

# IIA Emerging Leaders Mentoring Program

Mentor Handbook



The Institute of  
**Internal Auditors**

***Program Mission:***

To provide guidance and mentoring to new professionals in the internal audit field.

***Program Objectives:***

To provide guidance to emerging leaders in developing their career goals and aspirations, to develop leadership skills and increase self-confidence, and to invest in the future of the profession.

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

*- John C. Crosby*

*Note to Mentors:*

*Congratulations! You've decided to become a mentor and shape the career of a future internal audit leader! Thank you for accepting this role – your contribution to the profession is greatly appreciated. A mentoring program yields significant benefits for the mentee, but there are also benefits for the mentor. Having a mentee can help you build your leadership skills, learn new perspectives and ways of thinking, develop your ability to motivate and encourage others, and gain personal satisfaction. Below are guidelines and best practices that you can use throughout your interaction to facilitate a successful relationship.*

## **Mentorship Guidelines**

### **What is Expected of Me in My Role as Mentor?**

- Help your mentee clarify and determine their career goals and aspirations and the experiences, activities, and skills necessary to pursue those opportunities.
- Help the mentee develop the skills needed to be successful in internal audit.
- Discuss and provide guidance on internal audit and related professional subjects of interest. • Make regular contact with your mentee and be available for meetings and communications.

### **Remember What it Was Like and Share Your Experiences**

A great way to begin is to think back to what it was like for you when you were first starting out in your career, and to share those experiences and all of the things you wish you had known. Sharing career experiences, information, and advice with your mentee can be both anxiety-reducing and educational. It can be just as valuable to reveal lessons learned from times you were unsuccessful as from times you prevailed.

### **Most Valuable Mentoring Skill: Communication**

Communication requires actively listening and asking questions to understand perspectives, questions, and concerns. Although most new professionals have some internal audit work experience, they are newer to the field overall and would appreciate the opportunity to ask open questions to obtain guidance and advice from experienced professionals.

As a mentor, you may need to ask powerful questions to encourage your mentee to talk about what is important to them, which can lead to valuable insights. Ask questions such as:

- What do you expect from this relationship?
- What are your professional goals and aspirations? What are your certification goals?
- What plans do you have in place to achieve these goals?
- How can I help?
- What is your working style? How should I approach you when offering my advice, assistance, or feedback?

- What skills do you feel you demonstrate well? What skills do you feel you can develop further?
- What is holding you back from more opportunities?

## First Steps

### Initial Communication

Mentees will be paired with mentors based on areas of interest, job levels, and industry types. After a match has been made, your mentee will be provided with your contact information and you will be provided with theirs. We will ask your mentee to initiate contact by sending you an email introduction. When you respond, please let your mentee know your communication preferences (phone, email, etc.) Monthly meetings are recommended for the ongoing program.

A virtual orientation session will be scheduled by The IIA prior to the start of the program to discuss structure, expectations, and any questions.

### First Meeting

During the first meeting, encourage your mentee to share their goals for the mentoring program and the discussions they would like to have. Set up a list of priorities for discussion for future meetings, including professional background, professional goals and aspirations, career growth, skills development, networking, preparing for the CIA exam (or other professional certifications), career hurdles and how to overcome them, current events in internal audit and the business world, etc. Also discuss the preferred meeting schedule for future meetings – frequency, days, times, etc. Depending on geographical location, in-person meetings should be considered when possible.

## Mentoring Best Practices

### Allow your Mentee to Openly Discuss Questions or Issues They Are Facing

While the mentoring program is designed to allow you to provide guidance and advice to your mentee, it's important to allow them to express their questions or experiences as well. This will build the mentee's trust and allow for your communications to be a two-way street.

### Discuss Some of the Key Issues You Routinely Face

Share common or recent issues you have faced, including the nature of office politics, resolving conflicts, communication concerns, evolving issues in the industry, the effects of the economy on the industry, getting management's buy-in on audit findings, etc.

### Utilize Video Conferencing

Video calls can make for more impactful and collaborative conversations, as participants can pick up on non-verbal cues. Mentees and mentors are encouraged to use video-enabled technologies to

facilitate face to face discussions where possible. Make sure your mentee is comfortable with this approach before initiating.

### **Encourage CIA or Other Professional Certifications or Designations**

Share any study tips. What worked for you? What didn't work? Mentees welcome any advice about preparing for professional exams.

### **Provide Networking Opportunities**

Help your mentee make contact with other professionals in their industry or field of interest. Other opportunities include industry-sponsored or professional association meetings or events. For example, encourage your mentee to regularly attend IIA local chapter events or identify different people within their organization.

### **Assist Your Mentee in Personal Development**

Help your Mentee understand the key skills and experiences needed for a career in internal audit and how to develop those skills, including identifying their strengths and areas for improvement.

### **Give Constructive Feedback and Follow Up**

Help your mentee work through specific questions or issues they are experiencing and provide constructive advice. Often, an objective view and feedback can help them sort through their specific issues, and come to the best conclusion and action steps. Follow up on actual actions taken and status changes to remain involved in your mentee's progress.

### **Other Ways to Help:**

- Open doors to other contacts and resources for your mentee based on their interests.
- Encourage your mentee and help build self-confidence by focusing on their talents and strengths while building on their weaknesses.
- Explain some of the "unwritten rules" you have learned about being successful in the organization.
- Don't be afraid to offer suggestions and feedback that caters to your mentee's career level and experience. Get to know your mentee's interests and look for ways to turn them into opportunities. If you notice a behavior or receive a communication from them that could or should be done differently, take advantage of the "teachable moment" and let them know what you think.
- Offer to tell your career story in some detail. How did you start your career? What changes did you make along the way? Include high and low points and how these learning experiences helped you.
- Critique your mentee's résumé. Provide specific suggestions for and examples of any changes you recommend.

- Help your mentee research several career paths they might consider.

### **Consider “Outside of the Box” Ideas**

In addition to periodic check-ins, consider engaging in other activities or interactions with your mentee, such as:

- Co-authoring an article for IA Magazine
- Taking the same online training
- Attending the same conference
- Reading a professional book or IIA article and discussing

### **Maintain and Respect Privacy, Honesty, and Integrity**

A primary benefit to your mentee is the opportunity to develop a relationship based on open, honest interaction with an experienced internal audit professional external to their organization. Your mentee might appreciate the chance to ask career-related questions that they might be afraid to ask someone at their own organization. Your ability to uphold the confidentiality of your discussions is key to building and maintaining a strong relationship.

### Contact Us

If you have any questions or concerns, please email [MentoringProgram@theiia.org](mailto:MentoringProgram@theiia.org).

***Thank you for taking the time to make a difference to an emerging professional and helping to advance the next generation in the internal audit profession!***

**“If you cannot see where you are going, ask someone who has been there before.”**

**-J. Loren Norris**