

APEGBC's Mentoring Program GUIDELINE

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1 Definitions

APEGBC

Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of the Province of British Columbia

EIT

Engineer-in-training

GIT

Geoscientist-in-training

Mentor

A member of APEGBC who is a licensed professional engineer or geoscientist (P.Eng. or P.Geo.)

Mentee

An applicant with APEGBC or a member of APEGBC who is currently enrolled as an engineer-in-training or geoscientist-in-training.

The program

Refers to the APEGBC Mentoring Program

2 Introduction

Members of the public rely on APEGBC to ensure that the licensed body of professional engineers and geoscientists in the province of British Columbia meet the high standards of qualification, ethical practice and professional conduct. APEGBC's mentoring program arranges for an engineer-in-training (EIT), geoscientist-in-training (GIT) or applicant to receive guidance and support from experienced professionals. The program also links professionals who are seeking career guidance and general mentoring in their career with experienced professionals in the industry. APEGBC is dedicated to encouraging qualified individuals to be licensed as professionals and fostering professional growth.

2.1 What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a planned pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with an emerging or experienced one with the agreed-upon goal of having the mentee grow and develop specific abilities to reach long-term objectives.

The relationship must be based on specific goals driven by the mentee but jointly arrived at with the mentor. The relationship may be more structured as is suggested by the worksheets in this guideline or it may be based on a natural chemistry between the two partners. The relationship, however, should be between two individuals who do not have a direct reporting relationship but rather a relationship in which coaching and counseling can be delivered in a non-judgmental way.

2.2 Purpose of the Mentoring Program

The primary objective of the APEGBC Mentoring Program is to assist engineers-in-training, geoscientists-in-training, applicants and young professionals in obtaining career advice, counselling and assistance with achieving their professional status, as well as ongoing support beyond professional licensure

APEGBC's Mentoring Program allows experienced APEGBC professionals to transfer their skills and knowledge to aspiring professionals pursuing their engineering or geoscience career. The mentor can guide and provide access to networks and opportunities but the program is not intended to assist with employment or act as a job search mechanism.

2.3 Value of the Mentoring Program

The Mentoring Program assists the mentee in developing skills that would otherwise be learned through trial and error. This provides benefits to many parties including the mentee, their employer, the mentor and APEGBC.

Professional Development hours can be claimed for mentoring activities as outlined in APEGBC's *Continuing Professional Development Guideline*. Mentors and mentees may claim the time invested in mentoring under *participation activities*. As a mentor, you can help aspiring young people find their way in the technical world in which they live by sharing your expertise and insight.

The mentee learns how to avoid pitfalls and how to tackle challenges. They gain a trusted advisor who can smooth their transition into professional life, and help them gain specific skills and knowledge.

The mentor has an opportunity to give back to the professional community. A mentoring relationship also provides an opportunity for renewed enthusiasm for the mentor's role as an expert. Mentors offer a great deal of valuable information to mentees. They provide information on the profession, labour market and encourage mentees to build a professional network. Additionally, mentors often report that the relationship provides them with a valuable opportunity to reflect on their own career, development and future goals. For both mentor and mentee the relationship provides an opportunity for more diverse networking, and can be a fun and positive undertaking.

The employer gains in terms of personnel development. The mentee will develop in a guided fashion while their mentors will be more attuned to the needs and desires of upcoming engineers- and geoscientists. In the case where the mentee and mentor have the same employer, mentoring relationships can also serve to enhance and improve succession planning.

For APEGBC, the mentoring relationship provides an opportunity for members in training and applicants to learn about the association and its role. In addition, the mentee learns the value and benefit of volunteerism within the engineering and geoscience profession.

Within the context of professional licensure, the mentoring relationship can also be a place where the mentee learns about the real-life application of professional ethics and the role of the professional engineer or geoscientist at work and in society. Further, the mentor can provide guidance to the mentee on obtaining and reporting on acceptable engineering/geoscientist work experience.

