

**CWEA** MENTORING  
PROGRAM

# Mentoring Program Guide to Mentoring



# Mentoring Program Guide to Mentoring

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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*“A mentor is someone who allows you to see the hope inside yourself.”*

*– Oprah Winfrey*

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## WELCOME TO THE PROGRAM

Congratulations on taking that brave first step into something new and exciting - welcome to the CWEA Mentoring Program. We're glad you're here!

Both of us have benefitted from having mentors and have also enjoyed serving as mentors. We look forward to providing you with the information, support, and structure you need to develop a productive mentor-mentee partnership.

You're starting an exciting journey that can lead to long lasting, professional relationships. Studies of mentoring programs have shown the positive outcomes benefit both participants, as mentors say they also benefit from sharing their knowledge and building connections with professionals just starting their careers or moving into new roles.

Mentors provide guidance, support, and career direction by drawing upon their own life experiences. Mentees benefit from the expertise of seasoned professionals who can guide their future and be a sounding board. They assist with career development as well as provide life skills.

This Guide is your roadmap to helping make your journey a smooth one. It outlines how the program works, provides helpful exercises, and includes a Code of Conduct to help ensure a successful partnership.

Feel free to reach out to the Mentoring Program Coordinator or a CWEA Board member at any time if you have questions. We look forward to hearing about your experience. Have fun!

Sincerely,



**GILBERT BARELA**, CWEA President  
Mechanical Systems Superintendent  
Jurupa Community Services District



**JENN JONES**, CAE, IOM  
Executive Director/CEO  
CWEA

## DEFINITION OF MENTORING

Mentoring is a reciprocal and collaborative relationship that most often occurs between a senior and junior employee for the purpose of the mentee's growth, learning, and career development. A mentor is a friend, advocate, cheerleader, and confidant.

## PARTICIPATING IN THE MENTORING PROGRAM

A modicum of structure is necessary to ensure maximum protection for the program and its participants.

Mentors and mentees are matched based on similar interests and preferences. In some cases, specific requests may not be possible. However, it should be noted that research indicates random matches are just as successful as deliberate matches. Each person signs an agreement and liability release.

### Training is essential

The initial training is an opportunity to learn about the program's policies and procedures and the resources available to ensure successful matches. Training topics also include clarification of the difference between mentoring and coaching, roles and expectations of mentors and mentees, meeting focus suggestions, meeting time and location ideas, examples of how to communicate and engage with one another, possible activities, and staff resources available to the pairs.

In addition to reviewing the program components, the training will provide a first opportunity for new mentors and mentees to meet each other virtually.

This will provide a chance for the matches to learn a little about each other, why they decided to sign-up for the program, and expectations. The pair will also arrange the schedule for their next meeting and decide who will contact who.

### Mentees initiate meeting requests

The mentee should take the initiative to arrange the first meeting and determine the best schedule for at least two monthly meetings.

### Meeting locations

Meetings are left up to the discretion of the mentors and mentees. Options include in-person when feasible, via Zoom, Facetime, cell, text, and/or e-mail. Pairs can opt for in-person lunchtime, after work, or weekend meetings if feasible.

**If you're both attending a CWEA conference or Local Section meeting, either of you can ask CWEA staff for complimentary tickets or reimbursement. Email Alec Mackie on CWEA staff at [amackie@cwea.org](mailto:amackie@cwea.org).**

## Meeting frequency

**This mentoring group will run from April to April.**

CWEA asks mentors and mentees to meet **at least twice a month** for a minimum of one year. This will help maintain relationship consistency. Typically, meetings last an hour, but flexibility is the key.

One week, for example, as the mentor and mentee talk, their time together may be shorter depending on need and commitments. The amount of time is up to you.

## Program check-ins by CWEA

The CWEA mentoring coordinator will contact you to complete a **brief quarterly check-in** to find out how you are doing with the relationship and if you need assistance from the staff.

