

# Networking & Mentoring

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# ~~Networking~~ Relationship building





# How to build relationships

## Craft a 30 second intro.

- Who am I?
- What do I do?
- Where do I want to go?
- What am I passionate about?

## Talk to people!

- Reach out to people who gave an interesting talk.
- Find someone who has skills in areas you need to improve.
- Just say hi.

## Ask for introductions.

- Friends
- Manager (and their manager)
- LinkedIn
- Colleagues
- Professors
- Guidance counselors

## Get involved

- Volunteer in local community
- Sign up for role specific events (like hackathons, design jams, etc)
- Lead an event and ask for volunteers

Instead of...

What do you do?

What do you think is the most valuable part of your work — to yourself and others?

What problems do you want to help others solve?

What aspects of your work do you enjoy most and why?

What do you enjoy least and why?

What is your current role?

What roles and positions have led you to where you are today?

Which ones taught you the most?

Where are you from?

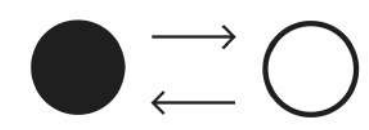
What places have you lived in and traveled to through your career or studies?

Which ones have had the biggest impact on you?

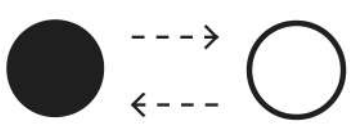
Which was your favorite and why?

“I look at everybody as a mentor. This is a world of constant learning - it never stops.”

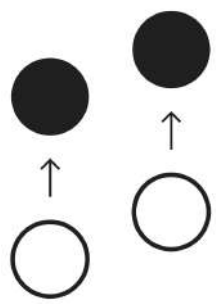
Ginni Rometty  
IBM CEO 2012-2020



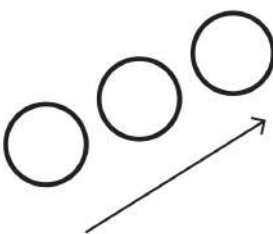
Traditional mentorship



Ad hoc conversation

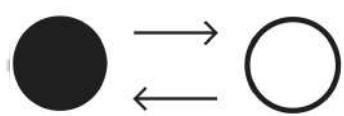


Sponsorship



Coaching

# Traditional mentorship



## What it is

A **deeper, supportive** relationship where the mentor provides advice and feedback to help you through your career and personal development

## What it’s good for

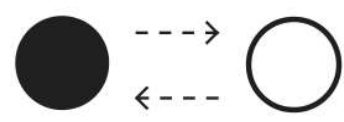
The ongoing nature of the relationship means the mentor will **know you holistically** and provide well-tailored advice and feedback.

## Relationship driver

You drive the relationship. Your mentor is reactive and responsive to your needs.



# Ad hoc conversation



## What it is

A **casual** conversation with someone whose skills and experience you respect.

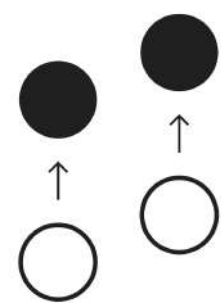
## What it’s good for

These are great for connecting with an array of people in the community. You can learn how others **clarify** their own goals, get feedback on an immediate challenge, or **expand** your knowledge on subject areas that you want to learn more about. Ad hoc conversations are useful to feel out if someone would be a good person to return to for more advice in the **future**.

## Relationship driver

You drive the relationship.

# Sponsorship



## What it is

A relationship with someone in a position of **authority** and **influence** who can advocate for your appointment to a role for the sake of accelerating your career.

## What it’s good for

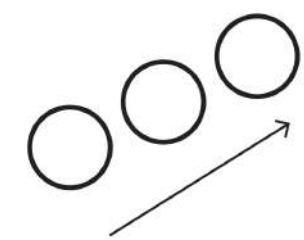
Sponsors can play a powerful role in opening up **new doors** to relationships, projects, roles, organizations, and teams to advance your career. Moving into new roles and opportunities will often require sponsors with clout to **advocate for you**.

## Relationship driver

The sponsor drives the relationship, advocating for you in many settings, including behind closed doors.



# Coaching



## What it is

A relationship that focuses on improving performance through **goal setting** and challenging you to stretch beyond your current self.

## What it’s good for

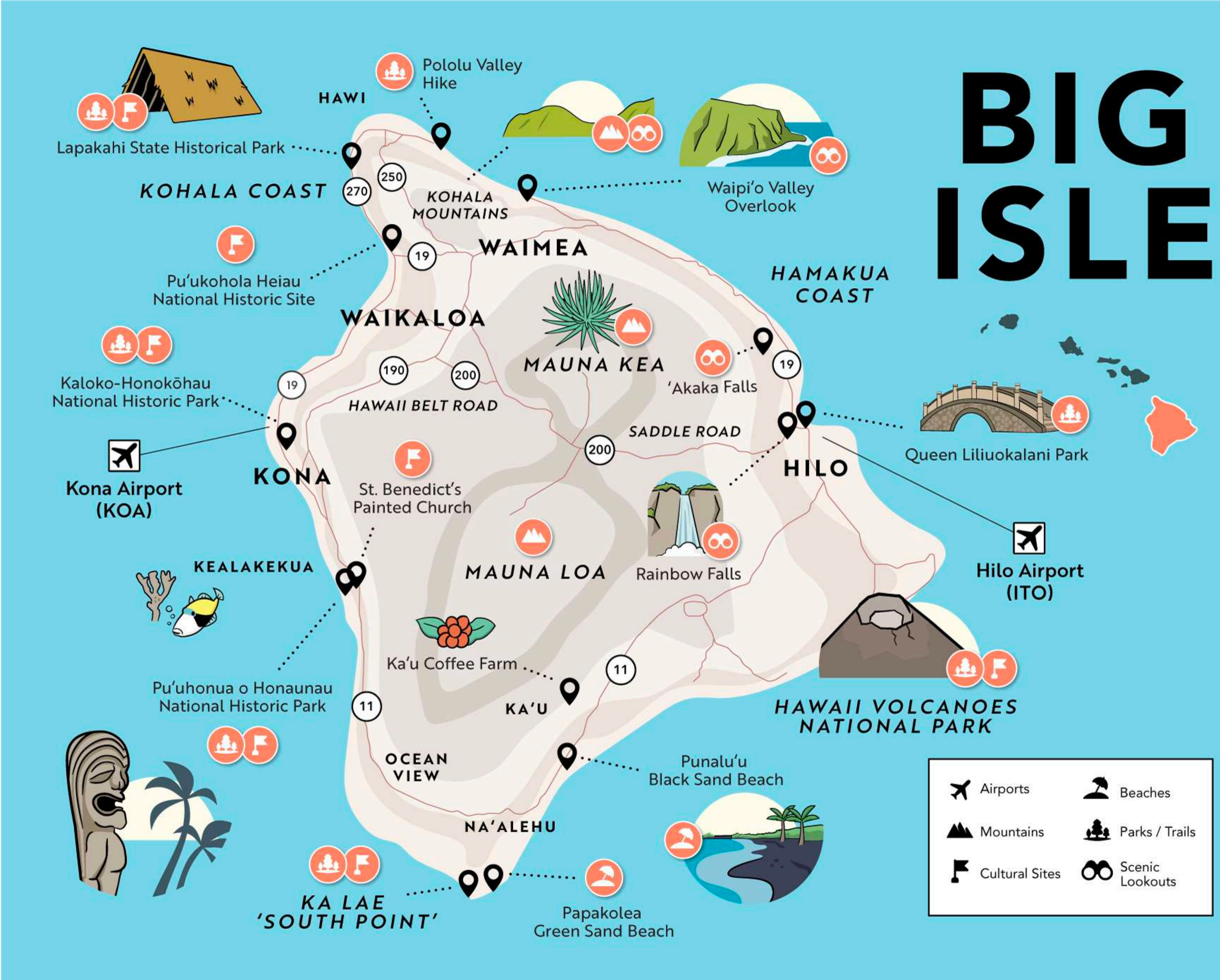
Coaching is one of the highest-value forms of mentoring relationships since it creates the optimal conditions for accelerated skill development: focused, intentional practice plus regular feedback in the form of **challenging questions**.

