

MENTORING PATHWAYS PROGRAM

Designed for the
personal growth
and professional
development of
our members.



Program Overview

The Mentoring Pathways program is an embodiment of the commitment of SMPS Sacramento to our members' personal growth and professional development. As such, participation in Mentoring Pathways is limited to SMPS Sacramento Chapter members only.

Mentoring Pathways is built upon expertise from individual chapters around the country and the resources provided by SMPS. We encourage professionals at all stages of their career to consider participating – either as a protégé or mentor. No matter where you are in your career, you can gain important benefits from participating in a mentor-protégé relationship.

The program will be overseen and administered by the Mentoring Pathways administrator(s), as appointed by the Chapter Board. Fostering the success of our future industry leaders is a key part of the mission of SMPS and the Sacramento Chapter's Mentoring Pathways program will provide an important means to help fulfill this mission.

Mentoring Pathways will connect experience professionals with aspiring talent of any age or at any stage of their career development in a supportive, one-on-one environment. The goal of Mentoring Pathways is to provide both the mentor and protégé with a rewarding professional relationship that is mutually advantageous.

Pairing Mentors and Protégés

Pairing of mentors and protégés will be done using a variety of tools:

- Mentors will complete an application that identifies background and specific areas of strength.
- Protégés will complete an application that identifies needs, background, and specific areas of interest.
- A mandatory kick-off meeting will be held to encourage informal networking between mentors and protégés. Mentor biographies will be provided to all protégés in advance of this networking session.

Protégés will be asked to identify three potential mentors for pairing. The Mentoring Pathways administrator(s) will recommend the final pairing.

Meetings and Frequency

Regular, pre-planned meetings are strongly recommended for mentors and protégés. The frequency of meeting will be dependent upon the needs of the protégé, the comfort level of each participant, the available time of the mentor and protégé, etc. To ensure that both the protégé and mentor maximize their relationship, monthly meetings are encouraged as a starting point. The protégé should take the initiative and be responsible for setting up the non-structured individual meeting, and presenting available time periods, objectives, and meeting arrangements. The protégé would also benefit from documenting the mentoring activity.

In addition, roundtable meetings will be hosted monthly to provide a more engaging setting for mentors and protégés to convene as a group and explore issues and opportunities facing marketing professionals through discussion. Roundtable meeting topics will be decided as a group.

Focusing on Goals

Mentors and protégés should continually review objectives and expectations. One tool for doing this is a Protégé Action Plan. This form can help both the mentor and protégé identify and stay focused on the goals of the relationship.

Duration of Mentoring Program/Relationship

A minimum commitment of one year is recommended; sometimes it takes time for a relationship to develop and find its place. Give it some time. Continue to review objectives and expectations.

Sometimes relationships have difficulty for a variety of reasons – e.g., personality clashes or different communication styles. It is the responsibility of both the mentor and protégé to address issues when a relationship is failing. The Mentoring Pathways administrator(s) will provide assistance to participants in changing or mending a relationship, if necessary.

Fees

Mentoring Pathways is designed to offer clear value to SMPS members. A \$175.00 program fee will be requested of the Protégé for participation in the program. While there is a greater level of commitment anticipated by charging a fee, the fee will also help to off-set anticipated program costs (e.g., personality tests, networking meetings, etc.).

Confidentiality

Both mentors and protégés should always maintain one another's confidentiality. Neither should approach each other or their firms to sell consulting services, and each should comply with the SMPS Code of Ethics.

Roles

Role of a Mentor

Mentors are role models who function as advisor, coach, counselor, and promoter. They have a genuine interest in helping the protégé's professional growth and career development and are willing to commit to the relationship for 12 months. Because mentors serve as role models, they show respect for the profession and are proponents for SMPS.

Mentors will want to avoid conflicts of interest and should not seek to conduct business as the result of a mentoring relationship. Specific mentoring activities can vary widely depending on the individual needs of a protégé as well as the nature of the mentor/protégé relationship.

