



*IABC Mentoring
for Communication Professionals*

Chapter Toolkit & Strategic Context

IABC Mentoring Task Force



International Association
of Business Communicators

Background

In 2018, the International Executive Board (IEB) established a Task Force to explore current programs and better understand mentoring opportunities for IABC chapters. Specific objectives of the Task Force were to:

- Map and share existing good practice from chapters and regions;
- Explore what a Theory of Change for mentoring at IABC should look like – and how it can more broadly be celebrated – as part of IABC’s commitment to create connection and develop strategic communication professionals;
- Create a framework that includes defining what is a mentor or mentee + types of mentorship; how a mentoring program can help us live our values (to be global, create connection, foster diversity and deliver insights and results); what support and materials are needed, if any;
- Explore how high-quality matches are made – and whether tech assistance from HQ might be of use; and
- Explore viability of a distinct Chapter Management Award.

Thanks to all the chapters who fed into this work as well as all the individual IABC leaders across the globe who helped with input and ideas, including those who participated in the record-setting #CommChat on mentoring. Some of the quotes in this document are from that vibrant exchange.

Mentoring Task Force Members

- [Anna Willey](#), ABC, MC, IABC Fellow
- [Edward Ulrich](#)
- [Michael Nord](#), SCMP (board liaison)
- [Natasha Nicholson](#) (staff liaison)
- [Jeanette LeBlanc](#)
- [Leanne Joyce](#)
- [Karen Drury](#)
- [Maliha Aqeel](#), SCMP
- [Michael Ambjorn](#), SCMP (chair)

Contributing Chapters

- [British Columbia](#) (Canada West)
- [Calgary](#) (Canada West)
- [Canberra](#) (APAC)
- [Dallas](#) (Southern)
- [Detroit](#) (Heritage)
- [Edmonton](#) (Canada West)
- [Regina](#) (Canada West)
- [San Francisco](#) (Pacific Plains)
- [Toronto](#) (Canada East)
- [United Kingdom](#) (EMENA)

This toolkit is dedicated to all the IABCers out there already mentoring. Thanks for all you do. We hope it will inspire more leaders across the globe to join your ranks.

Table of Contents

Background.....	2
IABC CHAPTER MENTORING TOOLKIT	4
Chapter Research	4
Chapter Goal Setting	5
Some topics shared by past mentoring teams	6
Application for interest.....	7
Information Sessions	8
Mentoring Agreement.....	9
Goals	9
Frequency of Meetings	9
Commitment.....	9
Evaluation	10
#IABCmentoring Speed Event.....	11
Chapter management award for mentoring programs	12
STRATEGIC CONTEXT: Mentoring and IABC's strategy	13
Importance of undertaking research with members	14
Supporting the Global Standard.....	15
How mentoring programs can support the Global Standard.....	15
Career levels of the communication profession	16
What is mentoring and why is it important?	19
How can Chapters and Regions benefit from a mentoring program?	24
Who would a mentoring program benefit?	24
The state of mentoring in IABC	25
Chapter challenges.....	27
What approaches have worked for other Chapters?.....	28
Select Resources	28

Table of Figures

Figure 1 - IABC's three Purpose pillars – to which the strategy is aligned to.....	13
Figure 2 - IABC Mentoring Theory of Change in brief.....	14
Figure 3 – Three intersecting IABC frameworks that work together	18
Figure 4 - Mentoring is a two-way street.....	19
Figure 5 - Excerpt from IABC Brand Guidelines.....	19
Figure 6 - IABC Tone of Voice - excerpt from IABC Brand Guidelines	20
Figure 7 - Qualities of a good mentor	21
Figure 8 - Qualities of a good mentee	22

IABC CHAPTER MENTORING TOOLKIT

There is no one-size program that will work for all chapters. The key is to ensure the program meets the audience objectives. Don't be shy: seek out experienced mentor program leaders. They're often happy to help. We are including some details or templates to cover these key themes to help get started:



Chapter Research

Begin your process with understanding the needs of your members and the capacity of your chapter to deliver to meet the needs.

Here are some sample questions for chapters to consider with membership in a survey or focus group format:

Chapter – Mentoring Sample Survey

- Are you interested in participating in a mentoring program within our IABC chapter?
- If yes, would you consider yourself a mentor or mentee?
- How much of a time commitment would you be willing to make as your contribution to the program's success (monthly, annually)?
- What professional competencies or career guidance are you interested in sharing or learning more about?
- What is your current communication role and industry focus?
- What is your preferred format for mentoring sessions?
 - Face-to-face meetings
 - Telephone discussions
 - Group gatherings
 - LinkedIn group
 - Combination
 - Other
- Should there be a formal agreement outlining goals and objectives established between mentor/mentee?
 - Would you commit time (1 hour) to attend an introductory session on the mentoring program's goals and objectives?