## Relationship driver

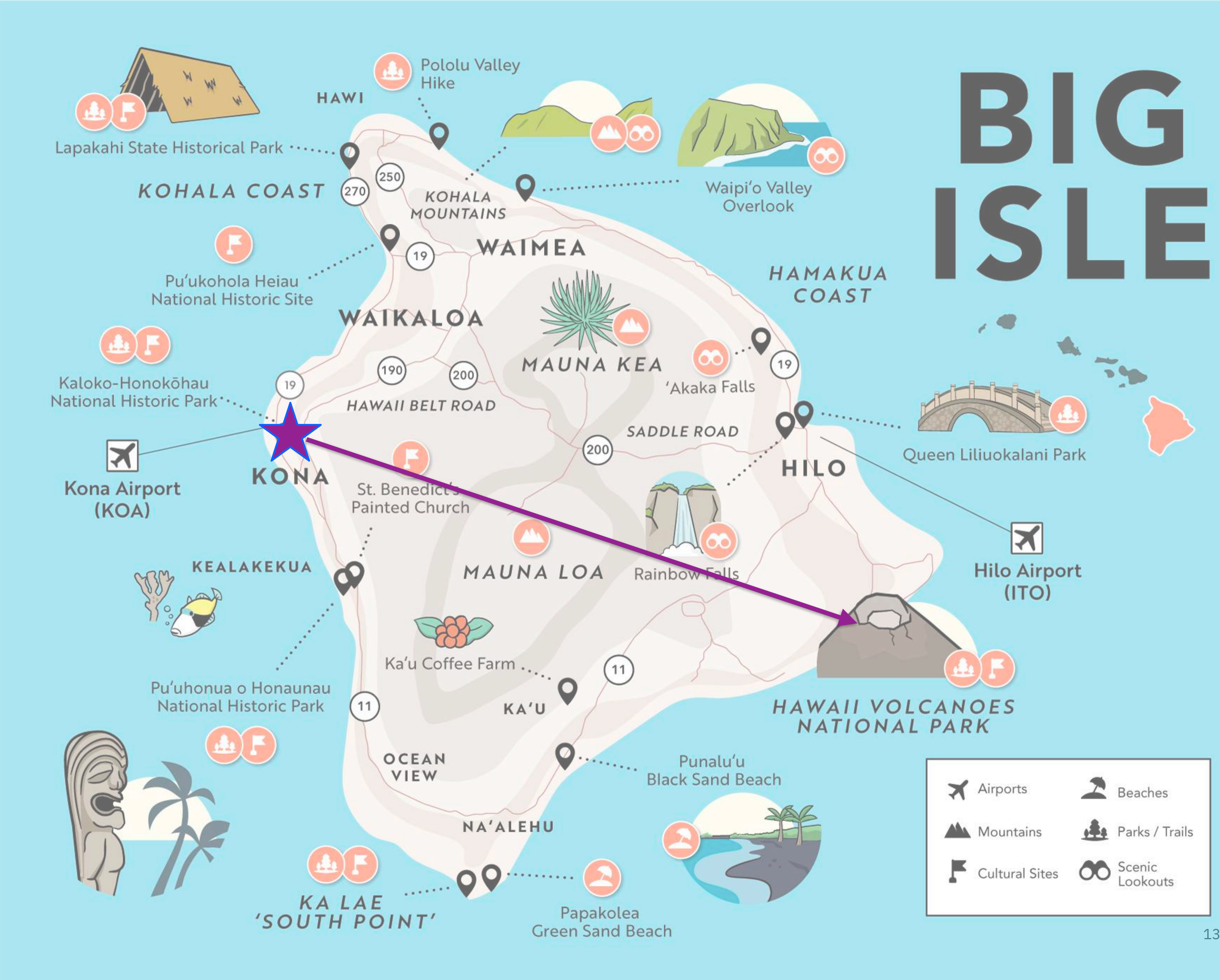
You and your coach are responsible for driving the relationship. You can reach out to your coach and your coach can also reach out to you.



