

# MENTORSHIP HANDBOOK

# What is a BethelBiz Alumni mentor?

As a BethelBiz Alumni Mentor you are a guide, friend, and resource who will help pave the way for students or recent graduates to succeed at Bethel and, ultimately, in the business world. Your shared faith in Jesus Christ, your mutual experiences at Bethel, and your professional experience provide a basis upon which you can build an impactful and meaningful relationship with your mentee. By investing in the life of a mentee, you are helping prepare them to lead and serve with excellence in every aspect of life. You are also playing a significant role in building and growing the BethelBiz community because mentorship is a critical component of any successful business network.

## The Mentoring Relationship

In order for the mentoring relationship to be successful, there must be a reciprocal and open relationship between the mentor and the mentee. Each party should display integrity, honesty, respect, active listening, patience, commitment, enthusiasm, and professionalism.

## The Benefits of Mentoring

The mentoring relationship offers an opportunity for professional development, networking, and an exchange of ideas between experienced professionals and the next generation of leadership. Mentees report a higher level of confidence, greater achievement, and increased commitment to learning and development. Mentors report significant personal satisfaction from helping someone reach their full potential and a sense of accomplishment and pride in their mentee's achievements. Mentors also note development of new insights into people, relationships, and their own beliefs. It is a relationship that is mutually beneficial as each learns and grows from the experience.

## Mentor Expectations

- Schedule and drive the initial meeting and then encourage your mentee to initiate contact and lead future discussions.
- Together, establish a meeting frequency and duration. We recommend meeting once a month for the duration of the school year.
- Help your mentee to set, track, and adjust their goal(s).
- Respond to all communications from your mentee in a timely manner.
- Conduct yourself ethically, respectfully, and professionally.
- Honor confidentiality.
- Keep the relationship a priority and ask your mentee to do the same.

You are not expected to offer your mentee a job or internship, to initiate all contact, or to have all the answers. If there is a concern with the mentee/mentor relationship, contact the program coordinator, Linda Goodwin, at [lindakgoodwin79@gmail.com](mailto:lindakgoodwin79@gmail.com).

# The Mentor Role

## Communicator

Mentees respond best to mentors who listen well, ask open-ended questions and establish an environment for open discussion. A successful partnership is characterized by two-way exchanges, with mentors sharing examples based on their successes and failures, and by providing honest and candid feedback.

## Guide

The best mentors guide mentees on their journey of learning. Because most mentors are natural problem solvers, they must curb the tendency to direct rather than coach. Mentors can suggest opportunities and warn of pitfalls, but they should not make the decisions for the mentee. Mentees learn best from mentors who present a variety of options, allowing the mentee to work through the analysis and reach their own decision.

## Ally

An honest ally is the foundation of the partnership. As an ally, you should be able to appraise behaviors and explain how others may perceive them. You are a “trusted counselor” who is expected to speak candidly. Because allies work in an atmosphere of confidence, trust and openness, you can provide feedback that the mentee may never again have the opportunity to receive. You should serve as a confidential sounding board, providing a risk-free environment for sharing challenges and seeking other perspectives.

## “Wide Angle Lens”

Mentees often become very narrowly focused on the matter at hand. Your experience can broaden their perspective to see the whole picture. One of your greatest contributions may be to help the mentee understand the broader consequences.

## Tips for Effective Mentoring

- Ask thoughtful questions about the mentee's interests, experiences, and background.
- Share your story. Telling the mentee about yourself and your experiences builds trust and rapport.
- Think about how you have learned from your mistakes and how your mentee can learn from them.
- Follow up on any important steps the mentee has taken, such as a job interview or leadership experience.
- Maintain regular contact. Weekly contact is recommended, but twice a month is expected.
- Always be honest. Don't hesitate to provide your mentee constructive feedback. It could make a huge difference in their career experiences.
- Encourage independent thinking. Don't solve the problem but help the mentee solve the problem.
- Ask the mentee what they are thinking and help them process their own ideas.
- Help the mentee develop and expand their networks.
- Exhibit a positive attitude, encouraging the mentee to approach challenges with enthusiasm.
- Encourage risk-taking.
- Share what is perceived as acceptable behavior and/or implications of certain behavior.
- Coach on how to challenge the status quo constructively and use their personal strengths
- Share perspectives on how to filter and interpret feedback from managers, partners, and peers.
- Coach on personal style and mode of communication (how to tailor behaviors to fit situation).
- Suggest practical ways the mentee can use strengths and develop them further.