IABC Mentoring Program

Chapter Goal Setting

[as adapted from IABC/BC and IABC/Toronto]

It is important that chapters take the time to focus and align goals of the mentoring program with the chapter's strategic plan and vision. Here are some questions to consider:

- What do you want to accomplish as part of the mentoring program?
- Could any one of these objectives be broken down further into mini-goals?
- What are some of the bottlenecks stopping you now or challenges in your way?
- How and when will you communicate with your mentoring teams throughout the program?

Conversation starters

Following a formalized process to match needs and opportunities for sharing, chapters have used found these starting points helpful:

- Mentees can identify a particular issue/challenge/opportunity they want to work on or build toward, so the structure and approach can be outlined;
- Mentors and mentees can brainstorm issues where most support would be helpful, using this as a base to structure their meetings;
- Sessions can start with outlining expectations and conclude with measuring progress made; or
- Mentees can describe their dream job or dream company to help bring some goals into focus.

Lessons learned

- Mentee and mentor details require permissions to share with the cohort partner and must be maintained in full confidence;
- Many are enthusiastic about the process initially, but don't follow through with the commitment of time; or
- Many feel unprepared to best support or facilitate the process.

Note: It is a JOINT process; mentees and mentors are often not used to the process and don't know where to begin. This toolkit (and the strategic context) can help you design a program that works. Do also check out the Chapter Management Award entries for mentoring – and don't be afraid to reach out to other chapters too.

Some topics shared by past mentoring teams

- ✓ Learn about the challenges professionals face on the job and how these problems were solved.
- ✓ Grow my network of contacts.
- ✓ Figure out the area of communications I would like to work in, tips for choosing a sector.
- ✓ Help understanding the career options available to me now that I have more experience.
- ✓ I hope to get advice on developing effective strategic communication plans that include measurement and evaluation.
- ✓ What professional development should I be considering to progress in my career?
- ✓ Knowledge about the industry down to the details of actual communication positions.
- ✓ Someone to push me outside of my comfort zone.
- ✓ I would like to learn a bit more about what skills I could hone to be a more desirable candidate for a public sector communication job.
- ✓ Advice on creating communication strategies and media relations skills.
- ✓ Ideas of what to expect in the first few years of your career in PR/Communication.
- ✓ Learning about the credentials that employers value most.
- ✓ Best job-searching tactics, networking advice and opportunities.
- ✓ Developing interviewing or informational interview skills.
- ✓ Discussion of Work/Life Balance.
- ✓ Learn more about what other communication professionals do in their positions.
- ✓ Guidance on how to improve my résumé/CV and experience to help me make a switch.
- ✓ I would like a sounding board for new ideas and brainstorming.
- ✓ To develop my writing skills and gain more knowledge in marketing communication.

IABC Mentoring Program

Application for interest

[as adapted from IABC/Dallas and IABC/Detroit]

Name _____
Current position _____
email _____
Contact number _____
Years of experience _____

I am interested in being a:

- Mentor Mentee

I am interested in this opportunity for:

- Professional growth – support for career development and cross-mentoring, when appropriate
- Project success – guidance for a specified project for skill and/or topic assistance
- Skills development – for advancing an aptitude in a particular skill (writing, project management, leadership, etc.)
- Student support – networking, job hunting and other guidance as a student gets ready for a career.

My area(s) of expertise or interest are:

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Executive communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Public affairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Crisis communication |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Change management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HR communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Investor relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Other skills such as |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing and editing | <input type="checkbox"/> Government relations | influencing, managing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> External communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Social media/digital strategy | teams, managing upwards, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internal communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Public relations | delegation, office politics... |

My goals for being part of this program are:

Note - When defining your goal(s), think **S.M.A.R.T.** objectives which would include:

- **Specific/Significant:** It is great to have a clear concise title to your goal, but you should also describe it in more detail. For example, "further my career" could be described with "Identify a five-year development plan and research potential next career steps."
- **Measurable/Meaningful:** Try to write a goal that you can measure numerically. A goal can be much more motivating if you can track and record your progress, and see how you are doing.
- **Achievable-Action-Oriented/Realistic - Relevant:** Can your goal really be achieved? Think not only about the goal, but about your personal circumstances.
- **Timely/Trackable:** How much time will you have to put in on a regular basis to achieve this goal? How long from now do you plan to achieve this goal?

My time commitment for this process (in hours) would be:

_____ hours monthly or _____ hours weekly
_____ full year or _____ 8 months of year

Match committee will review and pair mentors/mentees based on alignment of mutual goals and experience. We will notify the mentor/mentee by the method they have listed above. All applications will remain confidential.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

IABC Mentoring Program

Information Sessions

It is encouraged that chapters host information sessions for mentors and mentees to help establish expectations and provide a more formal overview of what mentoring is.