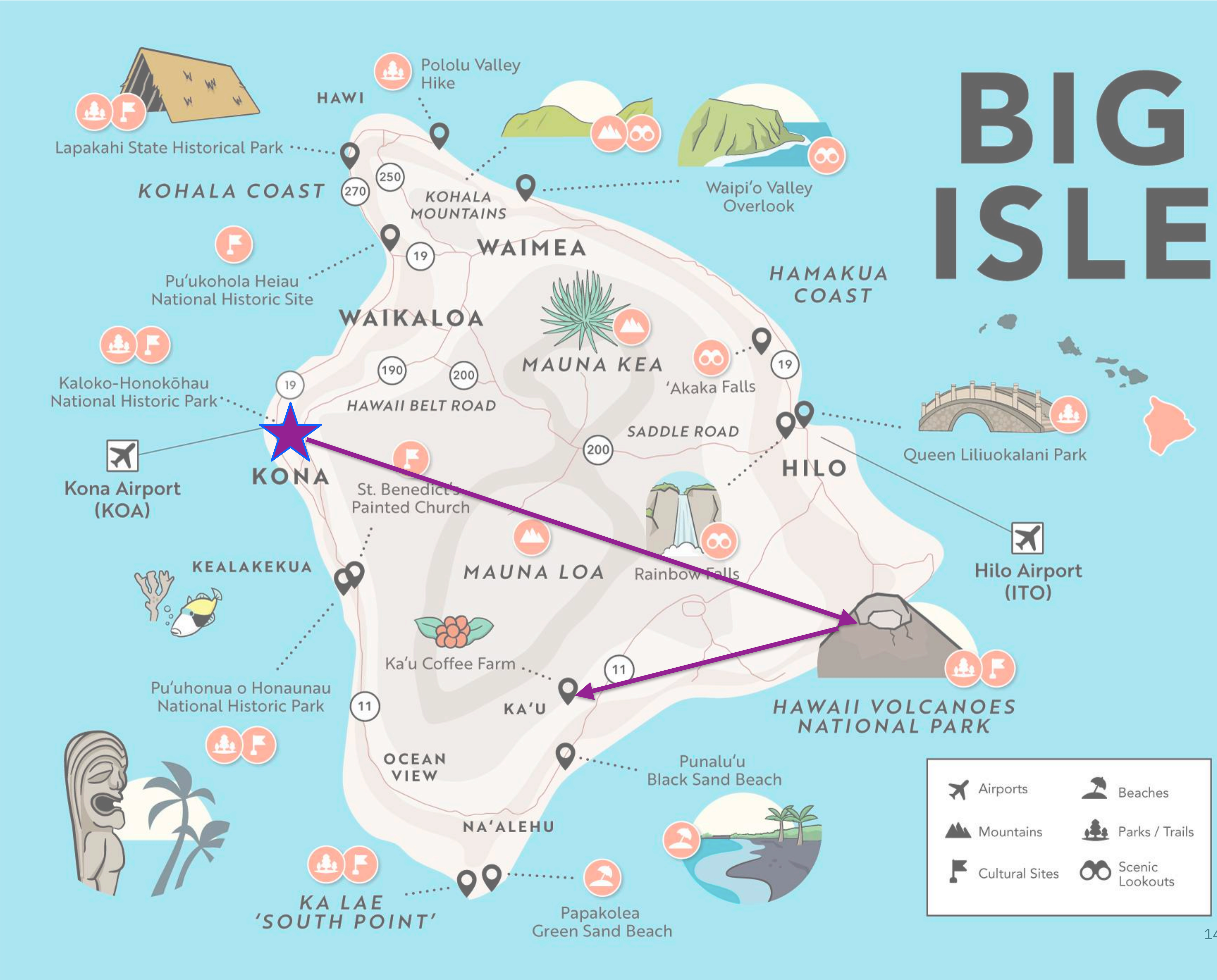
Mentoring  
vs  
Coaching



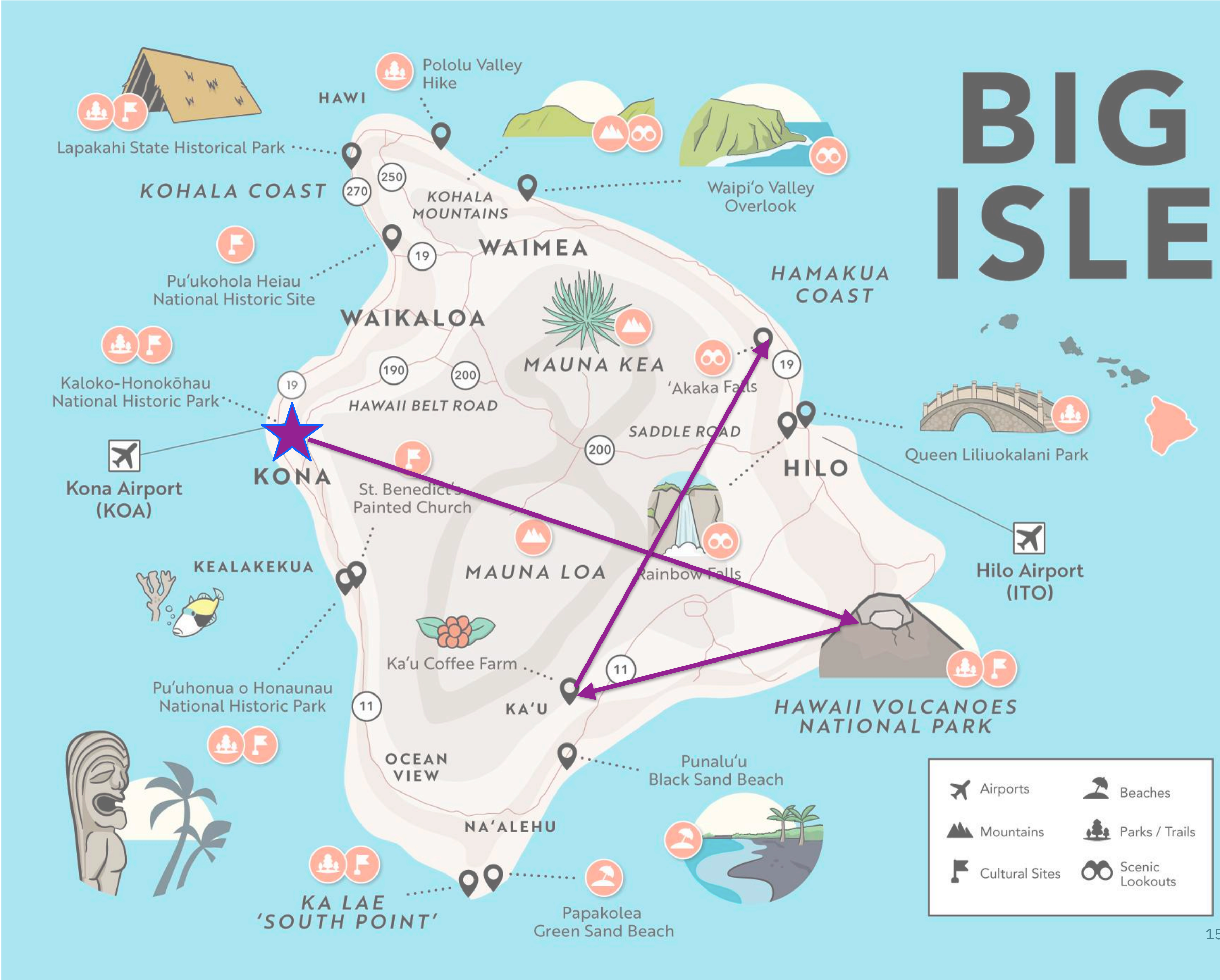






