



**CRIEC**

Mentee Handbook

# Table of Contents

3	Introduction
4	Becoming a Mentee
5	What is a Successful Mentoring Partnership?
6	The Mentoring Partnership Agreement
7	Clarifying Expectations
8	Managing the Process
12	Networking Your Way to Success
13	Cross-Cultural Awareness
15	Goal Setting
18	Your First Meeting
19	Roadmap Month One: Mentee Assessment and Job Search Activities
20	Roadmap Month Two: Professional Development and Networking
21	Roadmap Month Three: Networking and Interviews
22	Roadmap Month Four: Workplace Culture and Closure
23	Additional Activities You Can Do With Your Mentor
24	If You Find Work During Your Mentoring Partnership
26	Frequently Asked Questions
28	Learning Logs



## Welcome to the CRIEC Mentoring Program

This program is a powerful yet simple employment strategy that connects you to the Canadian workforce through mentoring.

While helping you gain job search strategies, build professional networks, gain understanding of cultural nuances and acquire the tools necessary to secure employment in your field of expertise, **Calgary Region Immigrant Employment Council (CRIEC)** also helps Calgary employers access the skilled and experienced employees they need to meet business objectives and compete at a global level.

CRIEC partners with Calgary employers to recruit mentors within their organizations, works with community partners, and makes appropriate mentor-mentee matches for productive mentoring partnerships – just like the one you are about to embark on.

CRIEC is here to support your efforts. Resources such as this handbook have been created so your mentoring partnership is professional, productive and rewarding.

We believe you will find the mentoring strategies provide a great opportunity to learn about the Canadian workplace, participate in professional networks and share your international experience.

Thank you for participating as a mentee. Enjoy the journey!







## Becoming a Mentee

As a mentee, you are an internationally trained professional who has the knowledge, business experience and English language skills to succeed in the workplace, but you need help getting your foot in the door.

Most of all, as a mentee you must be willing to listen, learn and share.

Your mentor will be someone who has a combination of business knowledge and experience, and will provide guidance as you navigate your way into the Canadian workforce. He or she will be comfortable in his or her role as a mentor and the mentoring process.

### What are your responsibilities in this partnership?

- Ongoing communication with CRIEC and with your mentor is critical. It is essential you inform CRIEC as soon as possible about any changes to your:
  - a. Employment status
  - b. Availability
  - c. Contact information

- Mentoring is a two-way learning relationship. For the partnership to be successful, participants must commit to making time for one another, taking into account the needs and schedules of both parties. Remember, your mentor is not expected to meet with you during the evenings or weekends. Be

clear and forthcoming as to your availability and respect the time allocated for each meeting.

- Mentees are expected to be on time and prepared for each meeting (agenda and questions ready). Present yourself in a professional manner (businesslike conduct and dress code).

Mentoring partnerships last anywhere from 1 to 4 months and usually consist of weekly meetings. You will meet with your mentor a minimum of

4 times to a maximum of 16 weekly meetings of 1-1.5 hours. You and your mentor together will decide what works best for your partnership. Although meeting face to face is optimum, it is not always practical. To connect between meetings consider other meeting and multimedia options (phone, email or video chat).

**Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction.**

- John C. Crosby

# What is a Successful Mentoring Partnership?

Mentoring partnerships advance in different ways depending on the needs and circumstances of each mentee. Three key areas of growth include: developing job search strategies, networking and adapting to the Canadian workplace culture.

The table below shows a typical progression of most mentees in each of these three areas. Keep in mind, not all mentees start in the same place, nor do they develop in all areas at a uniform pace. The key is simply to make progress.

