

ALUMNI MENTORING
PAY IT FORWARD
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NCI ALUMNI MENTORING
STUDENT WORKBOOK



National
College of
Ireland



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ALUMNI MENTORING PAY IT FORWARD

We hope that you enjoy the Alumni Mentoring Programme we have developed for you. The programme is designed to match the aspirations of our students with the skills and experiences of our graduates. Over the next 4 months you will have the opportunity to meet with an industry professional on a one to one basis.

You will meet your mentor 3 times and you can use this booklet to help you plan your mentoring sessions. Objectives for mentoring will be mutually agreed by the mentee and mentor at the start of the programme.

To ensure this first session is productive we ask you to think before the meeting about your:

EXPECTATIONS

What do you most want from your mentor?

GOALS

What do you want to have achieved by the end of the mentoring?. Try to identify SMART goals for example:

- Review my CV in order to start applying for roles by April
- Practice likely interview questions to increase my confidence before attending my first interviews.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

How will you know if you have succeeded?

MEETING 1: EXPECTATIONS AND STARTER QUESTIONS

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MEETINGS 2 & 3: CHOOSE 2 TOPICS YOU WOULD LIKE TO EXPLORE FURTHER

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During the meeting you will have 30 minutes to ask the mentors questions about their work, experiences, and career advice. These "informational interviews" are very valuable and can be used at any age and any stage in your career to get the inside track into what different jobs, careers and courses involve. We have detailed some questions and topic areas that may be of interest to you to explore over the meetings. You are welcome to also discuss other areas, but it is important that you agree these with your mentor at the outset of the relationship. We wish you the best of luck with the programme over the next few months and we look forward to your feedback.

SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT YOUR CAREERS ADVISOR.

**YOURS SINCERELY
NCI CAREERS TEAM**

MEETING 1: EXPECTATIONS AND STARTER QUESTIONS

PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

- Why did you choose to attend NCI?
- Where did you grow up? What was the transition like leaving home to come to college or leaving home to go to work?
- Can you tell me about your career journey since leaving NCI and about your work today?
- What were some of the key experiences you had in college that have helped with your career?
- What were some of your part-time or volunteer experiences that helped you get your first job in the field?
- What is your educational background in?
Have you done any other courses since finishing your primary degree?
- How did you get your first job? How many applications did you send? How did you network?
- What are some things I should be doing now to help me make important decisions about the career route I want to go down?

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

- What do you hope to gain from this relationship?
- What role do you expect your mentor to play?
- Are there any ground rules you would like to set?
- What is the best way to get in touch? LinkedIn, email, messages?
- Can we set up a plan or schedule for when I should be setting up meetings?
How are we going to have our meetings?
- What are your expectations of me for this relationship?
- Can we discuss what the focus of our 2nd and 3rd meetings should be?

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CAREER PATHWAYS, INDUSTRIES AND DAY-TO-DAY ROLES. (PICK 3 – 5 QUESTIONS THAT YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT)

- How did you get into your career area?
- Did you have to overcome any obstacles to get into this type of career?
- Have you kept studying or did you finishing after completing the degree?
- What do you like most about your job?
- What does a typical day look like in your current role?
- What is the most interesting job you have had?
- Are there any parts of your job that you dislike or find very challenging?
- Can you talk about advancement in your field?
- What are some of the challenges of the industry that you work in?
- What are some of the roles and responsibilities of graduates in your company?

CV REVIEW

COME READY WITH A CV TO REVIEW AND RECEIVE FEEDBACK

- What really stands out to you on a CV?
- What sections do you read first?
- What is something that automatically makes you like or dislike a CV?
- Does this portray a cohesive story of who I am and what I can offer?
- Should I include more detail in my Work or Education sections?
- I have done a lot of extra-curricular activities and volunteer work; do you think that I've highlighted the relevant skills from these?
- I've worked a lot of the same types of part-time roles, but am unsure how I can demonstrate skills that would be relevant to the field I want to work in. Can you help me identify some strengths?

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- Discussion regarding what skills are critical for working in the field today and how to develop them.
- What specific skills are critical for working in your field today?
- What skills can I develop while I am still in college that will help me gain an advantage in the job market?
- What experiences have been most impactful for the development of your career?
- What do you think someone coming into the profession needs to excel at in order to be successful?
- What skills would really stand out on an application or in an interview setting?