**If you have any challenges, they will be addressed promptly through the CWEA Mentoring Program Hotline at 510.382.7800 x114 or [mbarillo@cwea.org](mailto:mbarillo@cwea.org).**

Both staff and mentoring experts will assist you confidentially with any of your questions and concerns. This support from staff will help build a strong infrastructure and ensure the sustainability of the program. Never hesitate to lean on us.

## Program survey

At the six-month mark, a **brief mid-year evaluation** is emailed to participants. At the conclusion of the mentoring year, mentors and mentees will be asked to complete a **final post-satisfaction survey**.

## What if it doesn't work out?

Despite all efforts, there are those rare times when a match does not work out. Maybe it is chemistry or perhaps the workload of the mentor or mentee has changed, not allowing for the commitment to continue. It may be because one of the pair changes jobs, moves on, or has health issues.

Whatever the reason, we understand. When this is the case, the mentor and mentee should meet with the Mentoring Coordinator for a final time to discuss the current status, using this as an opportunity to discuss what was positive about the relationship, any challenges, and bring closure to the relationship. Mentors and mentees will have the option to reapply to work with another employee.

## Beyond the first year

It is common that once a high-trust relationship between a mentor and mentee is established, some pairs will want to continue beyond their first, formal year in the program.

This is encouraged, though not mandatory.

## QUALITIES & ROLES OF GOOD MENTORS AND MENTEES

You have been selected to be a mentor or mentee in the CWEA Mentoring Program because you possess the qualities necessary to find success through the experience. What does it take to be a good mentor or mentee? This brief list may help with reasons you were chosen.

### ROLE OF A MENTOR

- Present and demonstrates respect
- Committed and makes the time for mentoring
- Ready to help out
- Consistent and confidential
- Excellent work ethic
- Patient, flexible, and open
- Responsible
- Positive role model
- Genuine interest in developing others
- Sensitivity to others' needs and development
- Excellent listening skills
- Non-judgmental
- Accepts different points of view
- Confidential in all personal matters
- Assumes role of advocate for mentee
- Positive, reliable, and accepting
- Sense of humor

### ROLE OF A MENTEE

- Shows up to appointments on time
- Has drive and is motivated
- Receptive to feedback
- Actively seeks opportunities for continuous learning
- Learns from mistakes
- Consistent
- Reliable
- Appreciative
- Interested in personal growth and development
- Willing to take risks
- Self-reflective
- Confidential in all personal matters
- Accepts constructive criticism
- Non-judgmental
- Accepts responsibility

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*“The delicate balance of mentoring someone is not creating them in your own image but giving them the opportunity to create themselves.”*

*– Steven Spielberg*

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## CONFIDENTIALITY

During the time that mentors and mentees work together, strong relationships often develop a level of trust that results in the sharing of personal information. When that is the case, keep in mind that both mentors and mentees in the CWEA Mentoring Program are asked to **respect one another’s privacy.**

If one of you has a serious concern about the health, mental health, workplace treatment, or safety for your partner, please contact CWEA’s Mentoring Coordinator. More information can be found in the Code of Conduct section.

## COACHING VS MENTORING

Many potential mentors and mentees ask about the difference between mentoring and coaching. Please keep in mind that there is often some overlap, but the basic goal and outcomes of coaching versus mentoring are quite different. Mentoring is never involved in the improvement and evaluation of a mentee’s job performance.

	COACHING	MENTORING
<b>GOALS</b>	Improve job performance or skills	Support and guide personal career growth
<b>INITIATIVE</b>	Coach directs learning	Mentee is in charge of learning
<b>VOLUNTEERISM</b>	Mentee agrees to accept coaching; may not be voluntary	Both mentor and mentee are volunteers
<b>FOCUS</b>	Immediate problems & learning opportunities	Longer term personal development
<b>ROLE</b>	Focus on telling with appropriate feedback	Focus on listening, behavioral role model, making suggestions and connections
<b>DURATION</b>	Short term needs; “as needed”	Longer term; minimum one year

*(Source: Dr. Susan G. Weinberger, President, Mentor Consulting Group for Business & Legal Reports)*



## OPTIONAL EXERCISES

These exercises are optional. You may find it more important to start your conversation with **topics and questions that are important to you.**

### 1) GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER: WHAT WILL WE TALK ABOUT?

Discussion between a mentor and mentee is left up to your discretion. Here are some questions that may help in getting to know each other and make your time together meaningful.

