are typically assigned by firm leadership |
| • Immediate managers are not involved in the process | • Immediate managers are involved in the process; managers can be coaches |

Please see _____ 's Coaching Guide for additional information on coaching as well as the firm's coaching policy.



Continued from previous page

3.0 Mentoring program procedures

Both mentors and mentees should adhere to the following procedures while participating in the _____ Mentoring Program.

3.1 Employees interested in becoming a mentor should contact the mentoring program manager, review the [Mentor and mentee responsibilities](#) and complete the [Mentoring assessment tool](#).

3.1.1 Potential mentors may also be identified by management and firm leadership.

3.1.2 Mentors may also be external to the firm if chosen by the mentee. Mentors external to the firm are not required to complete the [Mentoring assessment tool](#).

3.2 Employees interested in becoming a mentee should contact the mentoring program manager, review the [Mentor and mentee responsibilities](#) and complete the [Mentee profile form](#).

3.2.1 All new employees are encouraged to find a mentor.

3.2.2 Employees are permitted to have mentors outside of the firm.

3.2.3 Employees can use the [Finding the right mentor tip sheet](#) for guidance on how to find the right mentor and develop a mentoring relationship.

3.3 Completed [Mentoring assessment tools](#) and [Mentee profile forms](#) will be reviewed by the mentoring program manager.

3.4 The mentee should select a mentor and reach out to see if they would be interested in a mentoring relationship.

3.4.1 If the mentee needs suggested mentors, the mentoring program manager can help to determine the best mentor/mentee fit using the [Mentee profile form](#) and the [Mentoring assessment tool](#).

3.5 Once a mentor is selected, both the mentor and mentee should complete and sign the [Mentoring agreement](#) and submit to the mentoring program manager.

3.6 The mentor should setup the initial meeting.

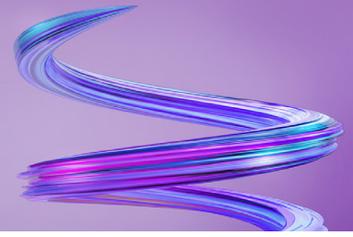
3.6.1 The mentor and mentee should review the [Initial meeting checklist](#) to ensure they are well-prepared.

3.7 During meetings, mentors and mentees should follow professional guidelines that govern confidentiality and non-disclosure and allow mentees to develop an environment of trust.

3.8 The mentee should continue to set meetings either on a scheduled basis (monthly, bimonthly, etc.) or as needed.

3.8.1 The mentor should take the time to get to know mentees personally and professionally and tailor methods to suit mentee's work style, needs and objectives.

3.8.2 The mentor and mentee can use the [Meeting journal](#) to track meeting highlights, feedback and action items.



Continued from previous page

3.9 The mentor and mentee should conduct periodic reviews to determine their degree of satisfaction with the mentoring relationship.

3.9.1 The [Six-month review form](#) can be used for mid-year reviews and tracking the progress of the mentoring relationship.