3 Effective Mentoring Relationships

3.1 Building the Mentoring Relationship

Building a relationship with your mentor/mentee is the first priority in the mentoring process. Ask open questions, listen actively, clarify and confirm. By learning more about your mentor/mentee, you will be better equipped to set the expectations of the relationship. Building an open and enjoyable relationship of mutual respect will be your key to achieving this goal.

Maintaining the relationship will be a significant part of its success. We encourage that you meet every 4 – 6 weeks for at least one hour with a recommendation of meeting a minimum of 4 times in the year.

Successful mentoring is all about:

- Having conversations
- Sharing knowledge, information and experiences
- Learning from each other
- Providing inspiration

3.2 A Receptive Mentor and Mentee

Mentors provide support, guidance, assistance, and an attentive ear. This helps to develop a supportive relationship where the mentee can receive encouragement and positive reinforcement for the achievement of goals, and guidance when obstacles make goal achievement difficult.

Mentoring relationships are most effective when both the mentor and the mentee bring the following skills and attributes to the table:

- Confidentiality. Both individuals must be able to trust one another so that valuable information is shared, not withheld. In mentoring relationships in which email is used, it is very important to ensure the email messages go only to the mentor or mentee.
- Commitment. Both parties must make a commitment to the relationship for the duration of the program (A 1 year term which has the option of being renewed). This requires both time and a willingness to “be there” for the other individual.
- Follow-up. A relationship that goes no further than verbal discussions will not result in significant progress for the mentee. Both individuals must be able to act on what has been discussed during meetings. For example: mentees should act on the advice given, mentors should provide information as promised, and both should report on the results of their actions.
- Active listening. This involves being fully present during all discussions. Both parties must be able to listen without criticizing, and must remain attentive to the needs and advice expressed.

Active listening includes asking clarifying questions and showing interest and support for what is said.

- Respect. Without the foundation of a mutually respectful relationship, neither individual will fully benefit from the program.
- Willingness to learn. Successful mentees must have a willingness to learn from their matched mentor. A mentoring relationship is interactive and requires the mentee to be committed to setting goals and working toward specific learning objectives.
- Self-Evaluation. Mentees need to be able to assess their skills objectively and evaluate potential opportunities for self-development. They should have a personal vision and a good grasp on their current career environment. Before seeking a mentor, mentees should have considered their career and life goals, their strengths and their areas of development. The more the mentee understands themselves, the more accurately they can communicate their goals to their potential mentor.
- Time. Building a mentoring relationship takes time. Mentees must recognize that a mentor's time is valuable and ensure that they adequately prepare for each meeting. It is recommended that mentees be prepared to commit a minimum of two hours of preparation time before their meeting.
- Commitment and building trust. Mentees must be committed to achieving the objectives of the mentoring relationship. Persistence is an important part of the process. The more the mentor is able to trust in the mentee's ability and willingness to learn, the more committed he or she will be to the partnership.

4 Finding a Mentor

Mentoring is a tool that can be used to complement your career development process. You may have already have established a coaching relationship with your direct supervisor. A mentor can help you develop skills and competencies in which your supervisor may not be an expert or for which they may not have time.

APEGBC has provided mentees and mentors an online tool that allows them to directly request a match with a suitable mentor/mentee.

Attributes to look for in a mentor

- How much time does your potential mentor have available? Is the person already involved in other mentoring relationships?
- How similar is the potential mentor's personal style to your own?
- Does the potential mentor have a similar professional or academic background to yours?
- Has your potential mentor had a career path (or even life path) from which you would like to learn?
- Is the potential mentor active in professional societies and have a network of associates?
- Diversity: it may be beneficial to seek someone who may offer new approaches and assist with developing your creativity with different learning, problem solving and people management skills than yourself.

Approaching a potential mentor

Approach your potential mentor with a well-developed plan for the mentoring relationship. The mentor needs to be able to assess if they will be able to help you acquire the skills or competencies that you want to develop. Do not feel badly or rejected if a potential mentor says no to the request to become your mentor. There are many reasons that they may feel compelled to say no. For example:

- Your potential mentor may not feel she/he is an appropriate mentor for you.
- She/he may already be involved in other mentoring relationships and not have the time to commit to another mentee.