1. Why I signed up to be part of the CWEA Mentoring Program.
2. What I hope to get out of our time together.
3. Any prior experiences as a mentor or mentee. Share some details.
4. Current area of practice of the mentor and mentee.
5. How long at your present job.
6. Past positions at your company and prior jobs.
7. Where did you grow up?
8. Educational experiences.
9. Why did you choose your current career?
10. Challenges currently being faced by the mentee.
11. How can the mentor help the mentee?
12. Where does the mentee want to be in 5, 10, or 20 years?
13. How the mentor can help to reach these milestones.
14. The Mentoring Program focuses on career exploration. How can the mentor open doors for the mentee?

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

*— Dr. Susan G. Weinberger*

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## 2) REFLECTION

Optional for your second or third meeting.

Below is a thoughtful and fun exercise. Mentors can ask mentees to take the time to reflect and state their greatest achievements.

The mentee can think of all the things they are proud of. It is okay to boast. The mentee can go as far back as possible. Maybe that means even during high school, college, the first job you had, or the job you have now. These do not have to be work-related. Discuss these together.

### MENTEE'S GREATEST ACHIEVEMENTS

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### MENTEE'S AREAS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO IMPROVE - CHALLENGES

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## 3) SETTING GOALS

Some mentors and mentees may never talk about setting goals for the future. Yet we all have to set goals in our personal and professional life. The pair may decide based on discussions that setting a short- or long-term goal and monitoring its progress toward completion would be helpful for the mentee. When that is the case, the mentor can help. Below are some tips. Remember that a mentee's goals must always be their own, not the mentor's goal.

Why do mentees need to set goals in the first place? It is a chance for everyone to:

- Choose where you want to go.
- Decide what you want to achieve.
- Know where to concentrate your efforts.
- Build self-confidence which grows faster when you set and achieve goals.

## What are S.M.A.R.T. goals?

- **Specific** - Being clear about your goals and expectations is the first step to reaching them.
- **Measurable** - If you cannot measure something, you can't tell if you're performing well or if you are off track and need to course-correct.
- **Achievable** - It is important to look at your end objectives and design goals that are within realistic capabilities.
- **Realistic** (and relevant) - Goals are useful only when they can actually be achieved.
- **Time-bound** - Goals need start and end points, as well as benchmarks.

When setting goals, draw up a contract and assess your progress and pitfalls frequently. Chart the results. Reassess or reaffirm the value of the goals you have set. Remember that a mentee's goals must be their own. Mentors can work with mentees to break down larger goals into smaller, realizable ones.

## Goal Setting Exercise

**Mentee's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mentee's Goal:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Category in which my goal falls:**

Personal                       Career                       Academic                       Other

**I want to achieve this goal because:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Currently, my strengths, weaknesses and opportunities related to this goal are:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**What could prevent me from reaching the goal? (Obstacles, risks)**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Any sacrifices involved? (Time, money, changes)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional information and skills I will need to acquire?**

\_\_\_\_\_

Who I will need help from to achieve the goal (my support team) \_\_\_\_\_

**MY PLAN**

I will carry out these activities to reach my goal:

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My deadline for achieving this goal is:      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Date this plan is made: \_\_\_\_\_      Date to review this plan: \_\_\_\_\_

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*“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said,  
people will forget what you did,  
but people will never forget how you made them feel.”*

*– Maya Angelo*

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## CWEA MENTORING PROGRAM CODE OF CONDUCT

The successful operation and sustainability of the CWEA Mentoring Program is built upon principles of ethical conduct on the part of volunteer mentors, mentees, program staff, and board members. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires the highest standards of professional conduct and personal integrity.

The success of this program depends upon stakeholder's trust. We are dedicated to preserving that trust. We owe a duty to all our CWEA members and stakeholders to act in a way deserving of public confidence.