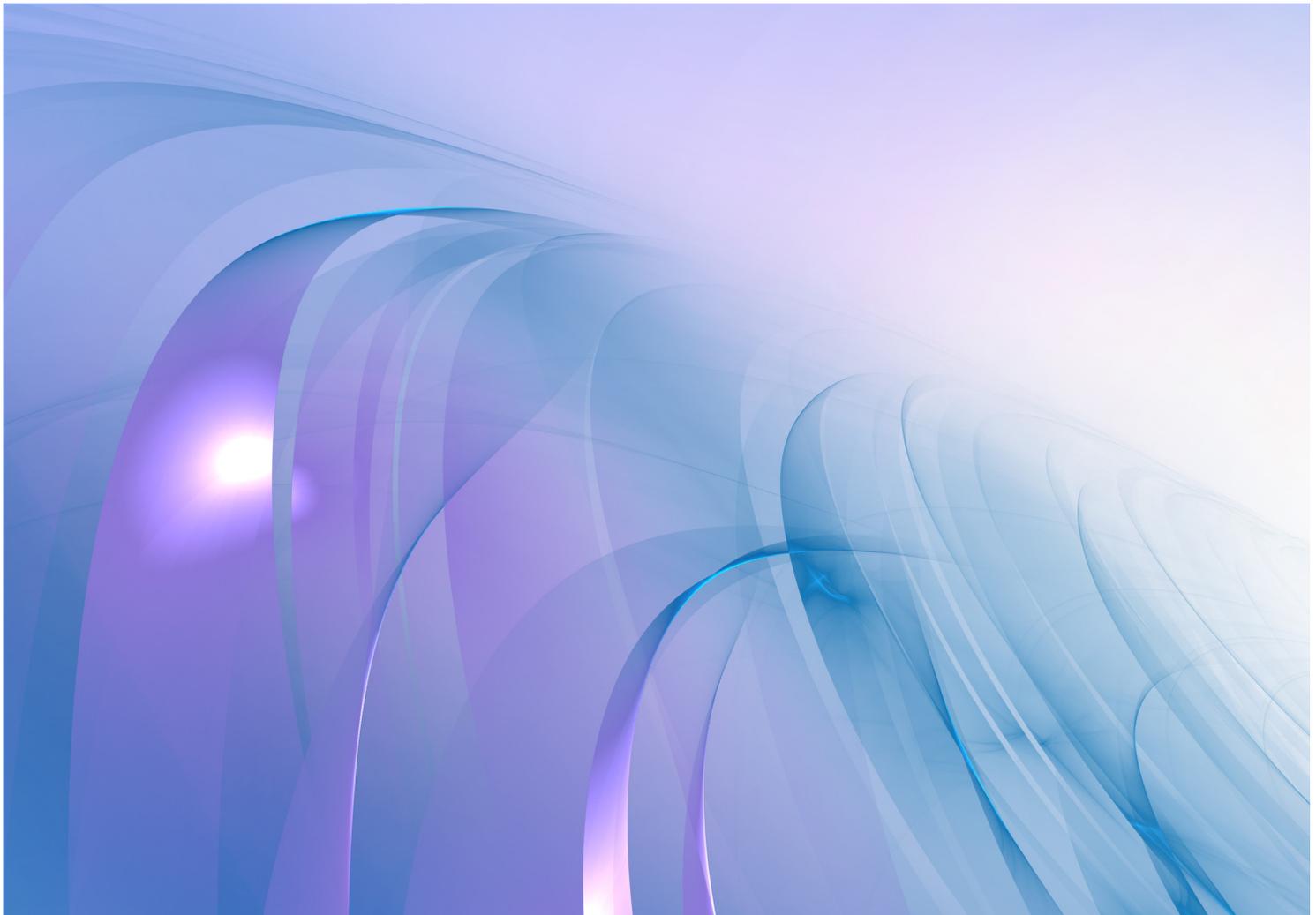
3.10 There is no formal closure of the mentor/mentee relationship unless agreed upon by both the mentor and mentee.

3.11 The mentors and mentees are required to conduct themselves in a professional manner and abide by the employee handbook.

4.0 Contacts

For additional information on the mentoring program, please contact:

_____, Program Manager



FIRM inMOTION

Part II: Mentor and mentee guidance and tools



Finding the right mentor tip sheet

Finding a mentor who will help you grow and develop in your career is one of the first steps in the mentoring process. The following tool offers guidance on how to find the right mentor and develop a mentoring relationship.





Mentor and mentee responsibilities*

Defining the roles and responsibilities of both mentors and mentees are an important part of the mentoring process and will help to set a clear and defined path. Mentors and mentees should be enthusiastic and positive about the mentoring experience. The following are examples of mentor and mentee responsibilities and characteristics.