Typically, a responsible mentor does the following:

- Maintains confidentiality in interactions with a protégé.
- Is responsible for living up to commitments to maintain the relationship.
- Listens to a protégé's concerns and needs to more effectively provide support/guidance.
- Assists the protégé in developing SMART¹ goals and an action plan to achieve these goals.
- Shares knowledge about developing a career path in the A/E/C industry.
- Helps the protégé to identify gaps in skills or experience that inhibit the protégé in his or her current job or from moving to the next level commensurate with career goals.
- Provides insight into the influence of politics and corporate culture on the protégé's job and career path.
- Suggests ways to respond when working with difficult individuals or work situations.
- Shares knowledge and experiences about common mistakes/pitfalls to aid the protégé to succeed.
- Encourages and inspires the protégé to tackle tough challenges.
- Serves as a sounding board for ideas and options, but lets the protégé make his or her decisions.
- Answers specific questions about A/E/C marketing, shares relevant books or articles for discussion, and recommends seminars or courses to meet the specific needs of the protégé.
- Provides information/introductions to additional professional associations relevant for the protégé.
- Encourages participation in SMPS events and programs, chapter committees, board positions, and networking with other SMPS members.

Role of a Protégé

A protégé is one who seeks knowledge, advice, and support in building a professional marketing career in the A/E/C industry. A protégé is committed to Mentoring Pathways for 12 months, and has a continuing interest in spending the time and effort necessary to build a successful career in the industry.

A protégé is not required to conduct business as the result of a mentoring relationship, and should avoid conflicts of interest. While some activities may vary, depending on the specific mentor/protégé relationship, typically a responsible protégé behaves as follows:

- Maintains confidentiality in interactions with a mentor.
 - Is responsible for living up to commitments to maintain the relationship.
 - Respects a mentor's time and schedule.
 - Does not ask for business from the mentor or expect the mentor to provide business referrals.
 - Is clear, honest, and complete in expressing needs and providing information so that a mentor can more effectively provide support and guidance through his or her knowledge and experiences.
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- Uses a mentor as a sounding board to consider various solutions to challenges and to obtain feedback on various options.
- Is willing to tackle tough challenges.
- Develops SMART¹ goals and an action plan to achieve these goals.
- Proactively acts to achieve goals, and keeps track of actions taken and progress made by participating in review meetings on a regular basis.
- Uses resources available through the program or suggested by the mentor (internet research, books/articles, etc.) to prepare for discussions, widen his or her viewpoint, and enrich both the protégé's and mentor's knowledge pool.
- Considers a mentor's advice, but takes responsibility by making his or her own career decisions.
- Shows genuine appreciation for time, guidance, and support that a mentor provides.
- Is willing to become active in chapter programs and committees.
- Gives back to the program – becomes a mentor in the future.

Selecting a Mentor

Participation in Mentoring Pathways will provide you with an opportunity to significantly enhance and advance your career growth and leadership development. To make the most of your involvement, you should take the lead in finding the right mentor for you and in continually pursuing your goals.

To more fully understand the nature of the respective roles in the mentoring relationship and what can be expected, you may want to review the Role of a Mentor and the Role of a Protégé.

Consider the following about the nature of the mentoring relationship you want:

- What type of person would you feel comfortable with? Keep in mind that sometimes the best development comes from opposites.
- What type of person are you? How do you best learn?
- What do you want from the relationship?
- Which kinds of issues would you feel comfortable discussing with your mentor?
- Although you want to feel comfortable and safe in the relationship, remember your goal is to be challenged and to grow professionally.
- Your mentor should not be your manager or supervisor.
- Consider broadening your relationships by looking for someone with whom you already don't have a strong relationship.

¹ SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time bound.

Maximizing your Relationship with your Mentor

Being a protégé provides you with the opportunity to grow from your mentor's experience through a period of guidance and support. Below are some basic guidelines and principles to maximize your mentoring relationship.