5 APEGBC Mentoring Program

5.1 Mentee Requirements

The following are APEGBC's mentoring program requirements for all mentees:

- Must be employed during the mentee/mentor relationship in an engineering or geoscience capacity. The mentoring program is not intended to help a mentee seek employment.
- Must be a member in good standing with APEGBC
- Must be seeking a mentor within the province of British Columbia
- *The mentee is not limited to one mentor*
- *The mentee's potential mentor does not have to come from the same area of discipline or educational background*

5.2 Mentor Requirements

Mentors applying to the APEGBC Mentoring Program must be:

- A professional member in good standing with APEGBC .
- A minimum of 3 years work experience after obtaining your professional designation.

5.3 What to Expect: The Steps of the Program and How to Apply

There are currently two methods of applying to the APEGBC mentoring program as an EIT, GIT, applicant or mentor.

First Method of Application:

1. Visit the APEGBC mentoring program page and fill out the *Become a Mentee* or *Become a Mentor Application Form*, as applicable.
2. Your application form will be reviewed and you will be contacted to confirm that you meet the program requirements (see sections 5.3 and 5.4).
3. Your request for a mentor/mentee is posted on the online mentoring program database.
4. You will either be matched with a mentor/mentee by the program coordinator or the mentoring committee.

Second Method of Application:

1. Visit the APEGBC online mentoring program database and review the postings for available mentor listings and mentee listings.
2. Apply to your desired mentor/mentee.
3. Your application is reviewed by the program coordinator, who will then contact the potential mentor to confirm that the mentor is still interested in participating in the program and meets the program requirements.
4. The program coordinator will then provide the mentee with the mentor's contact information.

Following either method of application; *it is the responsibility of the mentee* to make the initial contact with their assigned mentor.

After the first meeting, the program coordinator will contact the mentee and mentor to ensure that both parties are satisfied with the match.

Matches are encouraged to meet once every four to six weeks and are encouraged to keep track of their progress by keeping meeting minutes. APEGBC recommends that you meet a minimum of 4 times in the year. Meeting minutes are not required by APEGBC but they are recommended to track action items for future meetings. *A sample meeting agenda template and meeting minutes template is included in Appendix A.*

The mentoring relationship will officially come to an end once the mentee has achieved professional designation. Of course, matches may keep in contact outside of the program if desired.

5.4 Mentor/Mentee Meeting Structure

It is essential for each mentoring match to agree on a program structure. Both the mentor and mentee should jointly clarify:

- Where and how often they will meet.
- The length of time each meeting will be.
- If communication is best via email, Skype, phone, in person, or other methods

The relationship can be maintained in a number of ways including via videoconference, email, phone, in person – at work, away from work, etc. Any method that both participants agree will work for them is acceptable.

5.5 First Meeting

The mentee is responsible to prepare materials for the first meeting. In this meeting the pair will re-confirm the format for their mentoring relationship and begin to establish goals and objectives for the relationship.

At this meeting, the mentee should bring his or her goals and objectives that he or she would like to achieve from the match. *The mentee can bring a self-assessment form to the initial meeting. A sample self-assessment form is included in Appendix B.* Also, the mentee should be comfortable to reveal their personal strengths and weaknesses as this is an exercise in trust. It is helpful if the mentor is also willing to share some of their personal background, including career history and some of their own strengths and weaknesses.

By asking questions and actively listening, you can begin to identify goals and start working strategically in the direction of a learning plan. It is important that you think about the purpose of the meeting in advance of it taking place.

Questions to consider in advance of your first meeting may include:

- What should I know about you?
- What are your expectations of this mentoring relationship?
- What does career planning mean to you?
- What does mentoring mean to you?
- What are the success factors for maintaining a work life balance?

For long distance relationships:

- How do you plan on managing the difference in time zones and locations?
- How will you communicate taking into account these differences/challenges?
- What will be your primary way of communicating?