Mentoring Goals		Possible Outcomes of a Successful Mentoring Partnership <i>(This ongoing growth and development process will vary for each participant)</i>		
		Outcomes Step 1	Outcomes Step 2	Outcomes Step 3
Job Search Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced job search skills</li> <li>Targeted work options</li> <li>Enriched understanding of Canadian labour market</li> <li>Understand job opportunities that would utilize transferable skills</li> <li>Improved understanding of behavioural interviewing</li> <li>Enriched understanding of applicable professional accreditation or certification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved résumé</li> <li>Improved cover letter</li> <li>Identified organizations where mentee skills would be an asset</li> <li>Identified transferable skills</li> <li>Increased comfort with interview process in general</li> <li>Prepared for behavioural interviews with a couple of STARS examples (situation / task(s) / action(s) / result / strategies)</li> <li>Enhanced understanding of technical similarities and differences of their industry in Canada relative to former home</li> <li>Identified accreditation / certification requirements for occupation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased ability to customize résumé and cover letter to target position</li> <li>Engaged in active targeted job search</li> <li>Identified related occupations that can utilize transferable skills</li> <li>Attained one to two interviews</li> <li>Increased understanding of their role in industry and sector</li> <li>Increased understanding of professional designation process (where applicable)</li> <li>Registered in applicable courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the importance of continuous learning after employment is secured</li> <li>Secured a position in professional field utilizing as much of their education and years of experience as possible</li> </ul>
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased understanding of the importance of networking</li> <li>Increased understanding of how to network</li> <li>Made plan to develop professional network</li> <li>Increased professional network of contacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussed importance of LinkedIn</li> <li>Enriched understanding of the value of volunteering as a networking tool</li> <li>Attained knowledge of, and introduction to professional associations (where applicable)</li> <li>Built awareness of social events with networking opportunities (e.g. children's school, community association, etc.)</li> <li>Developed a list of contacts (at least 15) to initiate informational meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed a professional LinkedIn profile</li> <li>Participated in one to two volunteering activities</li> <li>Attended a professional association event</li> <li>Attended at least one social/ community event</li> <li>Completed (at least three) informational meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established network of professionals in field of expertise</li> <li>Feel confident in identifying and taking advantage of networking opportunities</li> <li>Understand how to market oneself</li> </ul>
Canadian Workplace Culture/ Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved understanding of Canadian workplace culture</li> <li>Enhanced professional communication</li> <li>Increased self-confidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed SMART goals leading to career action plan</li> <li>Identified resources for continual language improvement</li> <li>Improved communication skills (phone/ email/ workplace interactions)</li> <li>Apply technical language when describing professional experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implemented career plan</li> <li>Took responsibility and initiated steps in job search process</li> <li>Recognize similarities and differences in workplace culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased understanding of workplace culture</li> <li>Understand how to maintain and advance career</li> <li>Feel good about own identity and competence, and are confident about how skills fit into the Canadian workplace</li> </ul>

# The Mentoring Partnership Agreement

Set out your mutual expectations at the beginning of the mentoring partnership. This helps to establish a business-like framework for the partnership and invites good discussion. Experience has shown that clarifying expectations at the start of the partnership leads to a more successful mentoring partnership, and doing this will help you make the most of your time together.

## Recipe for a Successful Mentoring Partnership

A meeting to discuss your Mentoring Partnership Agreement should contain certain elements:

**Benefits:** What constitutes a productive partnership for both of you?

**Expected outcomes:** What do you both want to get out of the mentoring partnership?

**Approach:** How can you best work together to build a successful mentoring partnership?

**Flexibility:** What happens when something in the partnership does not go as planned?

**A mentor is someone who allows you to see the higher part of yourself when sometimes it becomes hidden to your own view.**

- Oprah Winfrey

## Agree on How You Will Work Together

Together, mentors and mentees are responsible for making decisions that include:

- Meeting schedules (regular meetings are recommended)
- Meeting duration and location
- Frequency and nature of contact between meetings (e.g. email/phone correspondence and response times)
- Notes and assignments
- Interruptions to mentorship to be permitted (e.g. vacation or work travel)
- Setting professional boundaries
- How to provide honest feedback
- How to deal with disagreements
- How to handle anything that may impede growth and development
- Confidentiality of meeting discussions
- Who will contact CRIEC if there is a change to the partnership

Your mentor is volunteering his or her time to support you. Keep in mind that your mentor is balancing this with other commitments that may include work, family and other volunteering. There may be occasions when your mentor needs to reschedule a meeting due to an unexpected work demand. Try to accommodate meeting times and locations that are most convenient for your mentor.

# Clarifying Expectations

## Please discuss the following expectations during the signing of the Mentoring Partnership Agreement.

- Treat each other with respect and sensitivity.
- Conduct the partnership as professional rather than social.
- Agree to how and when you will communicate with each other.
- Clarify and establish professional boundaries.
- Take the mentoring partnership seriously by striving to meet all commitments.
- Focus your partnership on exchanging insight into the Canadian workplace.
- Do not ask your mentor to: find you a job; provide job shadowing, training or tutoring or find you a work experience placement.
- You are expected to ensure you have your mentor's permission before using him or her as a reference.

## Professional Etiquette

- Set a meeting agenda
- Come prepared for meetings with questions ready
- Complete action items for next meeting
- Practise active listening skills
- Be open minded

### Tip

*Think of other points of consideration that would make your mentoring partnership a rich and rewarding experience.*

### Job Search Resources

[www.directionsforimmigrants.ca](http://www.directionsforimmigrants.ca)

*An online resource centre specializing in immigrant professionals' needs.*

[www.alis.alberta.ca](http://www.alis.alberta.ca)

*This resource provides career path planning support and job search strategies.*

<https://noc.esdc.gc.ca/Home/Welcome/6df628c6dd5249f3b6adc2962850d633?GoCTemplateCulture=en-CA>

*This website provides a list of National Occupational Classifications.*

# Managing the Process

The Mentoring Program is focused on understanding and meeting the needs of internationally trained professionals.