# Why partner with a mentor?

A mentorship relationship offers the mentee the opportunity to develop and enhance professional and communication skills, connect academics and career, explore new ideas and areas of interest, and build a professional network. In addition, the mentee can receive honest and constructive feedback, advice on how to integrate education, career, and one's faith, and gain perspective on long-term career planning. Finally, mentorship with a Bethel alumni provides the mentee with a valuable resource who has a shared faith in Christ and is committed to helping the mentee succeed by leveraging the unique talents God has given them to live with purpose and to accomplish incredible things — personally, professionally, and in our world.

## Mentee Expectations

- Take ownership and demonstrate an interest and commitment in your own personal and professional development.
- Invest time and energy to the partnership and be fully committed to it.
- Create a vision for your learning journey.
- Be committed to carrying out agreed-upon goals.
- Discuss your needs and expectations with your mentor.
- Come prepared for each meeting and be ready to learn.
- Be open to suggestions and feedback, even if it leads you out of your comfort zone.
- Keep your mentor informed of your progress toward your goals
- Realize that having a mentor is a privilege and work hard to take full advantage of the opportunity. Acknowledge and express appreciation for your mentor's time, efforts, and counsel.
- Be available to meet or talk 1 – 2 times per month
- Honor confidentiality and know the boundaries.
- Keep the conversations positive and professional.

If there is a concern with the mentee/mentor relationship, contact the program coordinator, Linda Goodwin, at [lindakgoodwin79@gmail.com](mailto:lindakgoodwin79@gmail.com).

*"...By participating in this kind of mentor/mentee relationship, we are developing the whole person, and through the expertise and experiences of our alums, equipping our students with the resources they need to be successful not only in the workplace, but in all areas of their lives."*

— A Bethel student and mentee

# The First Conversation: A Guide for the Mentee

Initially, you might be intimidated, especially if this is the first time you have had a mentor. Remember that the mentor shares a mutual interest in the success of the partnership and is anxious to help you. The most important thing to do in your first conversation is to introduce yourself and build rapport. Building rapport simply means getting to know someone on a personal level. Before the meeting, think about what you want to share with your mentor: your family, your hometown, your Bethel experience, hobbies, etc.

In addition, write out some questions to ask your mentor. Below are some suggestions:

- Tell me what you do for a living.
- Where did you grow up?
- Tell me about your experience at Bethel.
- What did you like best at Bethel?
- Tell me about your family.
- What are your interests outside of work?
- What are some of your favorite books?

## Make a good first impression

- Be early to the meeting
- Dress in business casual attire
- Approach them with a smile, shake their hand and introduce yourself
- Thank them for being your mentor
- Bring your resume. If you don't have a resume, create a profile of your current activities and include your major, student activities, recent jobs or internships.



# Setting Goals

We encourage you to establish goals for the mentoring relationship as soon as possible. Goals are important because they provide direction and clarity and help to improve the success of the relationship. Goal setting also increases the motivation to succeed, instills pride in achieving the goals, and bolsters self-confidence. Before your first meeting, think of two to three areas you would like your mentor’s assistance with over the next few months. In addition, think about your long-term and lifetime goals.

Goals	Timing

## Use the SMART Goal-Setting Model:

**Specific** — specify how the goal will be accomplished

**Measurable** — establish criteria for how to achieve a goal

**Action-oriented** — be proactive in taking action that will result in reaching the goal

**Realistic** — strive for attainable goals; consider the resources and constraints

**Timely** — allow reasonable time to complete each goal, but not so much time that you lose focus or motivation.

## Values Clarification

The purpose of Values Clarification is to assist you in making choices necessary to achieve your goals and dreams. When you are clear in your values, your day-to-day choices and life's work will become much more meaningful. You will spend less time on activities that take you further away from achieving your goals, resulting in more time spent on activities that bring you closer to having the life you want.

- What results in life are essential for you to see yourself as a success? (be specific)
- Describe the career of your dreams.
- Describe the qualities and characteristics of the relationships you have or plan to develop.
- Describe your “best” future self.
- Describe your ideal home/living environment.
- What inspires you?
- What do you dream about?
- At the end of your life, what would you like people to say about you?

# Additional Questions to Ask the Mentor

## Job Description

- Please describe a typical day on the job.
- What is the title of the person you report to?
- What types of problems do you face in your job?
- What are the most satisfying and the most frustrating parts of your work?
- What are the trends in your industry and how will they affect careers?