5.6 Developing Goals and Objectives

With help from the mentor, the mentee should set goals which can be broken down into specific objectives to be addressed in the mentoring relationship. These objectives will form the basis for the mentoring relationship. They should be both measurable and achievable, and should include target dates for completion, and interim steps, if necessary. The simpler the objectives are, the easier it will be to achieve progress towards the goals. *(Please refer to Appendix C for more details on how to set goals and objectives.)*

Appendix D provides a checklist on implementing the mentoring relationship and a document on planning your first meeting. Both mentors and mentees should keep accurate records of the relationship.

Always review notes of previous meetings before going to the next meeting to ensure completion of any action items.

5.7 Monitoring the Relationship

For the mentoring relationship to be successful progress should be tracked in relation to the established goals and objectives. After every meeting, the mentor and mentee are encouraged to complete a brief self-reflection exercise and consider:

Mentees

- What is going well?
- Progress on goals and objectives
- Potential areas for improvement

Mentors

- What is going well?
- Additional ways to contribute to the mentee's growth
- Potential areas for improvement

5.8 Potential Pitfalls

There are some common pitfalls to be aware of in every mentoring relationship. The first is that any relationship may need to be terminated due to factors beyond the control of the mentor or mentee, such as moving or being relocated. In this case, it is appropriate to inform both APEGBC and the mentoring partner. APEGBC can help coordinate finding new mentoring partners if required.

Mentees need to be respectful and considerate of the mentor's time and commitment. It is important to remember that mentors are volunteering their time.

Mentees

- Relying on the mentor to develop your career for you – a mentor is there to ask the right questions and guide the mentee to appropriate resources, but only the mentee can shape their own career.
- Expecting the mentor to give you all the answers – the mentor can show the mentee where to look, but answers come from the mentee, not the mentor.

- Asking your mentor to do your work for you – the mentor is a support for the mentee, not a crutch.
- Expecting immediate results – self-improvement and career development take time. Even with a mentor's support, changes will not occur overnight.
- Looking to the mentor for promotions or jobs –the mentor can guide and provide you access to networks and opportunities, but it's up to the mentee to find and secure advancements.
- Cancelling meetings at the last minute – respect your mentor's valuable time!

Mentors

- Lack of time
- Personal problems / over-stepping the relationship boundaries
- Unrealistic expectations
- Dependence / doing the mentee's work for them
- Mentor complaining about their problems

5.9 Program Conclusion

Once the mentee has obtained their professional designation, the formal relationship has concluded. However, the pair can also jointly agree to continue the relationship, if it has been productive, and both are willing.

6 APEGBC Mentoring Program Resources

Several resources have been developed and are available to both the mentor and mentee.

6.1 Mentoring Website

Interested EITs, GITs, applicants and other APEGBC members can go to the mentoring website (<http://www.apeg.bc.ca/services/mentoring.html>) to apply directly online to the mentoring program. The online database allows interested mentors to directly request a match with a mentee. A mentee can also apply directly for a mentor that they feel will be a suitable match.

In addition, the website includes frequently asked questions (FAQ) and contact information.

6.2 Mentor/Mentee Survey

To assess the overall program, a survey is sent on a yearly basis to all mentors and mentees. The purpose of the survey is to ensure matches are meeting and also to address any issues (e.g. matches that may not be working out, etc.). Feedback through this questionnaire will also help assess the program and make improvements as needed.

6.3 APEGBC Mentoring Events

Workshop -APEGBC may offer a yearly mentoring workshop based on interest to participants of the APEGBC mentoring program. The workshop will allow mentors and mentees to expand their knowledge in building relationships and maintaining effective communication. These sessions are also designed to build confidence, allow the mentor and mentee to develop and practice mentoring/coaching techniques and also enable program participants to benefit through sharing and learning from other's experiences.

Social Event - APEGBC may offer a yearly mix and mingle event to allow participants of the APEGBC mentoring program to learn from others in the program. The goal of this event is to allow participants to share learning experiences, network with their peers in the program, and for mentors and mentees to talk about their successes and challenges.