Your mentor may be able to help you in the following areas:

- Industry trends, market trends, types of employers, major employers.
- Job title implications – duties, expectations, level of experience required, type of qualifications required, where the job fits in the organizational structure.
- Access to the profession – credentials and their value, certification, licensure, formal codes of practice, major professional associations or regulatory bodies.
- Career paths and career progression.
- Practises, processes, tools and methods used on the job.
- “Culture” of the profession, including unwritten practices that come with experience, e.g. industry-specific jargon, sector-specific terminology, how to organize a particular task, how to present data, etc.
- General Canadian workplace cultural norms and context, and workplace sub-culture.
- Publications for research and networking
- Networking guidance and support.
- When, if and how to negotiate a contract: an insight into salary levels and benefits or resources to obtain more information.

**It is good to rub  
and polish our  
brain against that  
of others.**

- Montaigne

## Tips for Mentees

- Ask questions, and be open to giving and receiving feedback.
- See your mentoring relationship as an opportunity to grow, learn and bounce ideas.
- Note, mentors are not expected to be career counselors; mentees have access to this service and to job search coaching through community partners.
- Be sure to let your mentor know at the start of the meeting if you expect your mentoring meeting may be interrupted (e.g. by an important phone call).
- Ask for help from CRIEC.

## Points to Consider That May Require Special Emphasis

Share your experience, knowledge and background with your mentor, as well as any challenges you face or issue you are grappling with. Questions that you think may be insignificant (about the Canadian workplace, what different behaviours mean, etc.) are important to your development. No matter what the question, do not be afraid to ask it. You may surprise your mentor, but this is also his or her opportunity to learn from you.





When your mentor offers ideas or suggestions, consider carefully which ones to act on and follow through. Be prepared to discuss your plans to move forward. Have an open dialogue about what areas you agree and disagree with. Sometimes people disagree because of not understanding a person's position; make sure you clarify the points your mentor is making before you disagree to ensure full understanding.

Remember, your mentor is there to guide you in your job search process, not to find you a job. Building and maintaining this partnership will be a significant part of your success.

### **To get the most out of your meetings, consider the following:**

1. Set an agenda for each meeting, even if you depart from it when a different priority develops.
2. Discuss your learning preferences with your mentor.
3. Make an effort to understand your mentor's approach, and learn from it.
4. At the end of each meeting, talk about what was helpful and the next action steps.

If, during the course of your mentoring partnership, you and your mentor decide that one or both of you would benefit from some added training or support in a particular area, contact CRIEC.

## **Professional Communication**

Utilize your mentoring relationship to better understand professional communication in the Canadian workplace.

### **Communication Tips for Mentees**

- Ask questions about effective workplace communication skills.
- Enhance your language and communication by practicing idioms with your mentor.
- Be open to expressing yourself differently if the change will help others understand you better.
- Monitor your own speech and listen to what you say and how you say it.
- Listen for the proper use of situational English idioms and expressions.

#### **Tip:**

*Open up communication one conversation at a time, build trust and commit to a mutual learning partnership.*

## Handling Roadblocks

Mentoring is a powerful connection between two people. Over the course of your mentoring partnership, you may experience some roadblocks.

### Issues and Possible Solutions

Some possible issues that may arise during your mentoring partnership are listed with suggestions on how to deal with them. This list is not exhaustive.

### Expectations of Meetings

*“My mentor can’t meet when or where I want to meet.”*

*“Our meetings are shorter or less frequent than I would like.”*

- Remember your mentor is volunteering his or her time to help you. Expect to meet when and where it is convenient for your mentor.
- Agree upfront on when, where, how often and how long your meetings will be.
- Discuss what other options may accommodate both of you: meeting for longer every other week rather than shorter meetings every week, or having discussions by phone/email in between face-to-face meetings.
- Mentors are available to meet with you during a normal work week and around their work schedule.
- Contact CRIEC if you require further support.

**Problems are not  
roadblocks, but  
exercise tools.**

- Debasish Mridha

## Prioritizing the Partnership

*“My mentor never calls me back.”*

*“I sent three emails and I haven’t received an answer yet.”*

*“My mentor cancelled our meeting at the last minute twice.”*

- In your first meeting, communicate and agree to how long it might take you to return calls and emails.
- Be forgiving.
- Discuss the expectations you have of your mentor. Are they realistic?
- Are there any other commitments that could affect these meetings?
- If issues around responsiveness persist, refer back to the Mentoring Partnership Agreement and discuss how the expectations you both agreed to are not being met.
- Contact CRIEC for support.