Responsibilities

| Mentor | Mentee |
|--|---|
| • Acting as a resource for information about the firm and/or profession | • Taking initiative in skill and career development |
| • Helping the mentee develop or improve skills and knowledge in order to reach goals | • Reaching out to schedule ongoing or as-needed meetings |
| • Establishing trust and maintaining confidentiality | • Taking advantage of the suggestions and feedback offered |
| • Sharing professional experiences | • Developing and using the skills of professionalism |
| • Providing career guidance and insight | • Developing and fostering the mentoring relationship |
| • Offering constructive and meaningful feedback | • Exhibiting a desire and willingness to assume responsibility for self-development |
| • Providing insight into leadership opportunities | • Open to mentor suggestions |

Characteristics

| Mentor | Mentee |
|--|---|
| • Facilitating mentoring meetings | • Initiating meeting times, goals and expected outcomes |
| • Demonstrating leadership traits | • Supporting and committed to the firm |
| • Demonstrating ethical traits | • Willing to accept risk |
| • Providing credibility | • Ability to listen and follow through on commitments |
| • Exhibiting a desire to help the mentee as well as the firm | • Wanting to learn, grow and succeed |
| • Helping the mentee attain goals | |

*The information above was modified from the AICPA Young CPA Network's *Mentoring Guidelines* booklet and the AICPA's *Share. Learn. Grow. Mentor. how-to guide*.



Mentoring assessment tool*

Learn the difference between a boss and a mentor by taking this quick assessment. Use the results to determine areas that you should work on before considering being a mentor.

For the following questions, place a checkmark in the box that best describes you.

| Questions | Always | Often | Occasionally | Never |
|--|--------|-------|--------------|-------|
| 1. I tell my employees what to do. | | | | |
| 2. Employees come to me for answers to problems. | | | | |
| 3. I have a set time to focus on mentoring. | | | | |
| 4. I ask employees to suggest solutions to problems first. | | | | |
| 5. I don't have time to mentor. | | | | |
| 6. My employees expect me to provide solutions to problems. | | | | |
| 7. I interrupt employees when I know solutions to their problem. | | | | |
| 8. My employees cannot be trusted with top clients. | | | | |
| 9. My employees have the same problems over and over. | | | | |
| 10. I am responsible for removing obstacles. | | | | |
| 11. I usually have negative conversations about employees. | | | | |
| 12. Employees can handle any situation if I am not available. | | | | |
| 13. I ask, "What do you think you should have done?" | | | | |
| 14. Employees complain they don't get enough time with me. | | | | |
| 15. Employees trust me. | | | | |
| 16. I give positive recognition to my employees. | | | | |

Definitions: (from the Merriam-Webster dictionary)

Boss: a person who exercises control or authority; specifically, one who directs or supervises workers.

Mentor: a trusted counselor or guide.

The difference between a boss and a mentor will have drastic effects on the development of your employees. On the left-hand side, next to each number above, place a "B" for boss or an "M" for mentor if the question sounds like something a boss or a mentor would do.

Below are the numbers listed for the questions that a mentor would answer as often or always. How did you rate yourself?

The following statements are indicators of positive mentoring behaviors:

3, 4, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16

*This information was excerpted from the PCPS Mentoring Assessment Tool (original content provided by The Rainmaker Consulting Group, a division of FiveStar3, LLC).



Mentee profile form*

The following form should be completed by all mentees and submitted to the mentoring program manager.

Mentee name _____

| | |
|---|--|
| Selected mentor | |
| Mentoring goals and expectations | |
| Career goals | |
| Leadership goals | |
| Strategies for achieving goals | |
| Professional background and experience | |
| Present professional activities (professional organizations, community organizations, volunteer boards, etc.) | |
| Concerns/requests | |

*This form was modified from the AICPA Young CPA Network's *Mentoring Guidelines* booklet.



Mentoring agreement*

The following mentoring agreement should be completed by both the mentor and mentee in order to set forth the terms of the mentoring relationship. This form should be completed before the initial meeting and can be modified based on your firm's current practices. The completed agreement should then be submitted to the mentoring program manager.

Mentoring agreement

We _____ the mentor and
_____ the mentee, agree to enter into a voluntary mentoring relationship, which we expect to benefit the mentor, mentee and _____. We agree:

- To respect the confidential nature of information discussed at mentoring meetings
- To be committed to make scheduled meetings a priority
- To meet (monthly, bimonthly, as needed, etc.) _____

We agree to a no-fault conclusion of this relationship if, for any reason, it seems appropriate.