For these reasons, all CWEA mentors and mentees agree to comply with applicable laws and regulations and conduct the mentoring relationship in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of program guidelines and relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct. Additional CWEA policies to be aware of include our [Sexual Harassment policy](#) (93-01); and [Code of Conduct guidance document](#) (98-01).

In general, good use of judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide you with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. **If a situation arises, the matter should be discussed openly with the Mentoring Program Coordinator as soon as possible.**

The intention of this Code of Conduct is to highlight ways of working that will impact the mentoring relationship in positive ways and help guide your decision-making in ways that protect you and fellow CWEA members.

### Acting Responsibly

While the onus for a positive, productive, and meaningful mentoring relationship is shared by both mentor and mentee, the mentor sets the tone, particularly at the outset of the relationship. It is up to the mentor to understand that your behavior, ways of working and talking, and your level of engagement are incredibly important. The scrutiny that comes with being a mentor has the potential to affect your mentoring relationship and CWEA. A part of what is meant by 'acting responsibly' is maintaining an openness to feedback and a willingness to adjust and adapt your mentoring style to best suit the needs of your mentee.

As a mentee you determine the relationship priorities, particularly at the outset of the relationship. It is up to you to understand that your needs, ways of working and talking, and your level of engagement are incredibly important.

### Maintaining Confidentiality

It is highly likely that during your mentoring relationship you will hear and/or share sensitive and personal information.

We ask that both the mentor and the mentee agree to maintain and respect the confidentiality of all the information discussed during the mentoring relationship. This applies to both parties at all times (even when you are not specifically on CWEA time).

The only exceptions are when the sharing of this information is specifically authorized by the mentor and the mentee. Of course, if such information represents danger or illegality, it is appropriate for the mentor to encourage the mentee to take appropriate action.

## Setting Boundaries

It is typical that those engaged in mentoring may develop a friendship. It is up to you as a mentor or mentee to ensure that this relationship always aligns with the priorities of the CWEA Mentoring Program and that you do not allow personal feelings (positive or negative) to influence your professionalism.

It is important to remain mindful at all times of the role of a CWEA mentor and mentee as has been defined and articulated in this Guide to Mentoring.

## Acting Competently

Mentors and mentees need to be conscious of your own level of mentoring competence and know when you might be getting in over your head and need some help. CWEA has built in channels for you to reach out when you need advice. We encourage you to reflect on each interaction between you and your mentee, even taking a few minutes to document or journal about your experiences.

It can be helpful to outline a few next steps you could take to deepen the relationship with your mentor/mentee between sessions. Take some time to think about your goals for future conversations.

Please be aware that we want your conversations to remain firmly in the realm of mentoring (forward-looking and solution-oriented). If you feel your conversations are focusing too much on issues firmly rooted in past problems, this might be a sign for mentors that your mentee may need additional support, for example, by approaching their supervisor, the organization's human resources department, or other company/personal resources.

## Connecting Consistently

CWEA has minimum expectations when it comes to how often and for how long you meet; as well as what channels of communication you can use to connect.

With so much flexibility, it is even more important that the two of you get on the same page as to how you will manage your special relationship. Both mentor and mentee should know clearly what to expect.

## Recognizing Bias

Mentors and mentees must recognize that bias, preconceived ideas, initial impressions, personal opinions, and stereotypes can influence the ability to pay full attention and be fully present and focused on your relationship.

The CWEA Mentoring Program asks that you maintain a level of self-awareness that signals to you when bias may be affecting a relationship. If this becomes a challenge, we encourage you to speak with the Mentoring Program Coordinator.

At the end of the day, the most important goal is for both mentor and mentee to have an overwhelmingly positive experience.

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*“It’s not what we have in life  
but who we have in our life that counts.”*

*– J.M. Laurence*

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## Mentoring Hotline

Who to contact if you have a question or concern:

**Megan Barillo**

Mentoring Program Coordinator

510.382.7800 x114

[mbarillo@cwea.org](mailto:mbarillo@cwea.org)

### DISCLOSURES

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