### Changes to My Availability

*“When I started with my mentor I wasn’t working, but now I work part-time.”*

*“Something unexpected and unavoidable came up with my family that affects my availability to meet with my mentor.”*

- Speak to your mentor about the changes to your circumstances. Is it possible to continue your mentoring partnership given your new availability? Remember that your mentor is not expected to meet with you during the evenings or weekends. If you are no longer available during the day, this may require closing your mentoring partnership.
- Your partnership may be paused for a few weeks, but you must contact CRIEC first.
- Contact CRIEC to advise them of any changes to your availability or for more support.



## Sharing Network and Contacts

*“My mentor won’t share his or her network’s contact information or introduce me to colleagues.”*

- Your mentor has likely spent years building a reputation and network base. He or she needs to build trust with you before feeling comfortable sharing those contacts.
- It is up to your mentor to decide if and when to share his or her contacts and make introductions.
- Your mentor may need to gain permission from his or her contacts before sharing their contact information with you. Be patient as this may take time, if permission is granted at all.
- If you still have questions or concerns, please contact CRIEC.

**Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.**

- Winston Churchill

### Tip:

*Where to meet?*

*When setting your mentoring meetings, here are a few things to consider:*

- *Your mentor is volunteering his or her time. Try to meet where it is convenient for the mentor.*
- *You may wish to meet somewhere like a food court where you can sit without buying something.*
- *Neither you nor your mentor is expected to purchase food or drinks for each other.*





## Networking Your Way to Success

Effective networking is your key to career success in Canada. Through it, you will build lasting relationships and improve your access to information, resources and job opportunities.

### What is Networking?

Networking is about developing a broad list of contacts and relationships – people you have met through various social and business functions – and leveraging them in your job search. People you meet in unexpected places can offer you job leads, advice or information about a particular company or industry. They can also introduce you to other influential people. Sometimes, in this culture, it is not what you know but who you know that helps to get you that interview.

Your mentor can assist you in building your network by pointing the way to organizations that may prove the most helpful. They can also advise you about managing those relationships in the early stages of network building.

### Tips for Networking Effectively

- Have a purpose to meet. Think of something you might have in common.
- Express interest in who they are and what they do. Make an effort to get to know them.
- Explore ways to assist them in their endeavours or share something of interest.
- Find a reason to follow up with further contact.

### When Meeting Someone for the First Time

First impressions count. The first 30 seconds can

determine how open someone will be to spending time with you.

- Think through your opening line. Say something welcoming, engaging and brief.
- Smile, maintain good posture and use a firm handshake.
- Find something interesting about them. Ask a few good questions to help stimulate the conversation.
- Pay attention. Listen.

### When Attending Events or Other Networking Opportunities

- Decide in advance how many new contacts you want to make, and work toward that goal.
- Make notes discretely on the back of each person's business card to remember something about him or her.
- Maintain eye contact when talking to people; to North Americans, it can convey interest and self-confidence.
- Include others in conversations.
- Find a reason to stay in touch with the people you meet. Follow up with a note or an email.
- Give and accept a "Thank you." If you thank someone and he or she tells you, "It was nothing," an appropriate response would be to say, "Well, I appreciate your assistance."
- Maintain business-like conduct and dress code.

# Cross-Cultural Awareness

As a new immigrant to Canada, securing employment is a top priority for you. Learning to understand the complexities of cultural dynamics in a multicultural city is paramount. In the workplace in particular, it can make or break an immigrant's opportunities.

Intercultural understanding is often challenging due to the differences in verbal and non-verbal communication in various parts of the world. Some of the factors that come into play include misinterpretation of terminology or body language, false assumptions, xenophobia or discomfort with certain cultural behaviours or habits, or cultural insensitivity due to lack of knowledge.

Cultural differences can vary widely in how they manifest themselves. Differences in attire and their significance, or the meaning behind what appears to be a simple physical gesture are just two examples. In one culture, taking initiative is considered an attribute; in another, it is a sign of aggression.

Two primary differences between western business culture and that of other countries have to do with the concepts of teamwork and time.

Unlike western culture, many other cultures are collectivist: teamwork is valued over individualism. In some countries, a previously arranged meeting time is considered a guideline rather than a specific commitment.

Overcoming cultural differences involves awareness, knowledge and skills.

**People will forget  
what you said,  
people will forget  
what you did, but  
people will never  
forget how you  
made them feel.**

- Maya Angelou

## Awareness

Be aware that behaviour reflects cultural norms that may be different from your own.

## Knowledge

Getting to know and understand what these cultural differences are will help you integrate into the Canadian workplace environment.

## Skills

Work with your mentor to apply awareness and knowledge in: learning effective communication, having a positive outlook and practising non-judgmental listening.

In this mentoring partnership, both you and your mentor are embarking on a voyage of discovery. You will benefit from learning the nuances of Canadian work culture, and your mentor will gain from learning about the richness of your own.