Agenda items for the sessions could include the topics set out to the right.

Introductions

Commitments

Lessons learned

Setting goals & action plans

Measuring progress

Career paths

Certifications

Resources available

Evaluation processes

IABC Mentoring Program

Mentoring Agreement

[as adapted from IABC/Toronto]

We are voluntarily entering into a mutually beneficial mentoring relationship focused on growth, learning, and professional development. To this end, we have both agreed upon the terms and conditions of our relationship, as outlined in this agreement.

Goals

Clear, specific and attainable goals create a strong foundation for a mentorship relationship.

1. What are the mentee's goals for this mentoring relationship?
2. What are the mentor's goals for this mentoring relationship?

We hope to achieve:

Frequency of Meetings

To accomplish this, we will:

We will attempt to meet at least _____ time(s) each month. We will meet via (e.g., Skype, phone, social media, in person, etc.)

If we cannot attend a scheduled meeting, how will we get in touch?

Commitment

We are committed to open and honest communication in our relationship. We will discuss and attempt to resolve any conflicts as they arise.

Mentor _____ Date _____

Mentee _____ Date _____

IABC Mentoring Program

Evaluation

[as adapted from IABC/Canberra]

Chapters are encouraged to measure their success based on their initially established measurable objectives.

Chapter follow up

- Get feedback from each cohort to measure success of the process.
- Have the mentor/mentee teams share their experience within chapter meetings and communication channels.

Promote the program	Quant measure: #speaking opportunities and online items.
Establish a mentors pool	Quant measure: 3-5 mentors in each stage.
Members seeking mentoring	Quant measure: 3-5 members in each stage.
The program attracts new members	Qual measure: Ask newcomers if mentoring featured in joining.
Experience of mentoring pair	Qual measure: Ask participants to identify the perceived value.

A brief note on terminology

Quant = **Quantitative** information or data is based on **quantities** obtained using a quantifiable measurement process.

Quali = **Qualitative** descriptions or distinctions are based on some quality or characteristic rather than on some quantity or measured value.

IABC Mentoring Program

#IABCmentoring Speed Event

How to put on a speed mentoring event - to help spark long-term mentoring relationships.

Objective

You might be a formal chapter, or a loose network of professionals. Either way, here's a way to strategically help #createconnection.

Audience

People working in communications. Works best with small groups unless you have a very large room (it can get very noisy)!

Strategy

Accelerate IABC's triple-play strategy:

- Advance the profession
- Create connection
- Develop strategic communicators

You can read more about how mentoring aligns with IABC aims in the Strategic Context section of this report.

Implementation

In a nutshell: people at an IABC event are each given a bookmark (see example to the right) - and then asked to pick a question from the bookmark and chat with the person next to them (ideally a new person) and then after 5 minutes or so, you swap people around. Rinse and repeat for as long as people are having fun. And then at the end you ask who might be up for:

- Getting trained as a mentor; or
- Signing up as a mentee.

And some may already have struck up a connection – who will carry on regardless, which is fabulous. For more resources search **#IABCmentoring**

Success

A fun event, and new connections created. For deeper aims, see the *Theory of Change* and *Comms Career Overlay* figures in the Strategic Context section, for more detail.

Explore with others

How can I...

- Manage up? And across?
- Learn from others (both older and younger...)?
- Get more out of my team?
- Make the most of membership?
- Find a new role?
- Make a career transition?
- Update my CV / résumé?
- Prepare for an interview?
- Negotiate terms?

Search
#IABCmentoring
to learn more...

#createconnection

REMEMBER

Chapter management award for mentoring programs



The Mentoring Task Force appreciates the support of the International Executive Board and chapter leaders in launching a pilot Chapter Management Award in. The award is geared to recognize excellence in chapter mentoring programs.

Criteria for the award includes both quantitative and qualitative aspects seeking information including:

- How many members are part of the chapter mentor program?
- How long has the chapter run the program?
- Does the chapter survey or otherwise measure participation?
- Can the chapter share any participant research?
- How does the chapter tie the program into its strategic plan?
- Does the chapter tie the program to IABC's global standards and the career roadmap?
- What does the chapter note as going well or been difficult?
- What would the chapter do differently if it were to set it up from scratch?

Looking for more? Search #IABCmentoring...

STRATEGIC CONTEXT: Mentoring and IABC's strategy

IABC's vision is that there are communication professionals at the heart of every organization. The organization's purpose is in turn to advance the profession, create connection and develop strategic communicators.



Figure 1 - IABC's three Purpose pillars – to which the strategy is aligned to.