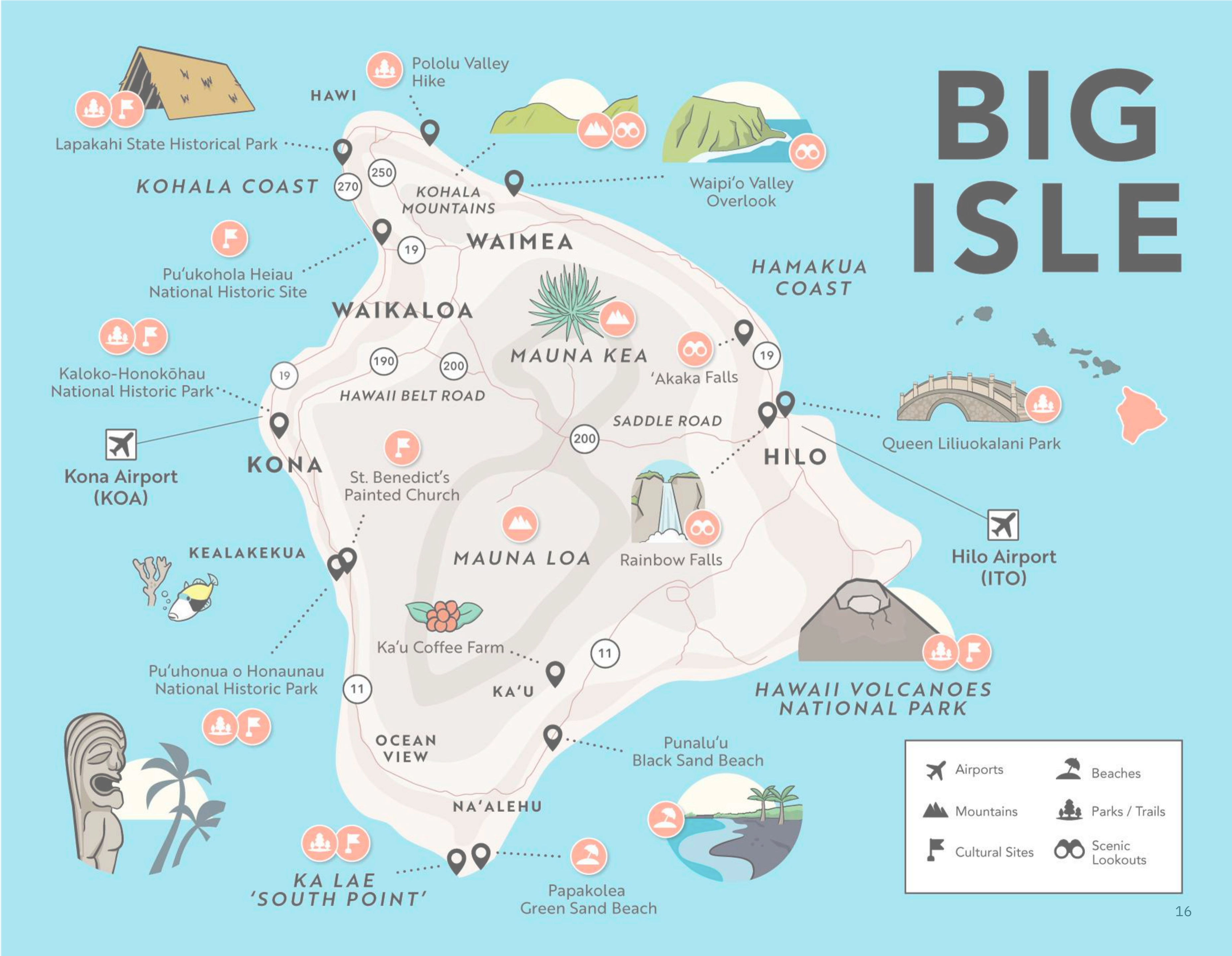
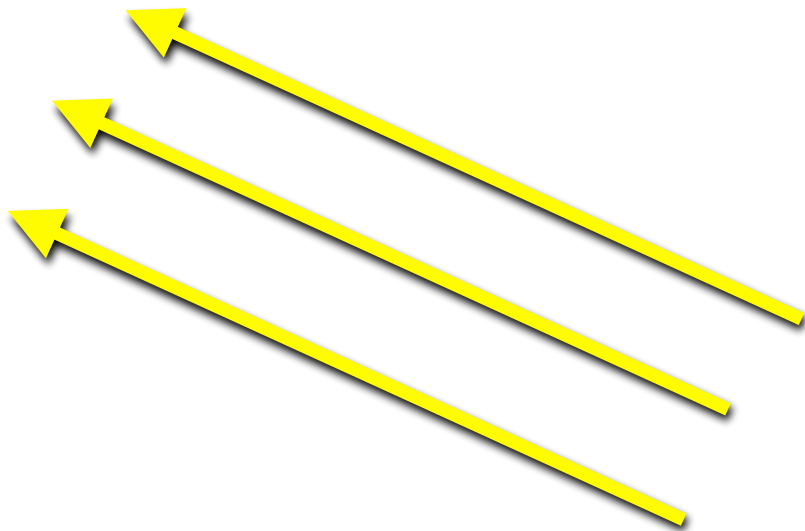