Mentors can provide insight into generic workplace cultural norms in Canada and the culture of your chosen field, but each workplace will be unique. You will be able to provide insight that will assist your mentor in being more effective in a diverse work environment.

You and your mentor can share information about workplace cultural norms in any of the following topics:

- What employers value, expect and reward at the employment level you are aiming for
- Expectations around punctuality and attendance
- Expectations about reporting and accountability, taking initiative, working independently, and participation in and contribution to team discussions
- Workplace hierarchy and norms around interaction with peers, supervisors, employees and clients/customers; norms around formality/informality
- Management styles
- Performance evaluation and feedback
- Meeting etiquette
- The first day on the job or orientation
- Policies and procedures
- Business writing norms
- Unwritten rules about how things are done, e.g. business jargon, what tasks take priority, how to write a project brief, how to present data/information
- Career paths and career progression

## Tips for Mentees

- Prepare a comprehensive list of questions about Canadian workplace culture that you would like answered. Remember, there are no foolish questions.
- Enlist your mentor's help in identifying some efficient and reliable ways to obtain the answers to your questions.
- Share some Canadian experiences or observations which you find difficult to interpret. Ask about any workplace cultural norms that may underlie these experiences.
- If you have an opportunity to visit your mentor's workplace, meet afterwards and share your observations about similarities and/or differences of workplace culture with your mentor.
- Explore what it means to be culturally competent and why companies have developed Diversity and Inclusion policies.



## Goal Setting

### Setting Smart Goals

Before meeting with your mentor, take some time to think through what you hope to gain from this mentoring partnership. Work with your mentor to set goals for your mentoring partnership and for your career. Refer to page 5 for mentoring outcomes that may assist in setting your mentoring goals.

**Nothing is more  
terrible than  
activity without  
insight.**

- Thomas Carlyle

Here is a way to help you establish SMART goals:

#### **S – Specific**

Goals need to be clearly understood and easy to remember. A vague goal is unlikely to be accomplished. A complex goal may need to be broken down into smaller goals to ensure success.

#### **M – Measurable**

It helps to determine success if you have some way to measure it, and you know how you want to get there. “I will achieve (insert objective) by (insert date).”

#### **A – Achievable**

Impossible goals guarantee failure. To ensure success, make your goals realistic and achievable.

#### **R – Realistic**

State your goals in terms of expected outcomes. Define the tasks to achieve your goal.

#### **T – Time-bound**

Deadlines help you stay focused and avoid procrastination. Long-term goals may be broken down into several short-term goals.



## The Grow Model

The GROW Model of Mentoring is a structured approach to setting goals that can be developed over a number of mentoring sessions. Keep in mind that the process can be adapted to meet your working style as well as your mentor's. Remember to celebrate milestones – big and small.

### G – Goals

To help build momentum and confidence, set SMART goals. Set goals and write them down so you can keep track of your progress and identify any possible barriers to achieving your goals.

Micro-actions are also a great way to get moving towards an outcome without leaving yourself feeling overwhelmed.

You might want to brainstorm with your mentor a list of potential barriers that might hinder your progress. For each identified barrier, come up with potential solutions.

Consider the questions below to help you develop your goals:

- What do you want to achieve through this four-month mentoring partnership?
- What are your goals for that timeframe (SMART goals)?
- What do you hope to achieve through these goals?

### R – Reality

Tell your mentor your story. Your mentor may ask you more questions to help you explore your goals more deeply.

### O – Options

Brainstorm options with your mentor to reach your goals. Consider:

- What could you do as a first step?
- What else could you do?
- What would happen if you did nothing?
- What has worked in the past?
- What do you need to change?
- Who can support you in making this change?

### W – What's next

With the support of your mentor, formulate and write an action plan.

- What steps do you need to take?
- What are you going to do?
- Who can help you in moving forward?

#### Tip:

*Increase your chance of success by sharing your goals with others who will support you.*



## Reviewing Career Goals

It can be difficult to set specific career goals if you do not have a complete understanding of the profession as it is practised here and you have not had the opportunity to speak with people who work in the field.

A mentor's critical assessment of your career goals may lead to the identification of barriers, professional development needs and/or alternative, yet comparable career choices. Take time to share and discuss your short-term and long-term career goals with your mentor. Be sure to discuss questions like, "What are the assumptions I am making? Do my 'assets' match the career choice? Am I underestimating (or inflating) my potential?" Your mentor may agree that you are absolutely on the right track, or may suggest alternative career paths for you to consider that will help you meet your goals. Work together to assess your career goals and aspirations and the best ways to achieve them.