Mentoring in IABC directly touches on all three aims. By helping establish relationships between mentors and mentees around the world, even across continents and nations, IABC members can sharpen their approach and grow as professionals. A mentor advising a mentee learns how to be a better advisor, and a mentee benefits from their experience by spreading and sharing their learnings among their IABC friends and colleagues.

A formal mentoring initiative also aligns with the IABC shared values which help define the culture and behavior of the organization and its members. These include:

- **We represent the global profession.** As the only global communication association, we strive to advocate for the profession, represent best practices, define the global standard and live by a code of ethics.
- **We create connection.** We connect business and communication and connect people with communication. We foster community, build special relationships and learn from each other.
- **We are a diverse community.** We welcome diverse communication professionals of all levels and practices. We embrace diverse viewpoints, encourage conversation and celebrate cultural differences.

- **We focus on insights and results.** We position communication as a strategic function that has impact on return on investment and demonstrates business value of communication.

Importance of undertaking research with members

The Mentoring Task Force acknowledges there is currently limited formal international research of IABC’s membership as related to mentoring programs. Some chapter research has been undertaken. The Mentoring Task Force underscores the importance of establishing benchmark research as part of member feedback at all levels.

With the establishment of additional robust mentorship programs, IABC can clearly provide support for its members. Communication as a profession is rooted in discussion, advice and measurement – all of which naturally blend with the expectations that come with a mentoring relationship.

IABC Mentoring Theory of Change

Mentoring at IABC is first and foremost focused on creating 1:1 supportive relationships. Often it is a 3-6 month engagement. That said, we hope participants will ultimately build on-going, flexible, diverse and dynamic ‘individual advisory boards’ / support groups for themselves.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

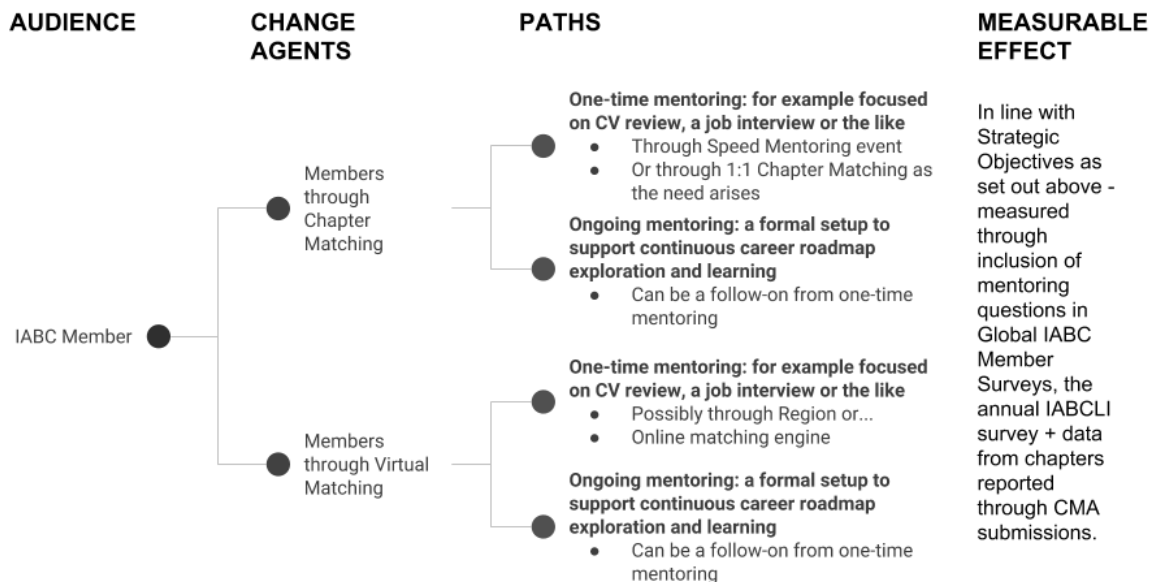


Figure 2 - IABC Mentoring Theory of Change in brief

Supporting the Global Standard

Mentoring programs at IABC are focused on creating one-on-one supportive relationships and have the potential to be in support of the Global Standard. The Global Standard is defined by communication professionals around the world embracing a shared career purpose and six core Principles as the building blocks of their work. Informed by a passion for engaging audiences with strategic communication, the purpose and Principles focus our work and form a global standard. Applying that standard enables us to cross all borders, align with diverse cultures and effectively serve organizations of all types and sizes. IABC's programs and initiatives are aligned to the Global Standard, ensuring consistency and credibility throughout all efforts.

Career purpose

Communication professionals represent the voice of an organization as it interacts with customers, clients, employees, partners, shareholders, competitors and the community. The communication professional brings the organization to life with a brand voice that aligns its verbal, visual and digital messages and activities with its mission and vision. By clarifying the brand, communication professionals also help ensure the organization runs efficiently and effectively.

