

BEACON MENTORING PROGRAM

Guiding Principles

Member-to-Member | Peer-to-Peer

Purpose and Intent

The Beacon Mentoring Program exists to do what Beacon does best: connect experienced professionals in ways that create real, lasting value. These guiding principles define how mentors and mentees show up, work together, and hold themselves accountable — grounded in Beacon's culture of generosity, integrity, and forward thinking.

Mentoring is not a passive experience. Both the mentor and the mentee bring goals, energy, and accountability to every engagement. These principles set the standard for what that engagement looks like in practice.

Goals of the Program

The Beacon Mentoring Program is designed to achieve the following goals:

- Build a community of professionals who contribute to each other's development and career growth, creating lasting relationships that extend well beyond any single engagement.
- Develop the next generation of business and nonprofit leaders, demonstrated by members' individual career progress, measurable milestones, and meaningful skill growth.
- Support mentors and mentees in defining clear, specific goals for their engagement — and providing the structure, workshops, and accountability to achieve them.
- Grow Beacon membership by offering a compelling, high-value program that attracts and retains professionals committed to lifelong learning and intentional growth.
- Advance autonomous, 21st century professional skills — including data-informed decision-making, structured reflection, and purposeful goal-setting — across the Beacon community.
- Ensure every relationship has the best chance to succeed by providing a framework for meaningful mentoring that goes beyond informal networking, with defined roles, metrics, and program support.

The Beacon Mentoring Mindset

Every participant, mentor and mentee alike, commits to the following mindset as the foundation of their work together.

Goals

- Define what success looks like before you begin. Set measurable, specific goals for the engagement.

- Goals should reference the invisible capital of both the mentor and mentee; that is, the intangible, non-financial assets a person carries that shape their opportunities and success but don't appear on a balance sheet.¹
- Revisit and refine goals throughout. Circumstances change, and so should the plan.
- Hold yourself accountable to the goals you set and communicate openly when adjustments are needed.

Values

- Lead with generosity. Share your time, knowledge, and connections freely.
- Operate with integrity. Honor commitments, keep confidences, and communicate honestly.
- Embrace inclusivity. Respect diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and ways of working.
- Model lifelong learning. Approach every conversation as an opportunity for both parties to grow.

Beliefs and Biases to Examine

- Acknowledge that your past experience is a resource, not a rulebook. What worked before may not be the right answer now. And experiences are neither positive nor negative; all are valuable for learning.
- Challenge the assumption that mentoring flows in one direction. Mentoring is reciprocal: mentors learn from mentees and mentees teach mentors.
- Resist the urge to solve problems for your partner. The goal is to build their capacity to solve problems themselves.
- Recognize that progress is rarely linear. Setbacks are data, not failure.

Mode of Work

- Work autonomously and intentionally. Use data, reflection, and structured decision-making – not habit or assumption.
- Prepare for every session. Respect each other's time by arriving ready to engage.
- Follow through between meetings. Commitments made in a session are meant to be acted upon before the next one.
- Communicate proactively. If something is not working, say so early rather than letting it drift.

¹ Invisible capital encompasses three interrelated forms:

Human capital — the skills, training, education, and knowledge individuals accumulate over time.

Social capital — the networks, connections, and relationships that influence access to opportunities and resources.

Cultural capital — the societal norms, experiences, and background that confer power, credibility, or advantage in specific professional or entrepreneurial settings

Together, these "invisible" assets often determine outcomes as much as—or more than—financial capital, yet they're frequently unacknowledged because they're inherited, networked, or absorbed rather than explicitly earned or purchased.

Six Guiding Principles in Practice

These principles are drawn directly from Beacon's leadership culture and applied to the mentoring context. Each principle is paired with specific behaviors that bring it to life. Mentor/mentee pairs should reference these as they discuss their project.

