

# MENTORING MANUAL

## INTRODUCTION

The Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA) is dedicated to providing valuable support and development to its members through its Mentoring Program. Mentoring is a supportive, professional relationship between an experienced IECA Member and a new Professional or Associate Member. This relationship may be structured with regular contacts or on an informal as-needed basis.



**Mentors are paired with Mentees based on their area[s] of consulting:**

- S** = School
- C** = College
- L** = Learning Disabilities
- N** = Special Needs
- G** = Graduate and Professional School
- O** = Other

## ◆ THE BENEFITS OF MENTORING

### **For the Mentee:**

- Introduces a new vision of a consulting practice
- Helps develop skills and good business practices
- Builds professional and personal networks
- Serves as a sounding board to think through issues and philosophy
- Transitions new members into the Association and the field in a supportive environment
- Gives support and celebrates milestones

### **For the Mentor:**

- Broadens skills and knowledge
- Introduces a different dimension to his/her job
- Brings new insights to the Member and the Association
- Extends his/her professional network
- Provides a fresh outlook to current methods, approaches and concepts
- Assists a new consultant to transition into the field in a positive and productive way
- Promotes a team effort to open means of communication as colleagues
- Strengthens each Mentor's commitment to the organization

### **For the Association:**

- 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

### **Who Becomes a Mentor?**

Mentors are experienced educational consultants who listen carefully, demonstrate empathy and patience, and are willing to share what they have learned to help those new to the profession or entering a new area of the profession.

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.

### **Qualities of an IECA Mentor:**

- Appropriate professional knowledge and skills
- 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

### **IECA Expectations of a Mentor**

- Serves as a realistic role model and promotes “best practices”; does not promote self as the “ultimate authority”
- Initiates contact with his/her Mentee(s)
- Makes contact at least every three months
- Shares methods and strategies used in his/her own practice
- Challenges and supports, but does not dictate
- Helps the Mentee gain confidence and independence
- Gives constructive and positive feedback

- Assists in developing research skills to find information applicable to the field and to address specific issues
- Endeavors to encourage, support and confirm the positive aspects of developing and growing a practice
- Avoids personal criticism
- Suggests a reassignment if the relationship is not productive

### ◆ To Become a Mentor ◆

If you would like to become a Mentor, send an e-mail to the IECA National office at: [info@iecaonline.com](mailto:info@iecaonline.com) and put Mentoring on the subject line.

#### **Who Becomes a Mentee?**

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.

#### **Qualities of an IECA Mentee:**

- Desire to learn
- Professional introspection and growth

#### **Skills of an IECA Mentee:**

- Reflects on the profession
- Engages in open dialogue with his/her Mentor
- Shares milestones, successes and new information
- Accepts constructive input

#### **IECA Expectations of the Mentee**

- Desires to surpass current levels of performance and comfort
- Shows a willingness to ask questions that range from simple and practical to complex and conceptual
- Approaches his/her Mentor with questions and issues of concern
- Requests a reassignment if the relationship is not productive

## ◆ MAKING MENTORING WORK

### **The Mentor/Mentee Relationship**

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 are:

- Establishing the timing and frequency of contacts
- Exchanging background information
- Identifying areas of mutual interest
- Sharing methods of achieving goals

### **Suggestions for Establishing and Maintaining a Positive Mentoring Relationship:**

- Telephone
  - o Establish a level of comfort so that both the Mentee and Mentor feel free to call upon one another
  - o Make an unexpected call to touch base
- E-mail
  - o Send an e-mail to check in
  - o Send articles of special interest
- IECA Conferences
  - o Discuss participation in upcoming IECA workshops and events
  - o Introduce the Mentee to others at conferences, particularly to those who may have similar interests

- o Arrange to meet for a meal
- o Attend a workshop or two of mutual interest together
- Share materials, book lists, ideas, innovations and resources
- Participate on a tour of mutual interest
- Acknowledge milestones with a call, card, or e-mail

Since needs and circumstances change over time it is always good to reflect on how the relationship is working.

**Suggested Topics for Discussion:**

- Assistance available from IECA
- Business Practices
- Consulting Procedures
- Goals

◆ **Requesting a Mentor** ◆

To request a Mentor, use the form on the back of this guide and e-mail your request to the IECA National Office at *info@iecaonline.com* and put Mentoring on the subject line.



The Education & 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 e-mail to Member Services at *info@iecaonline.com* and put Mentoring on the subject line.



◆ MENTEE APPLICATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Office Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like a Mentor with the following experience:

- School
- College
- Graduate & Professional Schools
- Learning Disabilities
- Special Needs
- Other career experience: \_\_\_\_\_  
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INDEPENDENT  
EDUCATIONAL  
CONSULTANTS  
ASSOCIATION



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