

## Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) – Mentoring Initiative

### Tips for Beginning Your Mentoring Journey

#### Before Your First Meeting: Setting the Stage

Getting started on the right foot is key to a successful mentorship. Here are some steps to take before your first meeting:

1. **Get Acquainted with Our Guidelines:** Familiarize yourself with the CES Mentoring Initiative's code of conduct. It's like the roadmap for respectful and productive mentor-mentee interactions.
2. **Know Yourself:** Have your CV ready and pinpoint your expertise, skills, and areas you'd like to grow in.
3. **Plot Your Course:** Figure out what you hope to gain from this mentorship – your learning objectives. This way, you'll have a clear direction.
4. **Curiosity is Key:** Prepare a list of questions for your mentor. Think about what you want to ask and discuss during your meetings.
5. **Why This Mentor?** Craft your first email to them with care. Introduce yourself, share why you're reaching out, express your interest in being mentored, and ask if they're available and willing to guide you.

#### Your First Email: Let's Make a Connection

When composing your first email to your potential mentor, consider these points:

1. **Intro Time:** Share a bit about yourself – your background, education, and what lights your professional fire.
2. **The "Why":** Let them know why you're reaching out – what about their expertise or experiences resonated with you?
3. **Express Your Interest:** Show that you're excited about being mentored and ask if they're open to the idea.
4. **Plan a Date:** Suggest a few meeting dates or ask for their availability in the coming weeks.
5. **Where and How:** If meeting in person, propose a professional spot for your meet-up. If virtual, discuss your preferred video conferencing platform.

Remember, this is your opportunity to start building a connection, so keep it genuine and friendly. And don't forget to say thanks and provide your contact info!

## First Meeting: Let's Dive In

Your first meeting is all about laying the foundation. Here's what you could cover:

1. **Expectations:** Chat about what you both expect from the mentorship. It's like setting the rules of the game.
2. **Keeping It Confidential:** Discuss confidentiality – what can be shared, and what's off-limits.
3. **Boundaries:** Talk about what topics you want to avoid – like steering clear of certain problems.
4. **Stay Connected:** Decide on the frequency and methods of communication that work best for both of you.
5. **Matching Up:** Ensure your mentor aligns with your mentoring needs. If not, no worries – explore other resources.
6. **What's Success?** Define what a successful mentorship looks like for both of you. It's like a roadmap to achievement.

## As You Progress: The Adventure Continues

As your mentorship unfolds, here's what to consider:

- **Set Goals:** Draft initial goals for your mentorship and review them with your mentor. These could reflect your career dreams and how you see your journey evolving.
- **Meeting Magic:** Think about topics to discuss in your upcoming meetings – it could be your key learning points or topics you want to dive into.
- **Formalize It:** If you both feel it's right, explore a formal mentoring agreement and learning plan. It's like your partnership playbook.
- **Learning Pathways:** Plan learning activities that'll help you achieve your objectives. Your mentor can guide you through the best routes.
- **Align and Realign:** Get your mentor's input on your goals and objectives – make sure you're on the same page.
- **Unlock Resources:** Ask your mentor about resources, people, or opportunities that can propel you towards your goals.
- **Time Travel:** Discuss timelines to achieve your goals – set realistic milestones.