

# ANCA Mentor Program

**Rooted in Experience.  
Reaching for Excellence.**



Developed by Ken Voorhis & Corky McReynolds  
Updated December 2020

## THE ANCA MENTOR PROGRAM – HOW TO GET STARTED

---

Complete the [online skill survey](#) to indicate your needs as a mentee and your strengths as a mentor

The ANCA Mentor Committee will use this information to pair you with a suitable mentoring partner. We try to make pairs as quickly as possible, however in some cases it can take several weeks to find the right match.

## MENTORING: WHAT IS IT AND WHO DOES IT?<sup>1</sup>

---

### What is Mentoring?

---

- **The sharing of knowledge that furthers the professional growth and success of both parties.**
- **Being the best version of yourself.** If people don't strive to be their best through mentoring, it won't be effective.
- **Expectations defined by the mentee.** Without expectations, mentoring can either float or flame out because there isn't direction. One caution to this is that if the expectations are so self-serving and slanted, it may not be a good mentoring environment either.
- **Coaching.** Coaching has value if it addresses behaviors that need to be changed, improved or removed. It is definitely a method within mentoring if it is healthy in its outcome.
- **Mutually beneficial relationship of trust.** This may be one of the best utopian ideas ever shared. It rings true, but is truly difficult.

### Components of Effective Mentoring

---

- **Don't have false expectations.** Mentoring is for professional development. It may lead to higher positions, but a great expectation is to strive to have sustained personal growth that sticks and makes people better contributors.
- **Look for someone externally.** Internal mentoring in your own organization works, but it tends to be more "how to maneuver and succeed" internally vs. long-term development. External mentors have fresh eyes, different cultural perspectives, see your blind spots and tend to be more candid because they don't have to follow "internal norms."
- **Give trust first.** Giving trust is so much more effective vs. someone having to earn trust first. It does make things more vulnerable and potentially opens you to get hurt. However, it shows that a mentor is there for the benefit of the relationship and not for personal gain.
- **Set a time frame.** Mentoring should have a start, peak, and end. Set the expectations, work through them and then move forward. Healthy mentors usually do keep long-term relationships with mentees, but they also see them turn into mentors themselves!
- **Don't be a mentor unless you have a mentor.** Great mentors are mentored themselves. People who proclaim themselves as mentors too often are focused on how great they are. To teach others you must also be willing to be taught.

<sup>1</sup> Information in this section from rehaul.com.

## MENTORING: IT'S A RELATIONSHIP!<sup>2</sup>

---

### The Foundation

---

Mentees observe, question, and explore. Mentors demonstrate, explain and model. The following assumptions form the foundation for a solid mentoring program.

- **Deliberate learning is the cornerstone.** The mentor's job is to promote intentional learning, which includes capacity building through methods such as instructing, coaching, providing experiences, modeling and advising.
- **Both failure and success are powerful teachers.** Mentors, as leaders of a learning experience, certainly need to share their "how to do it so it comes out right" stories. They also need to share their experiences of failure, i.e., "how I did it wrong". Both types of stories are powerful lessons that provide valuable opportunities for analyzing individual and organizational realities.
- **Leader need to tell their stories.** Personal scenarios, anecdotes and case examples, because they offer valuable, often unforgettable insight, must be shared. Mentors who can talk about themselves and their experiences establish a rapport that makes them "learning leaders."
- **Development matures over time.** Mentoring -- when it works -- taps into continuous learning that is not an event, or even a string of discrete events. Rather, it is the synthesis of ongoing event, experiences, observation, studies, and thoughtful analyses.
- **Mentoring is a joint venture.** Successful mentoring means sharing responsibility for learning. Regardless of the facilities, the subject matter, the timing, and all other variables. Successful mentoring begins with setting a contract for learning around which the mentor and the mentee are aligned.

### The Mentoring Relationship

---

**An important element of the mentoring relationship is setting and facilitating clearly-defined learning objectives.** The process may begin with a first meeting where both parties can discuss their expectations. More detailed objectives can be defined and adopted as the relationship evolves. At the first meeting start-up issues, expectations, and initial goals should be addressed.

**Regular communication is important in order to effectively maintain the mentor-mentee relationship.** The mentoring team should establish a regular meeting time and commit to keeping those appointments. A meeting or call may be established monthly or at least quarterly. To help with encouraging the mentor relationships to become established ANCA will be send a check in email four to six weeks into the partnership. ANCA will also distribute a six month survey to find out what how the mentoring partnership is progressing.

After the first meeting between mentor and the mentee has occurred, the role of the mentor in regard to coaching, counseling, facilitating, and networking will begin to take shape. **Both parties should come well-prepared to all meetings so that the relationship can develop smoothly.**

<sup>2</sup> Information in this section from <http://www.sonic.net/~mfreeman/mentor/mentsupp.htm>.

## MENTORING: THE MENTEE<sup>3</sup>

---

### Characteristics of a Mentee

---

- Committed to expanding their capabilities
- Open and receptive to new ways of learning and trying new ideas
- Able to accept feedback and act upon it
- Willingness to apply what they have learned back on the job
- Focused on achieving desired results
- Able to communicate and work cooperatively with others
- Knows when to ask for help
- Have a sense of personal responsibility and commitment
- Willing to meet on a regular basis

### Benefits for Mentees

---

- A nonthreatening learning opportunity
- Improved self-confidence
- Developing business expertise & technical knowledge
- Support and reassurance
- Networking/partnership opportunities
- Coaching
- Listening and reassurance.