### Setting your career goals may include:

- Changing or confirming the kinds of positions which you would like to target in your job search
- Identifying professional development needs and lining up options
- Identifying and considering alternatives to your first career choice, if necessary
- Developing a short-term strategy for securing employment and aligning it with a long-term strategy for achieving career goals
- Developing strategies for transfer to a new industry, sector or occupation, if necessary

### Together you can:

- Explore transferable skills and alternative career options (if relevant).
- Discuss career options with your mentor that you might not otherwise have considered.
- Shed light on the pros and cons of different career options.
- Discuss possible rewards and challenges of the chosen career direction.
- Work on an action plan.

Some mentees will make a smooth transition into their field of choice, some will take a longer route and others will embark on a new direction. The mentoring relationship can provide insight, strategies and support for what follows.

### Together you can:

- Differentiate between short and long-term career goals
- Identify steps that can be taken to reach these goals and assign milestones; for example, volunteer work, certification or courses
- Strategize how to overcome challenges and barriers
- Plan the transition period between careers, for example, working at one job while taking courses to prepare for another
- Ask your mentor about his or her own career paths to date. Were they linear? If not, how was the transition made from one to another?
- Analyze job opportunities to identify their immediate benefits and potential opportunities.

### Tip:

*Start from your goal and work backwards, setting the steps to reach that goal.*



## Your First Meeting

Building a partnership of trust and respect with your mentor is the first priority in the mentoring process. By taking this approach, you will create a rapport through which you can express and explore your real needs, and you will create an environment in which your unique style of learning can be fostered. For your first meeting, here are some suggestions to help you get started:

### What to talk about:

- What do you hope to get from mentorship?
- Describe growing up in your country. What was it like?
- What is your cultural background and work history?
- Have you ever been in a mentoring partnership?
- What did you learn from this experience?
- What must be in place for our partnership to be successful?

### Tasks to complete at this time:

- Review “Clarifying Expectations,” page 7 together with the Mentoring Partnership Agreement
- Read and sign the Mentoring Partnership Agreement (and exchange contact information)
- Review the goals you brought in during your initial mentee assessment
- Discuss the order of priorities of mentoring (e.g. whether to cover interviews or networking first)
- Discuss logistics, ease of getting to a meeting location, what to do if a meeting is canceled at the last minute
- **Optional:** Bring a cultural item (to show and discuss to deepen cultural understanding)
- Schedule your next meeting

### Tip

*Review your partnership periodically to evaluate what is working and what is not.*



# Roadmap Month One:

## Mentee Assessment and Job Search Activities

### Meeting #1: Building the Partnership

- See “Your First Meeting,” page 18 of your handbook
- Set next meeting date and location
- **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

### Meeting #2: Identifying Career and Education Goals

- Review action items from last meeting
- Review the goals you brought in during your mentee assessment
- Decide on mentoring goals (refer to page 5 for some mentoring outcomes and pages 16-18 for goal setting)
- Clarify strategies for achieving career and education goals and form an action plan
- Explore relevant industry or professional certification or licensing requirements
- Set next meeting date and location
- **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

### Meeting #3: Job Search Strategies

- Review action items from last meeting
- Continue reviewing career goals
- Review the concept of time and punctuality in the Canadian workplace
- Discuss job search activities in your home country (see page 5 for examples of Job Search Strategies)
- Compare job search strategies in Canada
- Perform an initial assessment of your résumé
- Bring job postings to your next meeting to review with your mentor
- Set next meeting date and location
- **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

### Meeting #4: Job Search Strategies (Continued)

- Review action items from last meeting
- Continue reviewing job search activities
- Review job postings and advertisements
- Review employment contracts (permanent, independent contractor and project-based)
- Discuss salary ranges and salary expectations
- Explore when and how to negotiate salary
- Showcase your work (if available) and discuss how this translates to the Canadian workplace
- Discuss the value of volunteerism in Calgary and compare this to volunteerism in your home country
- Set next meeting date and location
- **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

# Roadmap Month Two: Employer Contact and Networking

## Meeting #5: Learning and Development

- Review action items from last meeting
- Explore professional development opportunities related to your field
- Discuss relevant courses or upgrading you could consider
- Review journals/publications relevant to your professional interests
- Review industry specific language/terminology
- Continue reviewing job search activities
- Set next meeting date and location
- **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

## Meeting #6: Networking and LinkedIn

- Review action items from last meeting
- Debate the importance of networking and share networking experiences
- Consider the importance of having an appropriate LinkedIn account
- Share ideas about professionally connecting with people on LinkedIn
- Examine the importance of having your LinkedIn profile match your résumé
- Discuss strategies for building partnerships with potential employers (within and outside of LinkedIn)
- Continue reviewing job search activities
- Set next meeting date and location
- **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