Communication professionals build a strategic communication plan based on thorough research, they communicate with a variety of audiences in a range of styles, they develop and edit content, and they assess where and how to communicate and how to evaluate the results of their work. They act as the organization's conscience and strive for its financial, social and environmental sustainability.

How mentoring programs can support the Global Standard

IABC has identified six core Principles as the foundation of our profession. The mentoring program can demonstrate, reinforce and nurture these Principles for the participants. The mnemonic for the Global Standard elements is #ECCASE – and here we look closer at each element.

Mentoring can help people grapple with the timeless and universal elements of what it means to operate as a professional:

- **Ethics.** An opportunity to align careers ensuring ethical approach at every level.
- **Consistency.** Participants have opportunity to learn from others and become more adept at consistently exploring strategic approaches for solutions.

*"Mentors provide objective insight, expertise, other resources (including people), new ideas, and more. And the great thing is, #mentees provide all of those things, too!"
@ElevatePoint*

Furthermore, it can also help with the Principles as they are applied to variable situations:

- **Context.** Participants gain a greater understanding of professional trends and professional growth opportunities with different approaches, regardless of years of experience.
- **Analysis.** Understanding an individual's current capacity, analyzing opportunities for career growth. This can be achieved through certification or programming. Sharing knowledge with others in the profession allows for deeper analysis of self and organization.
- **Strategy.** Members can share experience and knowledge in strategy development based on bases of experience and from a broader worldview perspective.
- **Engagement.** Communication professionals engage with international colleagues in valuable network expansion opportunity.

Career levels of the communication profession

Foundation

This is the entry level of the profession. At this level the communication professional attains the education and develops the core skills required to be competent within all Principles of the Global Standard and to work across disciplines. Foundational skills are required to do the job and understand the organization's culture, structure and function.

At this milestone the professional is expected to contribute under relatively close supervision and direction from a more senior person, and is expected to exercise initiative and creativity within a well-defined area. They must master basic and routine communication tasks, and demonstrate competence on a portion of a larger communication project or task.

Generalist/Specialist

At this level the communication professional branches into a role with either a specific or a generalist focus, where work experience provides opportunities for a more strategic and problem-solving approach. The communication professional will apply a deeper understanding and practice of the Principles.

Here, the communication professional begins to refine their career choices. They can be satisfied as a generalist or specialist for a number of years or for a whole career, but expertise and responsibility will continue to grow. Some professionals never need or want to move away from this milestone, thriving on interdependent work. They will build expertise in at least one area of the industry. They will develop credibility and a reputation while building strong internal networks of relationships related on their area of expertise and gain greater ability to develop strategic focus and problem-solving techniques.

Strategic Adviser

Maturing as a communication professional through consistent application of the Principles, at this milestone they are expanding expertise and innovation. The communication professional assumes increased responsibilities, including resource management.

They are interdependent, taking responsibility for work other than their own and developing others within the organization. To accommodate their personal development needs, they seek to build additional areas of expertise. They have strong interpersonal skills, broad business perspectives, stimulate others through ideas and knowledge, and effectively represent the organization's clients and external groups. They have expanded their expertise in niche disciplines and explored innovations within these disciplines. They are highly skilled and confident, providing strategic communication advice and counsel to the organization's leadership.

Business Leader

The communication professional at this milestone demonstrates the ability to serve at a senior peer level, leads within an organization by providing counsel, and helps to set organizational direction at a strategic level. They set a standard for application of the Principles.

As business leader, they play a key role in shaping the future of the organization by sponsoring promising people, programs and ideas. At this milestone they have developed a distinct competence in several areas of expertise and often have a regional or national reputation. The professional influences the future of the organization through original concepts that often lead to changing the way business is done. They are adept at seeing new business opportunities, motivating buy-in and gaining resources. They competently represent the organization on critical strategic issues, and are sought after to provide counsel and function at a peer level with other senior executives.

2018 IABC Mentoring and the Comms Career Roadmap Overlay

Mentoring at IABC is first and foremost focused on creating 1:1 supportive relationships. Normally it is a 3-6 month engagement. That said, we hope participants will ultimately build on-going, flexible, diverse and dynamic 'individual advisory boards' / support groups for themselves.

IABC STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



Challenges a mentor might be able to help you with

A mentor might also be able to help you with challenges that cut across all the pathways:

How can I...

- Find a new role?
- Learn from others? Both older and younger...
- Make a career transition?
- Update my CV / resume?
- Prepare for an interview?
- Negotiate terms?
- Manage up? And across?

Explore with others.