Appendix A – Meeting Agenda and Minutes

Preparing an agenda and keeping minutes for each meeting with your mentor or mentee is an effective method of tracking your progress, as well as confirming mutually agreed-upon goals and deadlines. Completing meeting minutes is not a requirement of the APEGBC mentoring program but it is strongly encouraged. Use the sample agenda and minutes below, and modify it to your own personal needs and experiences.

Mentee Name (include address/phone change if any):	
Mentor Name (include address/phone change if any):	
Venue:	
Date of Meeting:	

1. **Mentor's comments on previous minutes:**

2. **Work carried out by Mentee since previous meeting:**
 - a) Project Specific
 - b) Office Management/Administration
 - c) Engineering (not job related)
 - d) Field Work
 - e) Related to previous commitments
 - f) Information technology/data analysis

3. **Attend a technical session:**

Presented by:

Topic:

References/Related readings:

4. **Review of non-engineering/geoscience experience**
 - a) Drawing office
 - b) Workshop (trades/skills - application to design)
 - c) Purchasing/Contracts
 - d) Accounting
 - e) Sales and Marketing

- f) Personnel
- g) Management/Board of Directors - Company decision-making process
- h) Economic analysis
- i) Project management

5. **Four-Year Plan: *(can be adopted as a one, two, three or four year plan)***

Any changes required?

6. **Training:**

Training Required for: Present work load 4 Year Plan

- a) On the job
- b) Courses

Computer Training/Work:

7. **Work Relationships:**

Any problems of compatibility noted:

Advice/Guidance given:

8. **Other Business Discussed:**

9. **Report work experience to APEGBC via Work Experience Details or Online Tool for Competency Based Assessment**

Updated/filled out (Yes or No)?

10. **Actions for Mentor:**

Actions for Mentee:

Minutes accepted by:

Date:

Mentor

Mentee

Appendix B – Self Assessment Form: Mentee

Before entering into a mentoring relationship, it's a good idea to consider who you are, where you're going, what challenges you face, and where you'd like to be. Filling in this form will allow you to consider "the big picture".

Instructions:

This form is meant to give you an accurate assessment of yourself. Be honest, and write down the first thing that comes to mind.

What are my top three strengths as a person –the things I feel good about and am proud of?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What are the top three areas in which I could improve as a person –things I'd like to work on or ways I'd like to better myself?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What are the top three opportunities facing me right now–things I could do or act on to further myself?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What are the top three challenges facing me right now–threats or fears that keep me from achieving my dreams?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What are the three most important things I can do over the next year to build on my strengths and tackle my challenges?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Appendix C – Setting Goals and Objectives

Before your first meeting with a potential mentor, you need to be able to tell the prospective mentor what you want from him/her. If you know what your goals and objectives are, you will be able to explain what you want and need from a mentoring relationship. Knowing this will help you make decisions about whom to approach as a potential mentor, that is, the best person to help you meet your goals.

There is an old saying, “If you don’t know where you are going, any road will do.” Unfortunately, most of us have never been taught how to set goals or to develop personal mission statements.

Goals define the direction in which you are headed over the next several years. They are not short-term. It may take months or even years to reach them and they may not be clearly measurable. For example, you may be thinking about upgrading your education or have a goal of obtaining a master’s degree.

Objectives are smaller steps that you take to make progress towards your goals. To be useful, objectives must answer the questions what will change, by how much and when?

In order to create the kind of professional life you want, it helps to have a clear picture of where you are headed. It is equally important to make a plan on how to get there – how to accomplish your goals, one day at a time. By writing down goals and objectives for yourself, you are taking a step toward making them happen. The next step will be to take action – and keep a record. This is something you and your mentor can work on together over time.

Writing Goals: Here are some examples of goals a mentee might be interested in setting:

- Career – where do I want to be in my career in five years? Develop a career plan.
- Developing networks – Be an active participant with an APEGBC branch
- Personal – what goals do I have for my personal life? How do I achieve work/life balance?
- Education – where do I want to be in several years in terms of my education?

Example: A mentee might write: Three years from today, I will be:

- Finishing my Master’s degree
- Living on my own – not married
- Promoted to manager at company ABC
- Active in doing community service

Writing Objectives

Objectives are the smaller steps you take to make progress toward your goal. To be useful, objectives need to answer the question “what will change, by how much, by when?”