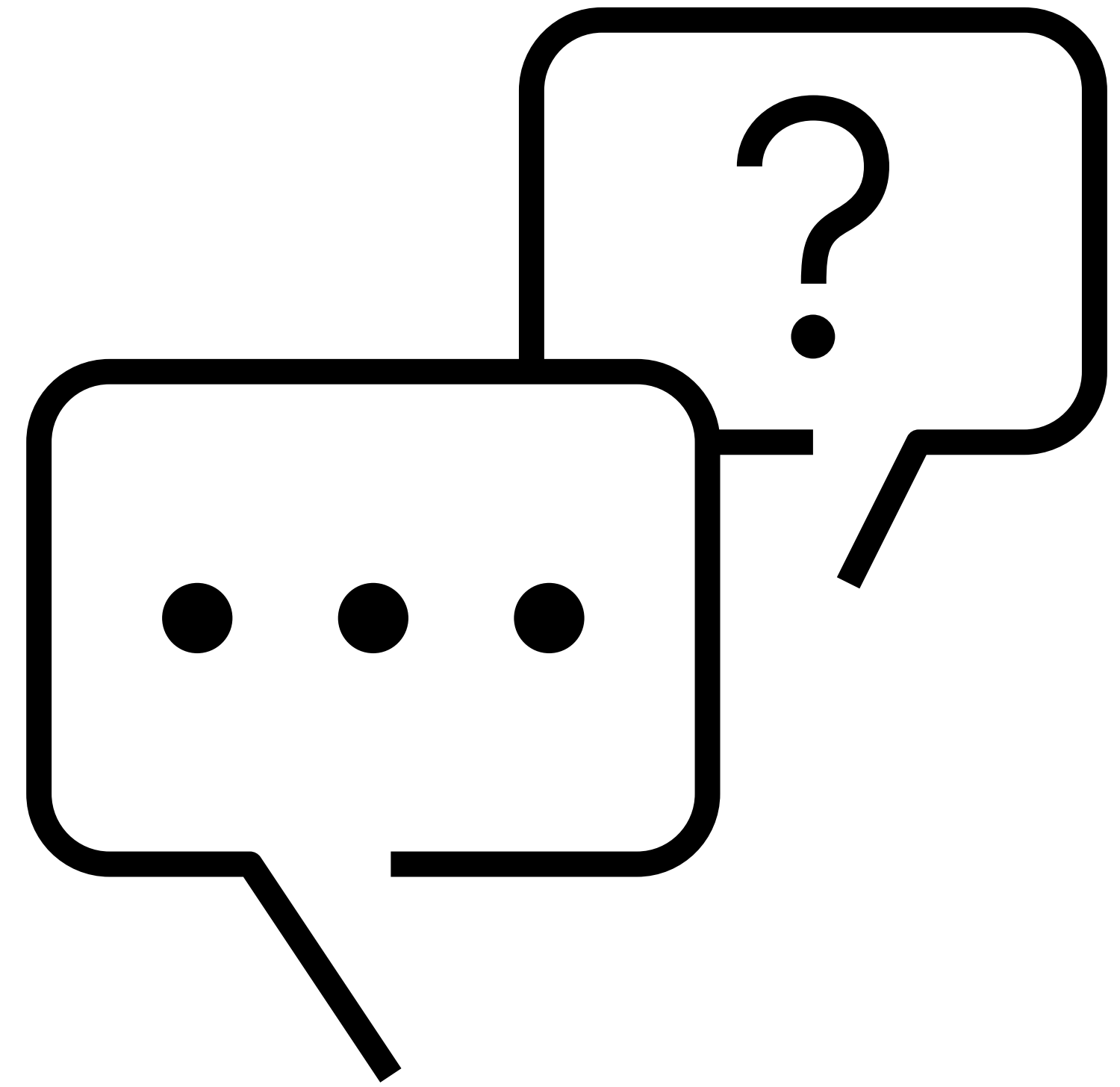


Coaching





# How many mentors should you have?



# Mentorship ~~network~~ village



## Pro tip

Reaching out to potential mentors shouldn't feel transactional. Be upfront about your intentions, and—just as important—don't act stiff. Treat it like other meaningful relationships in your life.

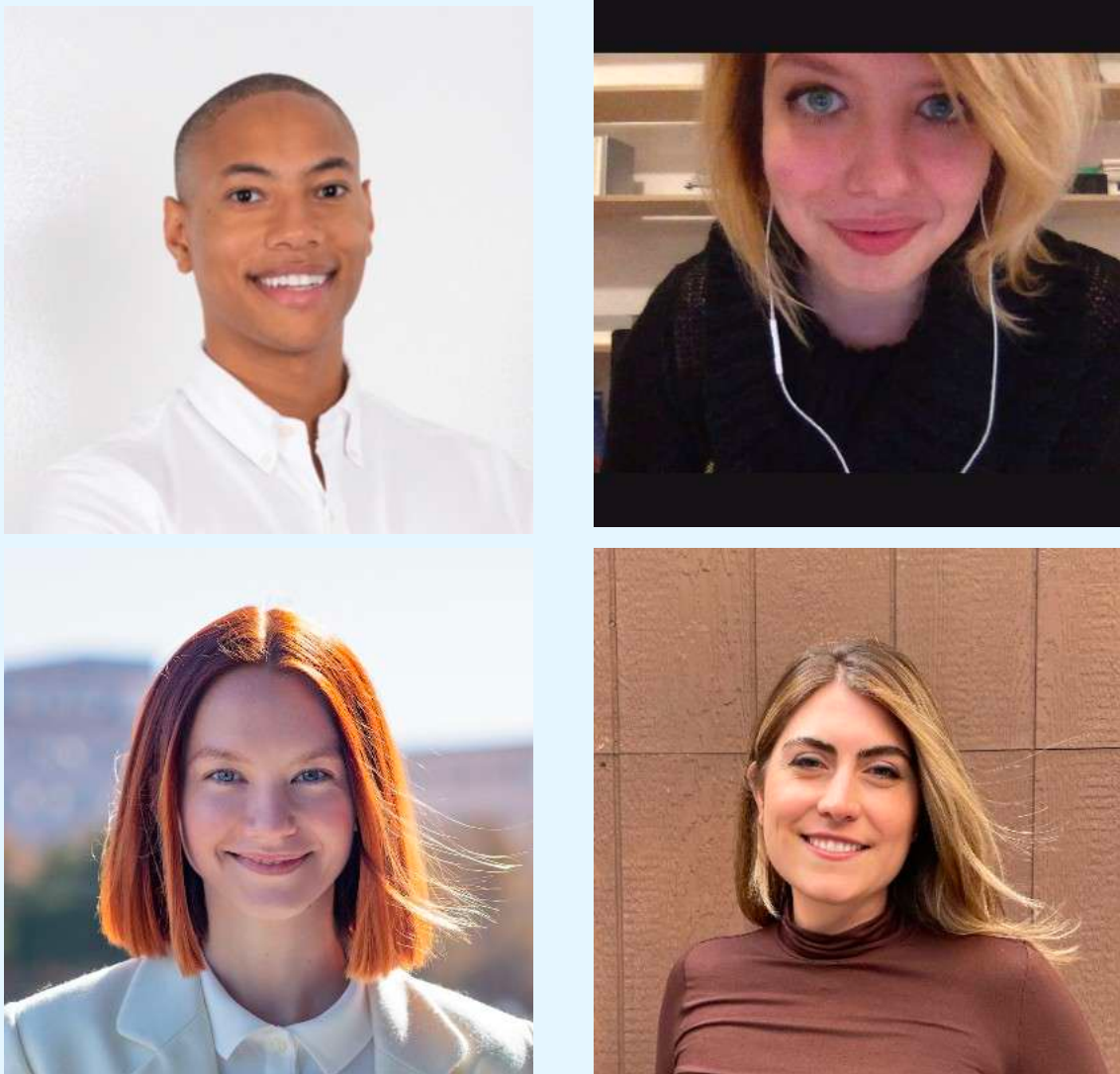
Your mentorship village can become an invaluable source of rich expertise and perspectives that will help you navigate your career journey.