## Personal Experience

- Transitions you have made in your life.
- What you wish you had known before you started your first job.
- Influential people in your life.
- The best piece of advice you have received about life, work, school, faith.
- Define what success means to you.

## Advancement

- Please discuss your career path.
- How did you prepare for your job?
- What do you recommend for a person interested in this occupation?
- If you could start all over again, what would you do differently?  
What steps would you take?
- What additional education/degrees/training are required in this field?
- What are the professional organizations in this field?

## **Additional Questions to Ask the Mentor** (Continued)

### **Lifestyle**

- What hours do you normally work?
- What are the pressures that you have to manage?
- How does this job affect your personal life?
- What is expected of you outside of normal working hours?
- Is there a formal mentor program at your company?
- Describe your experiences as a mentee — both challenges and benefits.

### **Career Conversations**

- Discuss the mentee's talents, skills, and interests.
- Discuss how the mentor's personal, professional and spiritual life fit together.
- Discuss the mentor's educational background and the role of educational preparation in your field.
- Discuss organizational types and cultures.
- Discuss how individual and personal values impact career choices.
- Discuss a current event or issue in your field.
- Discuss the transition from school to work.
- Discuss how to conduct an informational interview.

## Networking

The primary goal of networking is to create mutually supportive professional relationships. Networking broadens your professional circle and gives you contacts you can draw upon for information, advice, and support. In a mentoring relationship, networking benefits both partners.

Discuss what networking is and the value of networking, personally and professionally.

### DO

- Do try to give as much as you get.
- Do report back (Did you follow their advice? What happened?)
- Do follow up on all referrals.
- Do be businesslike. Be prompt; respect other's time and schedules.
- Do keep in touch with your old networks.
- Do call members of your network for "no reason at all." Keeping in touch is a reason.
- Do ask questions for which you really need the answers; not for things you easily could have looked up yourself.
- Do keep expanding your network.
- Do keep records of your contacts. Write notes with brief information about each (personal and professional), referrals they may have made, commitments you made to provide information.

### DON'T

- Don't be discouraged if someone brushes you off. It happens — and usually has nothing to do with you.
- Don't expect your network to function as a placement office.
- Don't be afraid to ask for what you need.
- Don't pass up any opportunities to network — they can happen in any setting.

# Mentoring Agreement

To get the most out of your mentoring experience, use this agreement to discuss the expectations and goals for the mentor and the mentee.

## Agree on expectations: how will the relationship work?

1. Meeting together: What works best? (Recommend at least one in-person meeting each month). Will we meet in person, Skype, or phone? If in person, agree on the places we will meet. Select a location that will work for both and be flexible. Remember, some conversations can occur by phone, especially between meetings.
2. How often will we meet? Renegotiate as needed.
3. In between meetings, what is the preferred method of communication? Phone, email or text?
4. What is the best time to reach other? Define for both the mentor and the mentee.
  - Weekdays or weekends?
  - Morning, afternoon, or evening?
5. If an email or voice mail is received, we will respond to our partner within... (24 hours, 1-2 days, other)
6. If we can't make an expected meeting, how will we get in touch?
7. When will we meet or talk next?

## Agree on Goals: What do you hope to gain from the relationship?

1. What are the mentee's goals for this mentoring relationship? Is there any clarification needed?
2. What are the mentor's goals for this mentoring relationship?
3. What actions can both the mentor and mentee take to achieve the goals?

Periodically assess the relationship and reflect together on how you could each get more out of the experience. The relationship should be mutually beneficial.

# Thank you,

BethelBiz mentors, for giving of your time and talent to the mentees. This program would not be possible without your commitment and passion to helping Bethel students and young professionals grow in their career.

## Help Us Offer More Value

We welcome all suggestions to improve both the Mentorship Guide and the BethelBiz Alumni Mentoring program. If you have any questions or feedback, please contact Linda Goodwin at **[lindakgoodwin79@gmail.com](mailto:lindakgoodwin79@gmail.com)** or **612-382-0416**.

In creating this handbook, material was used from the University of Minnesota Alumni Association Mentoring Handbook, College of Business at Illinois, the University of St. Thomas Alumni Association, Harvard Business School Mentorship Program, the Stanford University Alumni Mentoring Guide, and the Wells Fargo Mentoring Guide.