Levels	Career Roadmap	Global Standard	Ethical dilemmas
Foundation	How can I use the Career Roadmap to navigate my career?	How can I use The Global Standard of the Communication Profession?	How can I use the Code of Ethics with a specific challenge?
Generalist / Specialist	<i>The above +</i> How can I help others use the Career Roadmap - and prep for CMP status?	<i>The above +</i> How can I help others use the Global Standard?	<i>The above +</i> How can I help others use Code of Ethics?
Strategic Advisor	<i>The above +</i> How can I help my organisation adopt the Career Roadmap + prep for SCMP status?	<i>The above +</i> How can I help my organisation adopt the Global Standard?	<i>The above +</i> How can I help my organisation adopt the Code of Ethics?
Business Leader	How can I have my organisation adopt the IABC Career Roadmap?	<i>The above +</i> How can I draw on the Global Standard for results?	<i>The above +</i> How can I draw on the Code of Ethics organisation-wide?

Figure 3 – Three intersecting IABC frameworks that work together

"Mentors can be a great source of support during challenges. By being active listeners, and providing a fresh perspective and guidance on possible solutions they can be extremely valuable when you are trying to progress in your career and get stuck" – Gemma Lawrence

What is mentoring and why is it important?

The Task Force has accepted the definition of mentoring as the **transmission of knowledge and support** perceived by the recipient as relevant to professional development. Mentoring entails communication, during a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience – the mentor – and a person who is perceived to have less – the mentee.

The relationship between mentor and mentee is based on **trust and confidentiality**.

The mentor offers a safe and confidential discussion environment to the mentee to discuss issues and explore solutions to challenges. This facilitates trust as well as offering the mentee a fresh perspective in discussions. A mentor can offer insights into the ways an organization works, how the informal networks operate and what they think about the challenges and opportunities mentees encounter. The latter is particularly important.



Figure 4 - Mentoring is a two-way street

Mentoring as a two-way partnership

Both mentor and mentee must go into this two-way relationship with the mutual understanding that the mentor is not a manager or coach. The partnership should benefit both parties – the mentor supports the mentee in learning how to navigate difficult situations, and the mentee simultaneously shares their recent learnings or new ideas.

The qualities that make good mentors and mentees

The IABC Brand Guidelines provide useful and practice guidance which can be used in this context as well. Both parties in a constructive mentor relationship are likely

Our brand personality

CHARACTERISTIC	BEHAVIOR - WHAT IT MEANS
Accessible	Collaborative, supportive, consultative
Open	Transparent, direct, open minded
Lighter	Fun, friendly, welcoming
Contemporary	Current, leading-edge
Professional	Effective and efficient

Figure 5 - Excerpt from IABC Brand Guidelines

to feel comfortable operating with these characteristics.

Furthermore, tone in a mentoring discussion matters. Again, practical ideas can be had from the IABC Brand Guidelines.

Our tone of voice

Our tone of voice is the way in which we write and speak; what we say and how we say it. It is informed by our personality.

It is important that our brand personality is translated into words as well as the visuals. The way we express ourselves in words is a reflection of our brand.

IABC's voice is:

TONE OF VOICE	WHAT IT MEANS	WHAT IT DOESN'T MEAN
Human	We are personable. Address the audience with an inclusive tone in first person (i.e. you, we, us). It is a member-first perspective. We are welcoming and friendly. We are collegial and down-to-earth.	We don't mean we are too familiar, soft, cute or alternatively stiff. We don't mean a corporation talking to a customer but a colleague talking with another colleague.
Open	We are clear, uncomplicated and easy to understand. We are approachable and positive.	We don't mean patronizing, lacking substance, or double meanings. We avoid unnecessary jargon and rhetoric.
Confident	We are accomplished, relevant and leading-edge. We celebrate our successes and are proud of who we are (meaning our brand and our member community).	We don't mean arrogant, pompous, vain, or over-promising.
Professional	We are responsive, dependable and timely. We are knowledgeable and collaborative. We understand that quality underlies what we do and what we deliver to our members.	We don't mean stuffy, corporate or formal, boring or lacking a sense of humor.

Figure 6 - IABC Tone of Voice - excerpt from IABC Brand Guidelines

Important qualities in more detail

Some further important qualities that a mentor should have are **positivity, enthusiasm, and approachability**. The best mentors are not judgmental but are **good listeners** and always **open-minded** to new ideas. A mentor doesn't have all the answers, nor should they be expected to provide them. The mentor should instead help their mentee analyze their situation or challenge, then encourage and motivate them to make their own decisions and come to their own conclusions. A good mentor is **objective, supportive**, able to see **the big picture**, and **able to give constructive criticism** in a measured tone.



Figure 7 - Qualities of a good mentor

A mentor is, above all, **honest**. A good mentee must put in equal effort into the partnership. A mentee should remember that mentoring is a voluntary scenario, and that their mentor may not always be immediately available.

A mentee should be **proactive** and willing to seek answers themselves, only approaching their mentor for guidance on a challenge or situation when the mentee has already thought through several scenarios and possible solutions. It helps for a mentee to **be organized** when establishing a regular meeting schedule with their mentor, going into each meeting each time having **prepared** for what they are seeking from the mentee.