The Program/Relationship

Mentors will share their experiences and advice on such topics as career advancement, practice strategies, professional visibility, networking, and overcoming barriers to career success, to name just a few. Successful mentoring involves a dynamic process whereby each participant learns to respect and trust the partner's commitment, expertise, and individuality. A firm commitment to the mentoring process and a willingness to invest time and energy are the most important components for a successful relationship. At your first meeting with your mentor, discuss your needs, objectives, and expectations for the relationship. Identify and agree on clear goals and objectives. Set a timetable; negotiate frequency, venue, type, and duration of meetings.

Basic Principles

Ask for advice and be as specific as possible. While a mentor will usually offer advice, be open to constructive criticism as well.

Return phone calls and emails promptly. Ask how much time your mentor has to spend with you and work within his/her time constraints. Show appreciation for the time and assistance provided by your mentor.

If you and your mentor are having difficulty in developing an effective mentoring relationship, try to work it out together. Be honest about your expectations and what you feel is not working. If that is not successful, contact the Mentoring Pathways administrator(s) and ask for assistance in a resolution.

Meeting Preparation

To get the most out of your relationship, prepare for each meeting with your mentor. At the end of this document is a *Monthly Meeting Form*. While not required, the suggested format will help you to prepare for meetings with your mentor and track progress.

Potential Pitfalls

Limited Time

Studies have shown that finding the time and energy for mentoring pairs to get together is the greatest obstacle to a successful relationship. Relatively short, but frequent contacts between the participants through avenues such as phone calls and emails can result in shorter, regularly scheduled in-person meetings. At a minimum, protégés should meet with their mentors once a month.

Over-dependence

On occasion, a protégé may become overly dependent on his or her mentor. However, over-dependence can go either way in a mentoring relationship. Remember that both parties are responsible for living up to their mentoring agreement and that ultimately protégés are responsible for making their own decisions after considering all advice and weighing the pros and cons.

Evaluation

You and your mentor should have periodic discussions about whether your partnership is continuing to serve a useful purpose, if the goals of the relationship need to change, or if the relationship itself needs to change or end.

- Periodically reassess the progress of the relationship.
- Acknowledge if you are happy in the relationship; positive feedback is always rewarding.
- If you are not happy with the relationship, let your mentor know so that you may work toward a mutually agreeable outcome. If necessary, seek help from the Mentoring Pathways administrator(s).
- Continually reassess against your set goals and set new goals as needed.
- Consider the additional benefits that the relationship has brought you.

Remember

While we strive to be life-long learners (including your mentor), this relationship has a time limit. Be prepared to let go/leave at the end of the one-year timeframe. Learn from your mentor's experience. He or she will show you new and exciting windows to look through.

Successful protégés want to be a partner in the mentor/protégé relationship. They want to develop the skills, knowledge, and ability to develop within their industry. Although your mentor will guide and support you – YOU are the one responsible for your goals and career.

Maximizing your Relationship with your Protégé

You are greatly appreciated for taking the time to give back to a developing professional. We hope your mentoring experience is fulfilling. Consider your own experience of growth and career development that has brought you the success you have today. Following are some beneficial mentoring techniques to guide you as you guide your protégé.

<u>Model</u>	You are a role model for others' professional development. Help your protégé learn from your example.
<u>Empathize</u>	An empathetic mentor will comprehend the types of challenges and struggles a novice faces, usually because he or she was once a novice too.
<u>Nurture</u>	Nurturing encompasses a caring attitude and an emphasis on development and coaching.

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<u>T</u>each	A central aspect of mentoring is the process of teaching. Try to understand your protégé's learning style, then begin with the basics and build upon that.
<u>O</u>rganize	An organized mentor will know at the outset what his/her protégé wants to achieve and will focus every aspect of the relationship on helping the protégé achieve this goal.
<u>R</u>espond	Mentors must truly listen to questions from their protégés and respond to them fully. Mentoring involves genuine two-way communication on a continuing basis.
<u>I</u>nspire	A mentor who can inspire the protégé will have a profound, deeply rooted effect on that person for perhaps an entire lifetime.
<u>N</u>etwork	A good mentor introduces the protégé to other people who can also provide support, information, and resources.
<u>G</u>oal-set	Many young and inexperienced people fail to understand the importance of setting proper goals and objectives, or they lack the experience to make their goals realistic and attainable. Mentors set goals, teach the need for goal setting, and help their protégés master the process of establishing and effectively pursuing goals.