Mentor signature _____

Mentee signature _____

*The information above was modified from the AICPA Young CPA Network's Mentoring Guidelines booklet and the AICPA's *Share. Learn. Grow Mentor. how-to guide*.



Initial meeting checklist*

The following is a checklist of items that both the mentor and mentee should consider before their initial meeting. This checklist includes suggested questions and items that should be reviewed in order to have a successful first meeting.

| Mentor | Mentee |
|--|---|
| When preparing for the initial meeting, mentors should: | When preparing for the initial meeting, mentees should: |
| Review the Mentoring agreement and Mentee profile form . | Review the Mentoring agreement . |
| Summarize goals and expectations for the mentoring relationship. | Summarize personal and professional goals. |
| List two to three topics to discuss with the mentee. | Be prepared to discuss ideas or concerns relative to meeting goals. |
| Consider availability for meetings. | Consider desired frequency of meetings. |

Questions to consider

| Mentor | Mentee |
|--|---|
| How do you use your skills on the job? Which skills do you want to develop? | Have you had past successes in mentoring individuals? |
| What are some of your key accomplishments/areas of growth experienced over the past three to six months? | I'm seeking (specify) skills for my personal and professional development. Can you help me attain them? |
| What two to three areas have caused frustration or did not meet your expectations over the past three to six months? | What expectation do you generally have of the people that you mentor? |
| What attracted you to this program? How can I help in your development? | How much time can you offer? |
| What do you currently perceive as your top priorities for personal and professional growth over the next year? | |
| How do you like to spend your free time? | |
| Who do you admire personally and professionally? Why? | |

*The information above was modified from the AICPA Young CPA Network's Mentoring Guidelines booklet and the AICPA's *Share. Learn. Grow. Mentor. how-to guide*.



Meeting journal*

The following meeting journal that can be modified based on your firm's current practices, will help mentors and mentees track meeting highlights, feedback and action items.

Meeting date _____

| | |
|---|--|
| Topics covered | |
| Action items | |
| Networking opportunity requests | |
| Future agenda items | |
| Other topics or subjects for discussion | |
| Date, time and place of next meeting | |

*This journal was modified from the AICPA Young CPA Network's Mentoring Guidelines booklet.



Six-month review form*

The following template will help mentors and mentees track progress after a six-month period. This form should be completed and discussed by both the mentor and mentee. Completed forms should then be submitted to the mentoring program manager.

Mentoring six-month review form

Mentor name _____

Mentee name _____

Date _____

Completed by _____

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating "strongly disagree," and 5 indicating "strongly agree". Please indicate your degree of satisfaction with the following aspects of your mentoring relationship.

| Description | Rating | Additional comments |
|--|--------|---------------------|
| Mentoring relationship is working well. | | |
| Meetings are held regularly and as desired by mentee. | | |
| Appropriate amount of time has been devoted to relationship. | | |
| Areas for personal and professional development have been established. | | |
| Clear goals and expectations have been set. | | |
| Trust and confidentiality have been established. | | |
| Mentor/mentee listens well and is responsive. | | |
| Progress has been observed in areas chosen for development. | | |
| Barriers encountered during mentoring process have been resolved. | | |
| Topics to be discussed over the next six months have been defined. | | |
| Relationship is meeting expectations. | | |
| Mentoring relationship should continue. | | |
| Additional comments: | | |
| Suggested action items: | | |

*The information above was modified from the AICPA Young CPA Network's *Mentoring Guidelines* booklet and the AICPA's *Share. Learn. Grow. Mentor.* how-to guide.



Private Companies
Practice Section

P: 888.777.7077 | W: aicpa.org

© 2018 Association of International Certified Professional Accountants. All rights reserved. AICPA and American Institute of CPAs are trademarks of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and are registered in the United States, European Union and other countries. The Globe Design is a trademark owned by the Association of International Certified Professional Accountants and licensed to the AICPA. 1807-3128