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LAUNCHING TECH CAREERS. TRANSFORMING LIVES.



NPower Canada Mentorship Program

Mentee Handbook

Thank you for participating in [NPower Canada's 1:1 Mentorship Program](#)! We hope your participation in this program proves to be meaningful and your mentor provides you with invaluable advice and encouragement as you launch your career in tech.

Mentorship Basics:

What is Mentoring? Mentoring is a mutually beneficial relationship with the goal of professional and personal development. It is a process in which an experienced individual (the mentor) shares knowledge and provides guidance, expertise, and wisdom to a less experienced, often junior-level individual (the mentee).

Your mentor will have detailed knowledge of their industry, a wealth of business insights, and a network of professional contacts. Your mentor will help you clarify career goals and course of direction. From the many lessons they have learned along their journey, they have a realistic understanding of their respective fields. **Discussions with your mentor can inspire you further, helping you narrow your focus and maximize your potential. One of the most important parts of mentoring is reflecting! Your mentor will get to know you and be able to provide you with vital feedback and guidance.** This is a wonderful opportunity to further develop critical skills that are helpful in moving your career forward.

What you gain from a mentoring relationship has much to do with how open you are to learning; how willing you are to invest in developing a relationship of trust that requires time and energy; and how willing and open you are to being challenged, receiving candid feedback and being reflective. **The most important thing you bring to the mentoring relationship is your willingness to learn.** Mentoring is also about building mutual trust and respect. It's a two-way partnership – where both mentor and mentee will benefit.

What you can expect from your mentoring partnership

A mentor is an experienced and trusted advisor. Your mentor can help you identify and work through a professional goal, challenge, or learning strategy you may wish to set. **At different points in the relationship, the role of the mentor may take that of a coach by actively providing advice and guidance, sharing ideas and providing constructive feedback.** At other times, your mentor can be a source of encouragement and support for you, acting as a sounding board for ideas and/or concerns, and providing insight into their own, similar experiences.

Please do not discuss personal matters with your mentor or ask for their support with private matters.

Tips to help you be an effective, professional mentee and get the most out of the mentorship partnership:

1. Be Prepared.

Have a defined goal in mind in advance of your mentorship meetings. What specific professional advice or support are you looking for? Is it enhancing a particular skill? Networking? By pinpointing your 'ask', you are taking responsibility for your own learning and will ensure you get the most out of this incredible opportunity. In your first meeting, be prepared to ask for specific guidance and advice in relation to your goals, plans, obstacles, and strategic ideas. The more specific you are, the easier it will be for your mentor to help you.

Be prepared for each mentoring session, have an agenda, take notes, yet remain flexible if the conversation takes you in a slightly different direction. Throughout the relationship, ensure you communicate with your mentor. Ensure you show them gratitude for taking the time and effort to support you in your career endeavors. Create tangible goals and expectations at the beginning of the relationship to ensure you keep your meetings on course.

2. Set Realistic Expectations with Your Mentor and Show Your Eagerness to Learn.

Your mentor cannot and should not be expected to do everything for you, they can only give you tools and guidance. As a mentee, you are responsible for your own learning. This means coming prepared for your meetings, bringing your own questions, concerns, and ideas to the table for discussion.

3. Be Respectful.

Be respectful of your mentor's time by being punctual, alert, and engaging during your meetings. Respect is the starting and sustaining aspect of the relationship. Learning is greatly enhanced when you and your mentor feel a sense of personal and professional respect for one another. Mutual respect forms the foundation of a successful mentoring relationship.

4. Be Open Minded.

As you listen and receive advice and feedback from your mentor, remember to be open minded. Their input may not align with what you are initially expecting. That's okay! Do not be afraid to leave your comfort zone. Try new things, be open to new perspectives and approaches and ask questions.

5. Communicate Clearly.

Initiate contact with your mentor if you have questions or would like to further discuss something. Identify your needs and communicate them as clearly as possible to your mentor. It may be helpful to put some focused energy into organizing your thoughts and concerns before meeting with your mentor, so that your time together is spent wisely.