- Proactive
- Prepared
- Organized
- Specific
- Realistic
- Partnership-minded
- Puts equal effort in
- Respectful of time
- Open minded
- Seeks constructive feedback

Figure 8 - Qualities of a good mentee

A mentee, when entering into a mentorship, should be **specific** with their objectives concerning what they would like to receive out of the partnership. It helps for the mentee to proactively write down some **realistic measurable outcomes** as a result of the relationship. For example – “by the end of the mentorship I would like to have become more confident when developing a communication strategy”. A mentee should be **open minded** and **willing to take constructive criticism**, understanding that any advice from the mentor comes from a place of care.

"In my experience, they can definitely help you untangle complex problems and give you encouragement to keep pushing yourself further. I'm a huge advocate of building a Trusted Advisor type relationship with senior leaders, something my mentors inspire me to do."
- Advita Patel

A healthy mentor-mentee relationship can be easily defined and established if key components are taken into account:

- Both mentor and mentee have defined specific outcomes before entering into the relationship;
- Mentor and mentee understand that the experience is a two-way partnership; and
- Mentor and mentee go into the relationship acknowledging the qualities and attitude they must bring to each meeting.

Further definitions for reflection:

One-time mentor

- Someone who can solve a singular problem with you or help you with a challenge. This is likely a one-off meeting of the minds.

Formal mentor

- A person that will be part of your professional career for longer than a few weeks or months and will help you develop your skills.

Board of advisors

- A group of people that you can tap for help and advice as you progress through your career. Each member of this group brings a different perspective.

How can Chapters and Regions benefit from a mentoring program?

For the Chapters and Regions that offer mentoring, there is an opportunity to expand the member value proposition, strengthen engagement and contribute to revenue generating activities.

Mentoring offers a boost, study says, but few take advantage

“Organizations with formal programs claim plenty of benefits for the mentors, mentees and the organization as a whole. The mentee benefits most often cited in the study are professional development (36 percent) and a better understanding of organizational culture (30 percent). Top benefits for mentors are “developing new perspectives” (59 percent) and developing leadership skills (49 percent). And organizationally, respondents said the top benefits were higher employee engagement and retention (50 percent) and supporting the growth of high-potential employees (46 percent).” - [read more in the Feb 2018 CW](#)

Who would a mentoring program benefit?

Mentoring programs strategically align with IABC’s Career Roadmap paths of Foundation, Generalist/Specialist, Strategic Advisor, or Business Leader. They would be rooted in the Global Standard for the profession and correspond with maintenance requirements of IABC’s certification programming.

Opportunities for members include:

1. Creating connection
2. Developing strategic communication professionals
3. Advancing the profession
4. Attracting and retaining members

IABC’s mentoring framework could include formal, informal or hybrid approaches.

- ✓ Formal program – defined structure, guidelines and objectives
- ✓ Informal program – general peer-to-peer discussions
- ✓ Hybrid approach – in-person and virtual meetings, one-on-one and group mentoring

The state of mentoring in IABC

Our research found that there are 11 chapters providing various mentor programs for members, through a variety of approaches. The work of the Mentoring Task Force has involved capturing the current state of the programs so forward direction provide for important lessons learned.

[British Columbia](#) (Canada West)
[Calgary](#) (Canada West)
[Canberra](#) (APAC)
[Dallas](#) (Southern)
[Detroit](#) (Heritage)
[Edmonton](#) (Canada West)

[Regina](#) (Canada West)
[San Francisco](#) (Pacific Plains)
[Toronto](#) (Canada East)
[U.K.](#) (EMENA)
[Wellington](#) (APAC)



Key findings from Chapters

- ✓ Typically chapters have structured mentoring programs as creating one-to-one supportive relationships within a three to six month timeframe.
- ✓ Providing guidelines is useful – on how to make the most of the mentoring program and defines mentoring as the one-to-one matching between a mentor (usually an experienced practitioner) and a mentee (usually a young professional or student/recent university graduate) based on skills or interest.

- ✓ A few of the chapters don't have formal criteria for matching. In these cases, the chapter facilitates by matching applicants based on needs and organizing a kick-off event where mentors and mentees meet for the first time.
- ✓ The mentoring relationship lasts from 3-6 months and it's up to each matched pair to determine where and when they will meet and how often.
- ✓ Some chapters have also experimented with speed mentoring events where professionals go around the room to ask advice on a specific question or issue.