Thank you for committing to the Mentoring Pathways program and your protégé. We ask that you:

- Are willing and available to meet in-person with your protégé at least once a month and by phone or email more regularly, if requested.
- Be willing and available to attend and contribute to monthly roundtable meetings.
- Be clear on your expectations of the relationship. If you are not sure yourself, the protégé will undoubtedly get mixed messages from you.
- Prepare the agenda for the initial meeting (e.g., introductions, experience/situations, examples of future goals). While the protégé is requested to come to that meeting equipped with his/her goals for the relationship, as the more seasoned professional the mentor must ensure that this initial meeting is productive.
- Work with the protégé to clearly define the roles, expectations and outcomes for each of you. Let the protégé know what you can and are willing to give the relationship.

Discussions

Below are suggested topics for discussion with your protégé. These are only a guideline and topics should be developed based on the protégé's specific needs and the shared interests of the mentor and protégé.

- Managing conflict within the office or group
- Career progression
- Networking
- Influencing others (up and down)
- Managing politics in the office and organization
- Newest trends in technology
- Time management
- Work/life balance
- Leadership development

Difficulties

If you and your protégé are having difficulty in developing an effective mentoring relationship, try to work it out together. Clarify your protégé's expectations and be honest about what you feel is not working. If that is not successful, contact your Mentoring Pathways administrator(s) and ask for assistance in a resolution.

Changing, Mending, and Ending a Mentoring Relationship

Both the mentor and protégé share responsibility for developing and sustaining a productive mentoring relationship. Responsible mentoring involves a caring and supporting partnership. This responsibility also includes recognizing and addressing issues when a mentoring relationship is failing.

Mentoring relationships can begin to fail for many reasons, including changes in an individual's personal and/or professional situation, incompatibility, communication style differences, availability issues, etc. If one or both of the partners feel that the relationship cannot continue to be productive, it can be ended at any time. If a change is desired by either party, contact the Mentoring Pathways administrator(s) for advice and suggestions.

Steps to Take to Mend a Relationship

1. **Maintain open communication.** Mentors and protégés should monitor their relationships and be candid in communicating any situations that affect their relationship.
2. **Work within the partnership first.** Partners should first work together to address issues and mend the relationship, if possible.
3. **Explain the issues in writing.** If problems in the relationship do arise, the mentor or protégé may find it helpful to briefly write a summary of the issues of concern as a starting point for an in-person discussion. This approach may make it easier for the mentor or protégé to express and refine issues clearly and unemotionally.

4. **Communicate in person.** If there is a problem in the relationship, it is much better to address this situation in-person, rather than by phone or email.
5. **Seek advice or assistance.** If the partners have difficulty mending the relationship and want to seek assistance, contact the Mentoring Pathways administrator(s) for assistance.
6. **Continue reassessment.** If both partners feel that the relationship is or can be mended over time, they should continue to work together. If it is helpful, the partners can agree to continue for a specified time period and schedule a reassessment time.
7. **End the relationship and move on.** If the issues cannot be resolved, or the goals of the partners have changed to make the relationship no longer productive, the relationship can be ended and the participants can move on to other mentoring relationships. Reassignment of protégés to a new mentor will be made by the Mentoring Pathways administrator(s).

End a Relationship on a Positive Note

Many mentoring relationships end at a previously agreed upon time period, for example one year. Whatever the reason for ending the mentoring relationship, the participants should emphasize the positive benefits. Both participants should thank each other for the lessons learned for the opportunity to interact with one another. And, both participants need to maintain confidentiality both during and after the relationship.

Prior to completing the one-year mentoring term, or when a mentoring relationship concludes at an earlier point, the mentor and protégé will complete a survey to evaluate the effectiveness of and make suggestions for improvement to the Mentoring Pathways program.



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Monthly Meeting Form

Mentee: _____ Mentor: _____ Date: _____

Discussion Topics/Issues:

Results/Recommendations:

Next Meeting Date: _____ Time: _____ Place: _____