6. Have a Positive Attitude.

A mentorship relationship can be an amazing and productive way to grow and improve professionally and personally. Take advantage of this relationship and learn as much as you can while continuously being aware of ways to better yourself and the relationship. Enjoy the process!

Frequently Asked Questions (F.A.Q.s)

1. How do I initiate our relationship and organize our first meeting?

As a first step as part of this mentorship program, NPower Canada's Development team will send you an email sharing details about your mentor in addition to their contact information. Upon receiving this email, you are required to initiate contact with your mentor to formally introduce yourself and set up your first meeting. Here is an example of what your email should look like:

"Dear ____.

My name is _____. It is nice to e-meet you! Thank you so much for volunteering your time to act as my professional mentor. I'm excited to get started. I'd love to set up our first meeting either by phone or online. Below are a few dates and times that work well with my schedule. If these do not work on your end, can you please provide me with a few upcoming dates/times you are available? I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,"

2. What can I expect from 1:1 mentoring?

First, be realistic in your expectations of how much time and support your mentor can give you. NPower Canada mentors are volunteers and are often managing demanding jobs, families, and other commitments. Your mentor's time is valuable, so show them that you value it. Follow through with appointments made; avoid sending too many requests in a short space of time; and try to make progress independently in the times between your conversations. Above all, remember to thank your mentor regularly and to tell them about your successes as well as your current challenges. Expressing gratitude

and illustrating evidence of your progress will show your mentor that their time and commitment to the program is well spent.

Consider asking your mentor about insights and learn their experience in their field. Your conversations can revolve around job search and career advancement, but also can focus on sharing experiences with each other about your career/life journeys, overcoming obstacles and anything else that you need coaching on. Also, feel free to go back to the Mentee Intake Survey you filled and check the list of topics you'd be most interested in discussing with your mentor.

Here's a **weekly agenda** you can use, which has also been shared with your mentor. We encourage you to discuss what is most important, challenging or interesting each week, but you can reference these topics when needed:

- **Week 1:** Introduction, goal setting, identifying barriers and interests
- **Week 2:** Resume and LinkedIn review
- **Week 3:** Professional business communication, scheduling informational interviews, networking tips on how to expand your network in a new field
- **Week 4:** Understanding job descriptions in a new field, how to conduct job market research, identifying strengths and weaknesses to match job postings
- **Week 5:** Hiring process in the corporate world, how to prepare for a job interview, mock interview

After you find out more about your mentor's expertise and skills, you can ask them questions and get their advice on specific areas, while sharing your own perspective. Remember that your mentor is eager to learn from you, as well!

3. Is it my mentor's responsibility to get me a job? Is it appropriate to ask my mentor for a job?

It is not your mentor's responsibility to get you a job and it is not appropriate to ask your mentor for a job. However, it is encouraged to ask your mentor to look at your resume, provide feedback, and offer insight into hiring and onboarding processes within the tech industry. Do not be afraid to ask questions but ensure you are polite and professional. **To optimize your mentor's time, coming equipped with prepared questions is ideal.**

4. How do I know what my mentor expects of me?

The best thing you can do is communicate. Have a conversation with your mentor about their expectations the first time you meet. Be sure to discuss and establish how frequently you are both able to meet and what you would like to get out of the experience. NPower Canada's Development Team will provide you with a valuable goal setting document that you can use to help you to prepare for this conversation with your mentor.

5. Will my mentor help me find a job?

As discussed in question 3, your mentor's role is **NOT** to find you a job for you. Their role is to share their knowledge, experience, and advice with you and potentially introduce you to occupation-specific connections.

6. How long should this mentorship relationship last?

Officially, you will have weekly meetings with your mentor for 5 weeks after your initial meeting. However, you can extend your sessions to 8 depending on mutual availability. Some mentoring relationships last a lifetime depending on the willingness of, and connection between the two parties. Alternatively, some mentoring connections may last for only a short time due to busy schedules, demanding training schedule, and unexpected circumstances.