It's something that should **evolve and strengthen** over time so you have the best advocates and supporters standing beside you **for your current context**.

Always keep a look out for potential ad hoc mentors who can help with certain skills or knowledge at a time of need, looking both *inside and outside* your **area of study, role, school, and company**.



# My mentoring village

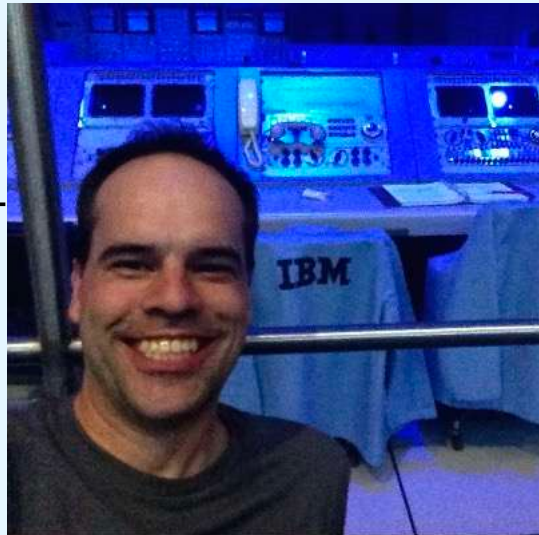


Mentees, internal and external to IBM



Ty: Director of Design  
IBM Cloud Infrastructure & Data Services

Sponsor



Andrew: VP, IBM Fellow and Chief Architect  
Public Cloud



Shani: VP, Design Technology Lifecycle Services

Coach

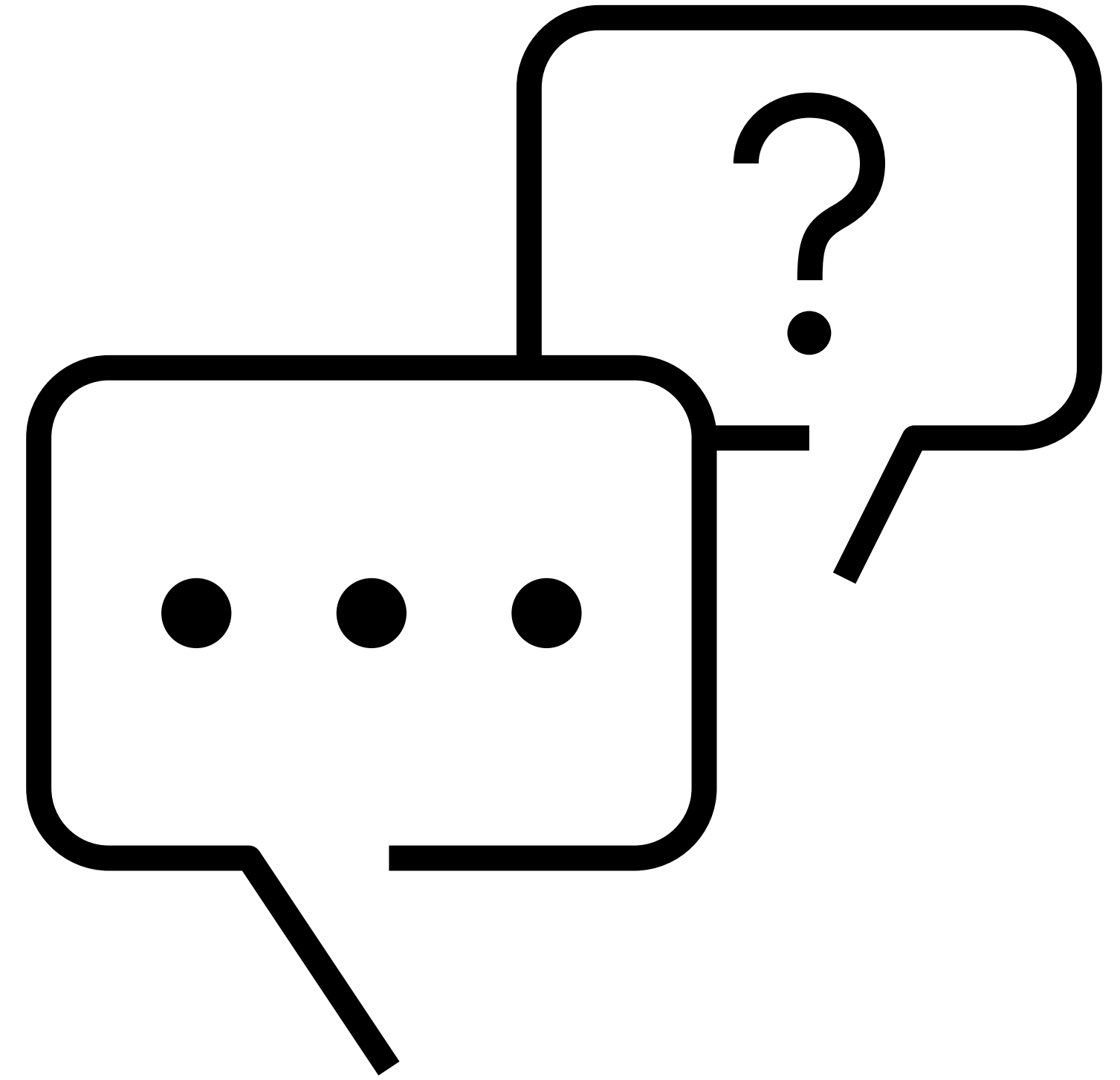


Patrizia: Distinguished Engineer, Technical Community and Client Engineering Director