## MENTORING: THE MENTOR<sup>4</sup>

---

### Characteristics of a Good Mentor

---

- A desire to help** - Individuals who are interested in and willing to help others
- Have had positive experiences** - Individuals who have had positive formal or informal experiences with a mentor tend to be good mentors themselves
- Good reputation for developing others** - Experienced people who have a good reputation for helping others develop their skills
- Time and energy** - People who have the time and mental energy to devote to the relationship
- Up-to-date knowledge** - Individuals who have maintained current, up-to-date technological knowledge and/or skills
- Learning attitude** - Individuals who are still willing and able to learn and who see the potential benefits of a mentoring relationship
- Demonstrated effective managerial (mentoring) skills** - Individuals who have demonstrated effective coaching, counseling, facilitating and networking skills

### Benefits for the Mentor

---

- Increased motivation
- The opportunity to positively influence the next generation
- New insights and perspectives
- An opportunity for self-development
- Increased self-esteem
- Increased peer recognition
- The opportunity to improve communication

<sup>3</sup> Information in this section from <http://www.sonic.net/~mfreeman/mentor/mentsupp.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> Information in this section from <http://www.sonic.net/~mfreeman/mentor/mentsupp.htm>.

## MENTEES: ASK THESE QUESTIONS!<sup>5</sup>

---

1. What are your goals and dreams (Short term and long-term)?
2. Why did you choose to pursue these goals and dreams?
3. What books have influenced your ideas and thoughts the most?
4. What ideas or thoughts inspired you or motivated you to get started?
5. What is the one action you have taken that has accounted for most of your success?
6. If you could change your life in one way, what would you change?
7. What magazines, newspapers and/or information products do you study?
8. How do you handle defeat and/or failure?
9. How do you handle obstacles and roadblocks?
10. What are your strengths?
11. What are your weaknesses?
12. Who is your hero?
13. Who is in your professional network?
14. Who has had the most impact on your life?
15. Who are your personal and professional advisors?
16. Who do you listen to? Who do you accept advice from?
17. Who are your personal and professional mentors?
18. Why are these people able to inspire and connect with you?
19. Who are your mentor's mentors and advisors?
20. What dreams or goals inspired your mentors?
21. Who influenced your mentors?
22. What magazines, newspapers and/or information products do your mentors study?
23. Who is in your mentor's personal and professional network?

<sup>5</sup> Information in this section from <http://www.ezinearticles.com/?25-Power-Questions-to-Ask-Your-Mentors&id=169121>.

Don't overwhelm your mentor by asking all twenty-five questions at one time. Instead, find appropriate times to naturally weave the questions into your normal conversations. You can even send an email to ask one specific question every week or every month.

Take time to digest the responses that you receive and to apply the answers to your life if appropriate. You will receive feedback related to the changes that you are making in your life, ensure you follow-up by sharing your successes and failures with your mentor.

Remember, the only dumb question is the question that is not asked. Take advantage of the experience and insight that your mentor has to offer.

## MENTORS: ASK THESE QUESTIONS!<sup>6</sup>

---

**1. What is it that you really want to be and do?** This question is about aspiration and purpose. The reason why someone is doing what they are doing should come out here. The question is also meant to get at the business goals and broader aspirations of an individual - someone wishing to be successful in business so that they can do more to help others, for example. The answer to this question should reveal the passion of the mentee - what is it they do or wish they could be great at doing?

**2. What are you doing really well that is helping you get there?** This question helps spotlight a person's core strength and ability to execute towards his/her goal. What is someone naturally good at doing? Detailed and standardized operations? Leading and motivating staff? Numbers? What is it that someone does better than the average person that can help her achieve her aspiration?

**3. What are you not doing well that is preventing you from getting there?** This is about facilitating an honest and critical assessment of the roadblocks, challenges or weaknesses in a person or company that is slowing their ability to win the game; to meet the goal from question one.

**4. What will you do differently tomorrow to meet those challenges?** Questions two and three help determine whether people are spending the right time on the right things. Progress cannot be measured just by hard work. Someone may have a great work ethic, but if he is not focused on the right priorities, then "you're making good time, but you're lost," as another one of my partners likes to say. People also have a tendency to practice and repeat what they are already good at doing. It is human nature to show off your best side and hide weaknesses.

**5. How can I help / where do you need the most help?** The answers to the first four questions matched against areas where you as a mentor have particular strengths, relationships, or learning resources - should help determine how you can best help someone achieve the goal.

These questions will help you assess where you can really help. Try these five critical questions the next time you are interviewing a mentee candidate, the next time you have a mentoring session, or answer them yourself as a self-diagnostic. The answers can help you or your mentees put together a sensible game plan for forward progress.

<sup>6</sup> Information in this section from <http://blogs.hbr.org/tjan/2009/03/five-questions-every-mentor-mu.html>.