



SIR MENTOR MATCH: A NEW MEMBER BENEFIT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Who can participate?

Any SIR member may participate in Mentor Match.

What is Mentor Match?

An online directory on SIR Connect facilitating a match between two SIR members, a mentor and a mentee, who will follow a six-month program, working together to help mentees set and meet their goals.

When can I sign up and get matched?

The program will run on a continuous basis, meaning new mentors and mentees may enroll at any time. Matching does not happen automatically – mentees should find and request a mentor through the online directory. (SIR staff can help match people, upon request.) The six-month program begins at the time that a mentor and mentee are matched.

Where does the mentoring take place?

Anywhere! It's up to the participants. You may meet entirely virtually, if you wish.

How should I use this document?

This program overview is meant to be used as a guide. You don't have to follow it exactly, unless you want to.

Minimum Recommendations:

- Once matched, mentees should complete the goal-setting worksheet.
- Mentors and mentees should review the "Guidelines" documents to better understand their roles.
- Schedule an introductory meeting with your mentoring partner during Month 1.
- Communicate at least monthly during Months 2-5.
- Schedule a wrap-up meeting during Month 6.
- Complete the evaluation survey and submit to SIR.
- Expect to spend a total of approximately 10 hours over the course of the program communicating and carrying out action plans.

Note: Doing more than the minimum is certainly encouraged! You and your mentoring partner may decide to meet more often than monthly, or to get together in person (if possible) in addition to communicating virtually, connecting via social media, etc.

Suggested Structure

We recommend structuring your time together in the following way. You may use this as a guide and follow it as you see fit.

Month 1: Get to Know Each Other

Build your relationship and garner trust by sharing some personal information. Topics may include:

- Your background and how it has shaped you
- Your career overview or your experience in school
- Your strengths and shortcomings
- What you enjoy doing, both professionally and in your free time
- Your challenges, or what you worry about most
- Your hopes for the future
- What is most important to you in your life and career

Also, decide how you will communicate with each other during the course of your mentoring relationship. Consider the following:

- Do you have a preference for phone calls, Skype, email, or other kinds of communication?
- If you live close enough to each other or are attending any upcoming INFORMS conferences, would you want to meet face-to-face? (It is okay to answer no.)
- How frequently do you expect to communicate?
- How much time do you have to spend, both communicating with your partner and on the tasks you set? (It is a good idea to set your goals accordingly.)
- Are there times during the next six months when you will be unreachable due to travel, personal plans, or work commitments?

Month 2: Discuss and Set Goals and Metrics for Your Mentoring Relationship

Mentees should complete the goal-setting worksheet to share with their mentors. Use this as a starting point to discuss what you intend to work on during the program.

- Prioritize the areas of improvement you want to work on together
- List your specific concerns in those areas
- Translate those concerns into goals
- Assign a deadline for each goal
- Decide how you will know whether you have succeeded in reaching your goal(s)

Month 3: Develop an Action Plan

Now that you know what you and your mentoring partner are conjointly working toward, develop a plan to take action toward those goals.

- List the tasks you will need to complete to reach your goal
- Decide who will do each task
- Assign a deadline for each task
- As you go, check to make sure that your tasks truly align with your goals

Months 4, 5, and 6: Take Action

Now that you know what you want to do, and how you're going to do it, it's time to put your plans into action.

- Complete the tasks you have identified
- Ask questions
- Ask for feedback
- If something isn't working, adjust your plan
- Schedule a wrap-up meeting with your mentoring partner

Conclusion

Review what you have worked on together during your mentorship period.

Ask Yourself:

- Did I reach my goal?
- Did I enjoy and learn something from the experience?
- Did I change direction as a result of the experience? Did it help me make a tough decision, or feel more confident in my plans?
- Did I acknowledge and celebrate progress?

Finally, whether you are a mentor or a mentee, complete your evaluation survey. This will help us to improve Mentor Match in the future.

CONGRATULATIONS – YOU'VE COMPLETED THE PROGRAM!

Final Thoughts

Thank your mentor or mentee for their time. Consider maintaining your active status in the Mentor Match program, so that you can be matched again.

If you and your mentor/mentee mutually would like to continue working together beyond six months, you may certainly do so. Just have the mentee request the mentor again, and once the mentor accepts, you are matched in the system for another six months.

You may also want to continue your relationship on an informal basis, outside of Mentor Match. That's great– have fun and tell us about your success!

Questions about SIR Mentor Match?

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