# What does your mentorship village look like?

## Who would you like to add?

Remember, think *inside and outside* your **area of study, role, school, and company.**





# Myths

## 1

You need one mentor that will fulfill all of your needs.

Who wouldn't want one person to help solve all of our problems? However, the reality is that it's unlikely for one human to have all the answers to all your questions, tailored information for all your interests, and solutions to your nuanced problems.

# Myths

## 2

All mentorship looks the same: long-term and 1-on-1

While there are benefits to having a regular cadence with a traditional mentor, it's not necessary to approach all mentoring this way. Sometimes all you need is a brief conversation with the right person to get through whatever challenge you're facing.



# Myths

## 3

Only early-career professionals need mentorship

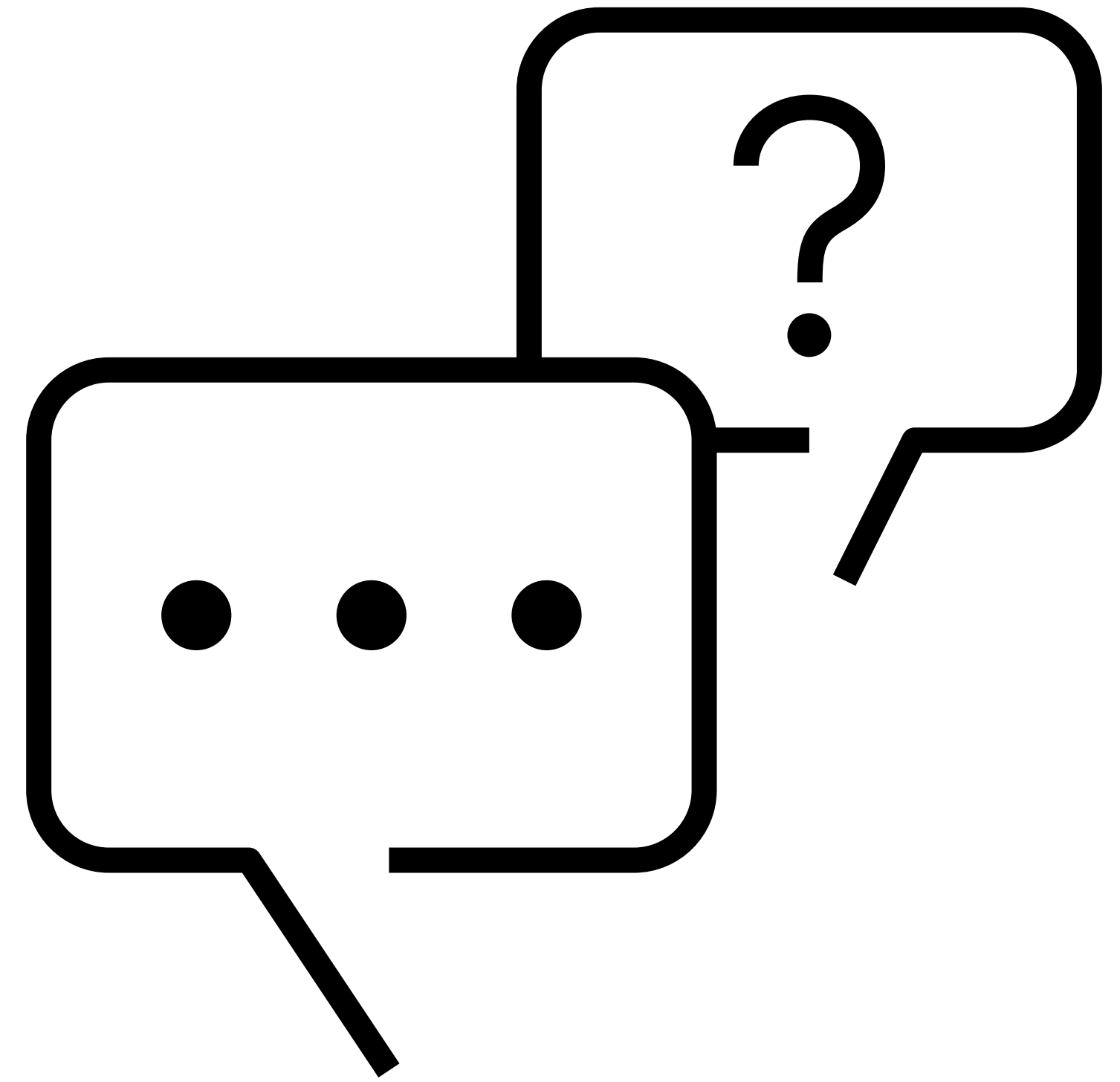
Mentorship is valuable at every stage in your career, whether you're a fresh-out-of-college new hire or a seasoned executive. Especially in a context that's ever-changing like the tech industry, every interaction can be an opportunity to learn. The learning should never stop no matter where you are in your career.

Mentorship needs to be done with someone more experienced

If you're seeking out someone with expertise in your core discipline, you may need to find a more experienced person. But remember that the point of mentorship is to learn and expand skills. For certain topics this can be accomplished with a peer—or even someone junior—who has a different skill set from your own.



How can you find the right people for your mentorship village?



# Finding mentors

## Reach out to people you admire

Don't overthink it— reaching out is often the hardest part. Prepare some questions that will help you clarify what type of role the person can play in your mentorship village.

## Get help

Ask your manager to help recommend potential mentors. Know someone who's well-connected in the your community? Consider asking them for help directing you to someone who could be a good match.