<p>British Columbia </p> <p>Type: 1-1 skills-based matching, Speed mentoring, Gift of Communication hybrid</p> <p>Program length: 3 months</p> <p>Status: Active</p>	<p>Detroit </p> <p>Type: 1-1 skills or interest-based matching, 8 week cycles with face-to-face check-ins</p> <p>Average length: 6-12 months</p> <p>Status: Inactive</p>	<p>Toronto </p> <p>Type: 1-1 skills-based matching (no students), Speed mentoring event</p> <p>Average length: 6 months</p> <p>Status: Active</p>	<p>Common best practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require applications from mentees and mentors • Matching done based on agreed criteria • Program kick-off and wrap-up events • Resources, guides to help participants • Monthly in-person or virtual meetings between pairs • Available for members only • Portfolio director checks in with the matched pair on how its going • Useful to have support for team <p>Common challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More mentee sign-ups than mentors available • Unclear participant goals and expectations results in mismatch • Lack of interest or engagement by participants or members over time • Board turnover impacts experience, consistency in program delivery <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vary type of mentoring based on participant need, e.g. , speed mentoring, formal 1-1, career advice • Database of members that have opted in to become mentors • Use career roadmap as a development guide • Structured matching based on goals and expectations
<p>Calgary </p> <p>Type: 1-1 skills-based matching, check-ins through by chapter administrator</p> <p>Program length: 6 months</p> <p>Status: Active</p>	<p>Edmonton </p> <p>Type: 1-1 skills-based matching, group mentoring: 1 mentor for several mentees</p> <p>Average length: 8 months</p> <p>Status: Active</p>	<p>UK </p> <p>Type: 1-1 skills or interest-based matching, online resources</p> <p>Program length: 6 months</p> <p>Status: Under Review</p>	
<p>Canberra </p> <p>Type: 1-1 career or skills-based matching (Pilot program, discontinued)</p> <p>Program length: 12 months</p> <p>Status: Inactive</p>	<p>Regina </p> <p>Type: 1-1 career and skills-based matching, Gift of Communication alignment</p> <p>Program length: 3-6 months</p> <p>Status: Under Review</p>	<p>Wellington </p> <p>Type: 1-1 interest-based matching, unstructured and informal, no set criteria</p> <p>Program length: 6 months</p> <p>Status: Active</p>	
<p>Dallas </p> <p>Type: 1-1 career, project & skills-based matching, student matching</p> <p>Program length: 3-12 months</p> <p>Status: Under Review</p>	<p>San Francisco </p> <p>Type: 1-1 skills or interest-based matching, fall and/or spring cycles</p> <p>Program length: 2 months</p> <p>Status: Active</p>	<p>Notable mentions</p> <p>Chicago, Central Florida</p> <p>Type: 1-1 career mentoring for students in partnership with a local university</p> <p>Program length: 3 months</p> <p>Status: Inactive</p>	

"Our best mentors may not be in the same geographic area as we are. With the technology we have available today, it's possible to connect people from around the world." – Linda L Matthie

Chapter challenges

- ✓ Chapters note one of the biggest challenges is receiving more applications from mentees than mentors. As a result, some applicants are left unmatched.
- ✓ Another challenge has been fluctuating level of participation, either to sign up for the program altogether or the participants not meeting their commitments. For example, some mentors complained that their mentee stopped responding to meeting requests.
- ✓ In other cases, some mentees felt that their mentor wasn't the right fit for the type of career they want to pursue or the advice they were looking for.
- ✓ Due to lack of interest, one or two chapters have let their mentoring programs become inactive.
- ✓ Many of the chapters are currently reviewing their program with a view to refresh the process and better align to meet the needs of members.

What approaches have worked for other Chapters?

In the lead-up to the 2019 Leadership Institute, in partnership with CW Observer, we'll interview a range of leaders around approaches they've used.

- Speed mentoring programs ...
- Establishing a mentors pool ...
- Attracting new members because of mentoring option ...
- Lunch and learn presentations ...
- Business Leader alignment processes ...
- Special interest groups ...
- Partnerships with local post-secondary institutions ...

Select Resources

- cw.iabc.com/2018/02/20/mentoring-offers-a-boost-study-says-but-few-take-advantage/
- cw.iabc.com/2018/03/20/3-things-that-attract-and-retain-top-millennial-talent/
- pages.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/richardson/documents/mentor.htm
- hbr.org/2017/04/mentor-people-who-arent-like-you
- hbr.org/2017/02/what-the-best-mentors-do
- iabc.com/the-benefits-of-mentoring/

Extensive further research and articles about mentoring can be found at:

- sloanreview.mit.edu/?s=mentoring
- hbr.org/search?search_type=search-all&term=mentoring
- scholar.google.de/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=mentoring&btnG=

A number of celebrations of mentoring also take place around the world – including:

- mentoring.org/our-work/campaigns/national-mentoring-month/
- nationalmentoringday.org/
- nationalmentoringawards.org/

Looking for more? Search #IABCmentoring...