Generosity of Spirit	<i>We freely give our time, knowledge, and connections to support one another's growth.</i> As a mentor, make yourself genuinely available, not just present. Share relevant contacts, resources, and opportunities without being asked. Celebrate the mentee's wins as your own. As a mentee, reciprocate by bringing energy, preparation, and gratitude to every session.
Meaningful Connection	<i>We engage authentically and build relationships that extend beyond the program.</i> Show up fully in every meeting – no multitasking, no half-presence. Be honest about your experiences, including struggles and uncertainties. Invest in understanding each other as whole people, not just professional roles. Use agreed-upon formats and schedules to build consistency and trust.
Lifelong Learning & Growth	<i>We take ownership of our development and support each other's learning at every stage.</i> Define a growth trajectory together, with measurable milestones. As the mentee, drive the agenda. As the mentor, provide the frame and the challenge. Reflect actively, using the Monitoring and Reflection sessions to assess what's working. Seek and offer feedback regularly, not just at formal check-ins.
Innovation & Forward Thinking	<i>We challenge the status quo and stay curious about new ways to solve old problems.</i> Both mentor and mentee: bring at least one new idea, tool, or perspective to each session. Encourage the mentee to explore options they might not have considered. Apply 21st century autonomous work practices: data-informed decisions, mind mapping, structured reflection. Treat every obstacle as a design problem worth solving creatively.
Inclusivity & Belonging	<i>We value diverse perspectives and ensure every member feels empowered in this community.</i> Match across industries, functions, and career stages when possible. Diversity of experience is a strength. Respect different communication and work styles without judgment. Surface and examine assumptions on both sides of the relationship. Mentor and mentee should feel safe asking questions that might seem basic. Treat every question as a sign of engagement, not a gap in knowledge. Make the other person feel their curiosity is valued rather than judged.
Integrity & Trust	<i>We communicate honestly, honor our commitments, and protect what is shared in confidence.</i> What is shared in a mentoring session stays in the mentoring relationship. If a commitment cannot be met, communicate before the deadline, not after. Be honest when the relationship is not

	working and use the re-matching process without stigma. Represent your experiences and expertise accurately from the start.
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Responsibilities

Both mentor and mentee commit to:

- Sharing relevant experience, perspective, and candid feedback, and receiving feedback openly and using it.
- Listening actively and asking questions that open thinking, not close it.
- Setting clear, specific goals and sharing them openly with each other.
- Coming to every session prepared with an agenda, questions, or work to review.
- Making and honoring commitments in meeting frequency, duration, and follow-through, and acting on commitments made between sessions and reporting back on results.
- Asking for help before problems escalate.
- Facilitating introductions and connections where appropriate and relevant.
- Maintaining confidentiality and ethical conduct at all times.
- Completing their profile accurately and participating in the matching process in good faith.

Program Structure Expectations

The Beacon Mentoring Program operates within a defined structure that supports, but does not restrict, the work of each mentoring pair. The following expectations apply to all participants:

Meetings

- Frequency, duration, and format (in-person or virtual) are agreed upon using the provided template at the start of the engagement.
- Sessions should have a clear agenda and defined next steps.
- Monitoring sessions are offered periodically to check progress and surface any adjustments needed.

Workshops

- Three workshop modules are available and recommended for all participants.
- Workshop #1 (Beacon and Mentoring) is strongly encouraged before or at the start of the engagement.
- Workshops can be completed sequentially or over the course of the engagement.

Metrics and Reflection

- Success is measured by defined metrics agreed upon at the start: career milestones, skill development, relationship quality, and member growth.
- A reflection session at the end of the engagement captures wins, challenges, and next steps.
- Short follow-up surveys support continuous program improvement.

Re-Matching

- If a mentoring relationship is not working, a re-matching process is available and no explanation required. However, volunteering candid feedback will be helpful to the Advocate in making future matches. The Advocate will keep this information confidential.
- The Advocate is available to support any transition with discretion and care.

A Note on Ethics and Impartiality

Putting the goals of the program into practice depends on holding the mentoring relationship to a clear ethical standard.

Beacon's Mentoring Program is guided by the principle that advice should serve the mentee's development, not the mentor's interests. Mentors do not use mentoring relationships to solicit business, recruit talent for their own organizations, or advance personal agendas.

All participants are expected to disclose any potential conflicts of interest to the Mentoring Advocate before or as soon as they arise. The Advocate is the program's steward and the first point of contact for any concerns about the integrity of a mentoring engagement.

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These principles are reviewed annually and updated in collaboration with the Beacon Board and Mentoring Advocate.