## Meeting #7: Networking Overview

- Review action items from last meeting
- Brainstorm networking opportunities
- Review your contact list and networking activities
- Examine the responses/feedback you have received
- Evaluate networking practices to improve outcomes
- Explore professional associations you might join to enhance networking opportunities
- Set a networking goal and action plan
- Discuss the use of appropriate small talk and business card exchange practices
- Continue reviewing job search activities
- Set next meeting date and location
- **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

## Meeting #8: Informational Interviews

- Review action items from last meeting
- Create a list of 5-10 targeted informational interview questions
  - Discuss the purpose of informational interviews
  - Conduct a mock informational interview; obtain feedback
  - Continue reviewing job search activities
  - Set next meeting date and location
  - **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

### Tip

*Complete the Mentoring Assessment tools at the end of this handbook at the midpoint of your partnership, whenever you and your mentor decide that point is. The roadmap is to be used as a guide only. The areas that you and your mentor focus on will depend on your learning needs.*

# Roadmap Month Three:

## Networking and Interviews

### Meeting #9: Networking Strategies

- Review action items from last meeting
- Brainstorm networking opportunities
- Consider a networking practice opportunity (e.g. attending a networking event)
- Receive feedback on your networking interactions
- Discuss the importance of continuing to network throughout your career path
- Continue reviewing job search activities
- Set next meeting date and location
- **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

### Meeting #10: Telephone Interviews

- Review action items from last meeting
- Discuss do's and don'ts of telephone interviews, email and voice messaging
- Conduct mock/practice task on telephone interviews, emails and voicemail messaging, and receive feedback
- Continue reviewing job search activities
- Set next meeting date and location

**Optional:** Set up and conduct a mock telephone interview

- **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

### Meeting #11: Interview Review/Preparation

- Review action items from last meeting
- Discuss do's and don'ts of interviews
- Share feedback and experiences from your previous interviews
- Review behavioural descriptive interview questions and answers; focus especially on questions you struggle with
- Continue reviewing job search activities
- Set next meeting date and location
- **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

### Meeting #12: Mock Interview

- Review action items from last meeting
- Conduct a mock interview session
- Practise how to answer a question about salary
- Mentor will provide feedback on mock interview
- Continue reviewing job search activities
- Set next meeting date and location
- **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

#### Tip

*Use the Learning Logs to make notes of your meetings.  
Customize your résumé and cover letter for each job description.*

# Roadmap Month Four: Workplace Culture and Closure

## Meeting #13: Workplace Culture

- Review action items from last meeting
- Compare how workplace culture may be the same and different from your home country
- Consider professional norms of Calgary business culture
- Discuss industry-specific culture of the mentor's workplace
- Examine the concept of teamwork in the workplace
- Discuss workplace norms
- Brainstorm "what if" scenarios that people face in the workplace and ways of dealing with them
- Discuss workplace conflict management
- Continue reviewing job search activities
- Set next meeting date and location
- **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

## Meeting #14: Action Planning

- Review action items from last meeting
- Continue discussing workplace practices
- Draft an action plan for the next two months
- Continue reviewing job search activities
- Set next meeting date and location
- **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

## Meeting #15: Action Planning (Continued)

- Review action items from last meeting
- Share plan of action for the next two months; discuss potential barriers
- Discuss the importance of ongoing career planning beyond the mentoring partnership (e.g. 3-year and 5-year plans)
- Continue reviewing job search activities
- Set next meeting date and location
- **Between meetings:** Complete actions you committed to and prepare for next meeting

## Meeting #16: Your Last Meeting

Closures are important moments in our lives: take the time to acknowledge and celebrate your journey together.

- Review your work of the last few months. What was your most memorable experience and why? What have each of you learned?
- Talk a bit about the future. What will your next steps be? Does your mentor have any parting words of advice?
- Thank each other and acknowledge your mentoring partner's contribution.

Your last meeting is not the end of your involvement with CRIEC.

- Let CRIEC know your partnership is closing.
- Make sure you complete the closing survey that will be sent to you electronically.
- You have the option to stay in touch with CRIEC and get further support in your job search.

### Tip

*Whether you stay in touch with your mentor is up to both of you. You may want to maintain your relationship; however, there is no obligation after your formal mentoring partnership is over. Regardless of when your last meeting takes place, ensure you cover the topics discussed in Meeting #16 of the Roadmap to chose your partnership.*



## Additional Activities You Can Do with Your Mentor

- Ask for and read materials, reports, books or articles that may help you understand the Canadian workplace, and discuss them with your mentor to gain a deeper understanding.
- Discuss industry and market trends.
- Attend industry luncheons or lectures together and discuss the topic presented.
- Discuss various organizations and how they might differ.
- Explore job title implications – duties, expectations, level of experience required, type of qualifications required, where they fit in the organizational structure.
- Show examples of your own work to your mentor (if available).

