

# Guide to Remote Mentoring



## ▶ Introduction

**M**entoring is a relationship in which a person is supported through a learning and/or development journey. It's about reflecting, encouraging and supporting the new or existing business owner to make the most of themselves and their business.

Mentoring is about mutual trust and respect.

It's a two way relationship in which both parties get the chance to learn new things and further your personal development. Every mentoring relationship is different but all mentoring relationships present the opportunity for both mentor and mentee to learn from each other.

Ideally mentoring is best conducted face to face, however there are occasions when this is not possible and therefore remote mentoring may be considered as an alternative. Remote mentoring requires more structure and





## ► Roles and Responsibilities

**A**s in face to face mentoring, a remote enterprise mentor is normally someone who has a great deal of entrepreneurial business experience and who acts as a trusted confidante over a flexible period of time.

### **A remote mentor should:**

- Provide an outside perspective on the business owner and his or her business
- Share in confidence, by email, skype or telephone, the things that are worrying the business owner about their business
- Help by sharing their own experience of failures and successes
- Give friendly, unbiased support and guidance
- Provide honest and constructive feedback
- Be a sounding board for ideas
- Provide ongoing support and encouragement

### **A remote mentee should:**


- Take personal responsibility for making their business successful
- Consider the variety of options and choices that arise through communicating with their mentor provides
- Take advantage of the new personal skills and knowledge that come through working with a mentor
- Share in confidence the things that are worrying them about their business and/or new ideas that they have identified
- Provide honest and constructive feedback to their mentor to ensure that the relationship continues to be useful and effective





▶ **Getting Started**





Once connected Mentor and mentee can begin their mentoring relationship. It will be important to agree the basis for the mentoring relationship in terms of:

- Method/s of contact
- Frequency of contact
- Format of communications – i.e. structured or more informal
- Any special arrangements in terms of confidentiality or data protection

It is recommended that mentor and mentee communicate personally by either telephone or skype to establish a personal connection before moving to simply email communication.

Whether the first exchange happens by telephone, skype or email the same principles should be adopted. To get things going each party could:

- Tell each other something about themselves which may include information about their personal and professional lives
- Explain why they got involved and discuss what might be done together and what each may want to get out of the mentoring relationship
- Agree the format for exchanges which may include regular skype, telephone calls and/or emails
- Discuss the purpose of the relationship and an issue/challenge that the business owner is facing
- Use the reflective review outlined in Appendix 1 to plan and review each of the exchanges
- If using skype, plan to exchange information or signpost in real time

It takes time to build any relationship and it may take a little longer if there is a physical distance between mentor and mentee.

## ▶ Appendix 1

**Y**ou may wish to use this planning and reflective review format to structure your exchanges with your mentor/mentee. Revisiting discussions points and agreeing actions to be taken often helps the continuity of your mentoring relationship and allows you both to reflect on what has been achieved. The following questions can be used to not only record and review activities undertaken but also to plan for the future.

### ▶ Month 1

**Step 1** To be completed by mentee prior to skype or telephone call and shared electronically with mentor

What do I want to get out of this month's mentoring exchange/s?

To be considered by mentor in preparation for skype or telephone call

How can I help?

**Step 2** To be considered by the mentee prior to Skype or telephone call

What is the issue/challenge that I am facing?

What do I want most out of this conversation with my mentor?

To be considered by mentor in preparation for skype or telephone call

How can I best prepare myself for this call?

**Step 3** To be agreed by both parties

What actions are to be taken by me as a mentee?

What actions are to be taken by my mentor? (if appropriate)

How will we communicate with each other between skype/telephone calls?







► **Month 2**

**Step 4** To be completed by mentee (and mentor if appropriate) – could be shared prior to skype or telephone call if mentor/mentee feel it is appropriate

- What actions have I taken as a mentee?
- What have I learned from the actions taken?
- How will this change how I approach things in future?
- What actions have been taken by my mentor? (if appropriate)
- Is the relationship working? How could it be improved?

**Move back to Step 2 working through process again.**



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