Refer back to the Relationship building slides!

## Go to meetups

Place yourself in situations that give you the opportunity to meet new people. Go to meetups and events that could attract the kind of mentor you're looking for.



## Be prepared

### Remember your goals

Before each meeting, revisit your goals for the mentorship. How can the next meeting support achieving your goals? What do you want to accomplish walking out of the next meeting?

It's okay if you're somewhat **fuzzy** on the career outcome you're driving to. Just make sure you can articulate what you need so that your mentor can help.

### Prepare questions

One of the best ways to unlock the most valuable information from your mentor is through a well-crafted set of questions.

Come prepared to **ask sharp questions** to move the conversation forward.

Depending on your mentor, you may want to consider specific activities as well, like the *career vision or skill assessment*.

Check out sites like: <https://chronus.com/blog/questions-to-ask-your-mentor>

### Get concrete

Mentorship is ultimately about your personal growth and change. If the mentorship doesn't result in meaningful differences in your behavior, then something's not right.

Come up with concrete next steps **at the end of a session**. What are you going to do differently? When it makes sense, push to be held accountable for an action item at the end of each session. This will ensure these conversations actually make a difference.

# Career vision

Write a career vision statement in 2-3 sentences, using these questions to help guide you.



Pro tip

You can bring your activity and insights to your mentor(s) to get feedback on the vision and explore how you can achieve it.

Check out: <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/personal-vision-statement>

<div>1</div> <div>Imagine yourself in the future at a point in which you have achieved great career success. What is it that you have accomplished? What does your life look like?</div>	<div>2</div> <div>How do you define career success? Are you achieving some level of success in your current job? What opportunities will help you achieve complete success?</div>
<div>3</div> <div>What would your career be like if you had the power to make it any way you wanted?</div>	<div>4</div> <div>Who are the people you most admire? What is it about them or their careers that attract you to them? Is there something about what they have or do that you want in your career?</div>



# Self-evaluation

Breaking down the different facets of your craft can help expose specific growth areas to improve upon.

This activity will expose your strengths and weaknesses, and help identify what areas you can focus on to take immediate action.



Pro tip

Evaluate those soft skills too, like leadership, communication, storytelling, etc. Those skills tend to make huge career impacts.

<div>1</div> <div>Use Google to find lots of (free!) tools to help you start assessing your strengths and gaps.</div>	<div>2</div> <div>Assess what areas of growth you need to improve. Circle the top three growth areas.</div>
<div>3</div> <div>Ask: What kind of near-term opportunities can help me improve in this growth area? What are the skills that make up this growth area? Write down your specific goals to improve the selected growth areas.</div>	<div>4</div> <div>Use the insights from this evaluation to start a conversation with your mentor and manager.</div>



# Skill assessment

Faces of craft	Tradecraft	Stagecraft	Statecraft
	The ability to precisely and carefully shape elements and materials with the necessary tools for final production.	The ability to deliver a compelling narrative around the designed deliverable. The design recognizes the organizational and market context.	The ability to establish and drive relationships toward shared aims and alliances while promoting a set of mutual values.
Sel- evaluation	<p>I am proficient in the tools I need to use to get my job done (e.g. Sketch, SurveyGizmo, Adobe Illustrator, Keynote, GitHub).</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>	<p>I am confident in my understanding of how my work fits into the organizational context; how it supports the bigger strategy.</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>	<p>I am confident in my skill to build a diverse map of relationships and maintain them (cross-disciplinary, cross-business unit).</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>
	<p>I am proficient with my domain knowledge and skills to operate and execute in a [e.g. software product context].</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>	<p>I understand the market I am designing for well enough to design for market resonance.</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>	<p>I move people towards a shared aim while continuously facilitating a shared purpose and set of values.</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>
	<p>I understand the user needs I have to consider to design a great user experience.</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>	<p>My design work reflects and respects the brand philosophy of the bigger context my work lives in.</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>	<p>I can manage stakeholder expectations and demands in a graceful and effective way to maintain clear focus and purpose.</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>
	<p>I have confidence in my skills to deliver a final outcome that is excellently executed for users.</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>	<p>I am fluent in my abilities to frame and present my design work in the right context for any given audience.</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>	<p>I can have principled debates on risks, trade offs, and outcomes in a cross-disciplinary context.</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>
	<p>I am confident in my creative process to get from ideas to exemplary artifacts and deliverables.</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>	<p>I design with a strong understanding of how the brand, market, and organizational context connects, acknowledging the dynamics in my work.</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>	<p>I am influencing people in my organizational context towards fulfilling our mission, purpose, and values.</p> <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>Strongly Disagree</div><div>Disagree</div><div>Neutral</div><div>Agree</div><div>Strongly agree</div></div>

What can you specifically work on to improve your craft?



# Skill assessment

Solving for Complexity	No evidence	Limited evidence	Moderate evidence	Good evidence	Strong evidence
Gathers input from multiple sources					
Conducts root cause analyses to uncover the underlying issues					
Extracts insights from data through appropriate analyses					
Evaluates multiple options to find the best solution					

Embracing Challenge	No evidence	Limited evidence	Moderate evidence	Good evidence	Strong evidence
Demonstrates the courage to resolve conflicts					
Displays confidence in a positive resolution during uncertain times					
Perseveres in overcoming obstacles					
Able to think clearly in stressful situations					

Deciding with Speed	No evidence	Limited evidence	Moderate evidence	Good evidence	Strong evidence
Makes timely decisions by considering all relevant data sources					
Takes accountability for the consequences of own decisions					
Anticipates the impact of one's own decisions					
Tests ideas to mitigate a decision's risks					

# Be prepared

## Set a time frame

If you choose to meet with your mentor on a regular basis, start out with a finite time frame (e.g. 6 months, 1 year). This makes the commitment expectation clear for both of you.

## Manage logistics

Take the responsibility for scheduling and logistics. It may sound trivial, but this will help you minimize coordination costs and maximize the energy spent on quality conversations.

## Carve out time

Skill improvement won't happen without spending time practicing and stretching to the limits of your abilities on a regular basis.



### Pro tip

You may realize that it would be best to part ways with your mentor after reflecting on your goals, the relationship, and context of your job. Don't ghost and risk a burned bridge. Your underlying mission is to build a strong mentorship village of people who can advise, coach, support, and advocate for you.



# Q&A