This is a question you will want to discuss with your mentor so you ensure you're on the same page as you work to build your relationship. **Maintaining contact with your mentor at all times and agreeing on a decision together is crucial!**

7. My mentor keeps missing/rescheduling our appointments. What should I do?

If your mentor keeps missing or rescheduling appointments, it does not demonstrate that your mentor does not respect your time; it demonstrates that your mentor is busy and may need to prioritize urgent or time-critical tasks. Do not take it personally. Talk to your mentor about this, and if it keeps occurring, send an email to your site team first and then the Development team and they will assist.

8. How will I know when it is time to end the relationship with my mentor?

Although a lot of effort is put throughout the mentoring course, people often fail to pay attention to the ending phase of mentoring. Ending a mentoring relationship does not mean it has failed. In most cases, it simply means that the initial goals of the mentorship have been attained, and it is time to "graduate" and move on. Even if you are disappointed in the outcome, identify and express the positive benefits you gained as a result of being in the mentoring relationship.

9. What if my mentor cannot meet my objectives?

It is not a failure on their part (or yours) if what your mentor is able to offer does not fit with your needs. In that case, you should discuss this with your mentor and either work together to set different objectives or mutually agree to end the mentoring relationship. When ending a mentoring relationship, remember to thank your mentor for the knowledge and time provided.

10. Who do I contact if I have any concerns?

If you need additional support or have any concerns, please reach out to your site teams (your Program Coordinator, Program Manager) first and then you can consider seeking help from the Development Team.

Congratulations again for being selected to be a part of this program. This is a great accomplishment and highly speaks to your commitment, professional attitude and communication skills. I wish you the best of luck and hope you get the most out of it!

REMINDER: CONFIRM YOUR MEETING TIME A DAY IN ADVANCE, AND SHOW UP FOR YOUR SESSIONS ON TIME!

HOW TO BE A GREAT MENTEE

NPower Canada

SET YOUR GOALS



Take some time to write them down and communicate your goals with your mentor

BE OPEN ABOUT YOUR NEEDS



Give your mentor a clear view of your expectations, and aspirations

COME TO EACH MEETING WITH AN AGENDA



Your mentor won't have much feedback or advice if you don't have a purpose or goals

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY OF YOUR OWN LEARNING



Set yourself some weekly tasks; read books and blogs, attend events, listen to podcasts

BE AVAILABLE & RESPONSIVE



Check your email often, be responsive and maintain regular contact

HEED MENTORS EXPERIENCE & ADVICE



Don't be defensive; your mentor is trying to help you out with constructive feedback

DEVELOP TRUST



Don't ask for a job. Your mentor should be a trusted advisor.

LEARN AND HAVE FUN



Being a mentee shouldn't be a chore. It should be an engaging and fruitful experience

Sample Agenda for First Meeting:

Introduction and CV Exchange (15 min)	Share your professional experiences and academic background.
Review Goals (15 mins)	Share goals for your professional development and mentoring relationship.
Refine Goals and Develop Strategies (15 mins)	Discuss with your mentor which goals you can work towards together, and the required first steps. Determine the focus of your next meeting.
Establish Meeting Times (10 mins)	<p>Discuss times, dates, and places for meetings.</p> <p>Establish ground rules (e.g. frequency of meetings, duration of relationship, goals and expectations) that will assist you both in building the relationship</p>
Wrap Up (5 mins)	<p>Express appreciation! Thank your mentor for his or her time and effort. Recap what you will be doing to follow up and what you will be discussing at your next meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask for feedback at the end of every meeting about your communication skills, your emails, your discussions etc.• Agree upon next steps, solidify your next meeting date/time and discuss upcoming agenda items.

The Mentoring Process

Initial Meeting

- explain the purpose of the mentoring relationship
- the format of the meetings and how these will work
- what you will commit to and your role
- what is expected from mentees and their role

Mentor Sessions

- review experience
- identify objectives
- provide feedback
- identify strengths and achievements
- identify areas of development
- explore options
- coaching on specific areas if required
- discuss professional issues
- agree support needs
- set targets for future actions
- create opportunities for mentees to gain experience

Moving On

- identifying when the relationship reaches a natural end
- review and sign off objectives
- helping the mentee to identify the next steps (possibly a different mentor)
- Self reflection and review on the effectiveness of the relationship by both parties