Usually objectives work best when they are written for the next few months to a year. It’s hard to know what will change beyond that timeframe, so it’s hard to set realistic objectives for longer periods.

The following page provides space for you to write down the goals and objectives that you would like to accomplish through the program. Any goal or objective that is written down has at least a 50 per cent greater chance to be achieved than something that just passes through your mind.

Keep this sheet of paper on hand. Look at it often and add to it as your understanding of yourself develops. Your goals and objectives may change on a daily basis, depending on the situation. If you keep track of the changes, you can see yourself grow.

Here’s a tip on how to test if your objectives are solid – ask yourself, are they “SMART?” SMART stands for:

“**S**”pecific – do I know precisely what has to happen?

“**M**”easurable – how will I know if I’ve achieved this objective?

“**A**”ttainable – is it realistic or do-able?

“**R**”esult-oriented – will it really move me toward my goal?

“**T**”ime-limited – does it have a due date?

If your goals are SMART, they’re solid – now it is time to begin looking for a mentor.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal:

Objectives:

- ---
- ---
- ---

Goal:

Objectives:

- ---
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Goal:

Objectives:

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Goal:

Objectives:

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Goal:

Objectives:

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Goal:

Objectives:

- ---
- ---
- ---

Appendix D – Implementing the Mentoring Relationship

1. Meet with your mentor by phone or in person at (time, date, location).
2. If possible, obtain more information about him or her prior to the meeting.
3. List goals and objectives for your development prior to the meeting.
4. Be ready to share with your mentor any feedback you received on your strengths and areas for improvement.
5. Be prepared to discuss the mentoring partnership in detail, including:
 - What you would like to receive in knowledge, skills, and resources
 - The roles each of you will carry out
 - Any limits (e.g., maximum time you have available) you must set for the partnership
 - Times to meet in person and by phone
 - The date of your next meeting
6. Make changes, as appropriate, in your development plan.
7. Continue to meet in person or on the phone with your mentor on a regular basis.
8. Follow through promptly on every commitment you make to your mentor. If you're delayed, let your mentor know the reason immediately.
9. Agree to contact and get assistance from individuals suggested by your mentor. Let him or her know how these interactions turn out.
10. Ask for constructive feedback on your ideas and performance.

PLANNING THE FIRST MEETING

Before you undertake anything significant in your life that's new, it is important to do some planning. This worksheet walks you through some steps to plan a first meeting with your mentor. Your mentor should be creating a similar worksheet; you may want to send your version of this worksheet to your mentor so you are both prepared for your first meeting.

Basic Background Information

My mentor's name is: _____

Nickname (if any): _____

Phone number(s): _____

E-mail address: _____

Best time to call: _____

Preparing for the First Meeting

Typically, first meetings allow two people to get to know a little bit about each other, attach a face to a name and gain a bit of comfort. To do so, you need to think about what setting would feel comfortable for both of you, and plan some conversation starters.

1. Where might I meet with my mentor where we both would feel comfortable? List a few ideas below.

2. What are some things I could tell my mentor about myself that would help us get to know each other a little bit? What about me and my life story might be interesting and relevant to this mentor?

3. What are some questions I could ask my mentor to get to know him/her a little bit without prying?
(Write some possible open-ended questions below. Note: you want to be sure that these are questions which cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no'.)

4. What do I want out of the mentoring relationship – what are my hopes?

5. How can I find out what my mentor hopes to get out of the relationship – what questions might I ask?

It is recommended that you look over your answers to this planning sheet shortly before your first meeting. You might even bring it along to offer it as a bit of a roadmap for you both to follow. Use your judgment – but remember to look your responses over before the meeting – this will make you more comfortable and relaxed.

You should have prepared a preliminary development plan to go over during the meeting. Be careful to listen to how your mentor responds to your preparation. Ask your mentor about the strengths or weaknesses of the plan. What do you need to work on? Can the mentor see opportunities for growth within your career?