**It is impossible  
for a man to learn  
what he thinks he  
already knows.**

- Epictetus



# If You Find Work During Your Mentoring Partnership

If you find employment while you have a mentor, congratulations! Please let CRIEC know. There can be great value in continuing your partnership with your mentor, but the focus of your mentoring will change. To accommodate your new work schedule, you and your mentor may decide to “meet” by phone or video conferencing instead of in person. If your new job means you are too busy to continue mentoring, please inform CRIEC that your partnership is to be closed.

If you choose to continue with your mentor, below are some discussion topics you may find helpful.

- **Asking questions at work:**
  - a. Who do you approach when you have questions (e.g., who can help with different types of questions)?
  - b. Ask your mentor about examples of what questions are appropriate and inappropriate to ask at work (e.g., it is okay to ask about someone’s weekend or ask for help; it is not okay to ask about someone’s salary or age).
  - c. What are appropriate “small talk” conversations for talking to someone you don’t know well?
  - d. Are you clear about expectations of employees?
  - e. Discuss how you could handle potential conflicts at work.
- **Probation period:** Do you know if your new workplace follows a policy of a three- or six-month probation period? Do you know what this means for you?
- **Buddy system:** Some workplaces assign another employee as a “buddy” to help the new employee get acquainted with the company. Ask your workplace if it has this type of program. If it doesn’t, speak to your mentor about how to approach this topic with your supervisor.
- **Workplace culture:** Compare how Calgary’s business culture, the company’s culture and the team’s or department’s culture may be similar and different to each other.
- **Punctuality and work hours:**
  - a. Talk about the importance of punctuality in Canadian culture.
  - b. Discuss expectations of working outside regular work hours.
- **Policies and procedures:** Discuss the importance of workplace procedures and understanding who to speak to with different questions (e.g. HR, IT, email protocol, absences). You may wish to compare your workplace’s procedures with your mentor’s.
- **Dress code:** Do you know your workplace’s “official” and “informal” dress codes (e.g. every day, casual Friday, Stampede)?
- **Celebrations and gifts:** What is the culture for celebrations (e.g. birthday celebrations) and gift giving? Do employees in your team generally give each other Christmas cards or gifts? What would make an appropriate gift for a boss or colleague?
- **Professional development:**
  - a. Understand what is available through your workplace.
  - b. Look into internal mentoring opportunities in your company.
  - c. Review your own career plans on an ongoing basis.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Will my mentor find me a job?

No. The objective of the mentoring partnership is to assist you in your pursuit of employment by exposing you to professional networks and advice. Your mentor will help guide you and provide advice in many areas, but you are responsible for your own job search.

### How long will I have a mentor for? What is the time commitment?

Mentoring partnerships last anywhere from one month to four months and usually consist of weekly meetings. You will meet with your mentor a minimum of 4 times, to a maximum of 16 weekly meetings of 1-1.5 hours. You and your mentor together will decide what works best for your partnership. Although meeting face to face is optimum, it is not always practical. To connect between meetings consider other meeting and multimedia options (phone, email or video chat).

### Do we always meet in person?

In-person contact is recommended, particularly at the beginning of the partnership. Face to face interactions help build the trust and respect with one another that will allow both of you to get the most from your partnership. Occasional telephone and online meetings may take place once the mentoring partnership is established.

### How are mentors recruited?

Mentors are identified by the employer partners and/or recruited directly by CRIEC.

### How are mentors matched with mentees? Will I be involved in that process?

Matches are occupation-specific, but other criteria considered for compatibility could include shared education background and similar work experience. The matching program is completed by the CRIEC team. To make sure it is an appropriate match, mentors are given the opportunity to review the match.

**Coming together  
is a beginning;  
keeping together  
is progress;  
working together  
is success.**

- Henry Ford



### **What happens if I don't get along with my mentor?**

Not all people are compatible. In case of conflict or difficulty, contact CRIEC. You and your mentor will be asked to comment on the situation, and action will be taken to rectify the problem.

The partnership can be dissolved at any time at the request of either party by contacting CRIEC, who will schedule a closing interview.

### **How do I evaluate my effectiveness?**

Ask your mentor for feedback. Maintain an ongoing dialogue on your progress and experiences. Focus on issues and concerns regarding integration into the Canadian workplace. Open communication is the key to building a strong mentoring partnership.

Remember, taking ownership of your personal and professional growth is achieved through self-reflection and assessment.

### **What do I do when I don't know what to do?**

Contact CRIEC. The team is here to support you at every step. Whether your questions are big or small, it is always most helpful if you contact any member of the team early. Contact the team about any changes to your availability or employment details, questions about mentoring, concerns with your partnership, or anything else that may arise.



# CRIEC

Connecting Experience with Opportunity

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