BUILDING YOUR NETWORK

- Discussion on how to build a network and the networking tips mentors can share with students.
- How have you built your network over time? How did you start building your network in college?
- Who have been your most valuable contacts over time?
- I'd like to reach out to more people who work in XXX, can we talk about a strategy to connect with them?
- What advice would you have for me in terms of building my network?
- I'm interested in hearing more about XXX, is there anyone you know who I could talk to more about these types of roles?
- What are some job search strategies that you would recommend?

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

EITHER TO PRACTICE A SIMPLE MOCK OR SCREENING INTERVIEW, OR TO PREPARE FOR AN UPCOMING LIVE INTERVIEW.

- Would it be possible to schedule a mock interview with you?
Or would there be someone you know who might be able to do one with me?
- What type of interview format does your company use?
Can you tell me more about what you look for in candidate responses?
- I would like to practice the answers to the following questions, can you help?

CHOOSE 2 – 3 TO WORK ON

- Tell me about yourself
- Can you walk me through your CV?
- What is your biggest strength?
- What is your biggest weakness?
- Why do you want to work as a _____?
- Tell me about your favourite part of your course

I'd like to practice answering some competency questions around the following, can we talk through my answers?

CHOOSE 2 – 3 TO WORK ON

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Planning and Organising
- Problem Solving
- Initiative and Accountability
- Attention to Detail
- Customer Focus
- Adaptability/Flexibility

TECHNICAL INTERVIEW

EITHER TO PRACTICE FOR A TECHNICAL INTERVIEW, OR TO PREPARE FOR AN UPCOMING LIVE INTERVIEW.

- Would it be possible to schedule a mock interview with you?
Or would there be someone you know who might be able to do one with me?
- What type of interview format does your company use?
Can you tell me more about what you look for in candidate responses?
- I would like to practice giving answers to some technical questions
- I would like to practice answering problem solving/logic questions

RECEIVING FEEDBACK

YOUR MENTOR MIGHT GIVE YOU FEEDBACK ABOUT YOUR APPROACH TO CVS, JOB SEARCHES, INTERVIEWS AND MUCH MORE. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU LISTEN TO THEIR FEEDBACK AND RESPOND APPROPRIATELY. MAKE IT WORK FOR YOU!

1. UNDERSTAND

- A. Pause
- B. Remain silent and actively listen
- C. Paraphrase your understanding of the feedback

2. STAY OPEN

- A. Take the approach of "I want to learn about myself"
- B. Avoid explaining or justifying
- C. Assume positive intentions and put down your defenses

3. FOCUS ON BEHAVIOR

- A. Separate yourself from your behavior
- B. It is not about who you are. You're OK!

4. CHECK THE 'FIT'

- A. Try to obtain feedback from several other people
- B. Does it make sense? Is it practical?
- C. If it doesn't fit you can reject it in your own time
- D. Ask them for thoughts and perspective.

STUDENT REFLECTION

What did you most enjoy about the meetings?

Is there anything that you would like to ask a future mentor?

List 3 things that you have learned from your mentor?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Is there anything that you would do differently the next time you are in a mentoring relationship?

MENTORING PROCESS EVALUATION

FOR THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS, INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF AGREEMENT USING THE SCALE BELOW.

1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE

2 = DISAGREE

3 = NEUTRAL

4 = AGREE

5 = STRONGLY AGREE

MENTEE

- _____ My mentoring goals were achieved.
- _____ Mentoring has helped me build and enhance my career development capabilities.
- _____ Mentoring has helped me build a successful professional relationship.
- _____ I integrated new learnings into my career planning a result of mentoring.
- _____ I feel I was an effective mentee.
- _____ My mentor and I built a trusting relationship and were able to have candid and honest discussions.
- _____ My mentor and I engaged in reciprocal and on-going feedback.
- _____ My mentor and I used our meeting time effectively.
- _____ I have benefited from my mentoring partnership.

MENTOR

- _____ My mentee achieved his or her mentoring goals.
- _____ I was able to help my mentee build and enhance their career development capabilities.
- _____ I have been able to assist my mentee in building successful relationships.
- _____ My mentee integrated new learning to their career planning as a result of our mentoring relationship.
- _____ I feel I was an effective mentor.
- _____ My mentee and I built a trusting relationship and had candid and honest discussions.
- _____ My mentee and I engaged in reciprocal and on-going feedback.
- _____ My mentee and I used our meeting time effectively.
- _____ Mentoring is helping me build and enhance my leadership qualities.



