



DALLAS/FORT WORTH CHAPTER

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL

MPI D/FW Mentor Program in Honor of Fred H. Knieberg Mentee/Mentor Guidebook



OVERVIEW

Background

Fred H. Knieberg, CMP had the original idea to create a Mentor Program for the MPI D/FW Chapter. Knieberg dedicated the last few years of his life to creating a successful program designed to provide growth for experienced professionals within the chapter in the development of other members. To honor his work, the chapter created the MPI D/FW Mentorship Program (the Program), founded on the idea that finding good mentors in the meetings & events industry should not happen by accident, but on purpose.

Purpose

The Program matches individuals new to the industry with seasoned volunteer professionals so that they may share information, knowledge, and ideas in an open and non-threatening environment. The goal of the Program is to match learners with teachers to foster the reciprocal flow of information and advance the meetings & events profession.

MPI D/FW Chapter Mentor Information

Program information is available at <https://www.mpidfw.org/engage/mentor-cafe/> or by emailing Director of Leadership at dirleadership@mpidfw.org

What is a Mentor?

The dictionary defines a “mentor” as “an experienced and trusted advisor.” The Program defines this as experienced industry professionals who are active in their profession and who have a desire to share their experience and knowledge to help contribute to the success of future leaders. Mentors can be planners or suppliers, so long as they have a depth of knowledge and experience that would be valuable to someone new to the profession.

Mentor supports the mentee in meeting his or her goals through questioning, providing guidance and feedback, sharing his or her own experiences, and possibly connecting the mentee with other individuals or groups who could help. As a mentor you are able to contribute in several ways offering:

- Goal Setting: Mentors help protégés discover talents and interests and define and attain their goals.
- Information: Mentors share their knowledge, experiences, and wisdom.

- **Contacts:** Mentors provide valuable opportunities by facilitating career, and personal contacts.
- **Ideas:** Mentors stimulate curiosity and build confidence by presenting new ideas, opportunities, and challenges.
- **Support:** Mentors encourage growth and achievement by providing an open and supportive environment.
- **Advice:** Mentors guide protégés in reaching academic, career, and personal goals.
- **Role Models:** By sharing stories of achievement with protégés, mentors can become role models

Mentor Requirements: three years of supervisory experience in the hospitality industry preferred, willingness to provide time and guidance for a Mentee, complete MPI D/FW Mentor Profile Form online

What is a Mentee?

Mentees are often individuals fairly early in their career, and they can also be career-changers. Anyone who is new to the profession and who has a desire to learn one-on-one from someone with a different level of experience, or even a different perspective, can be a mentee

Mentee Requirements: member of MPI D/FW Chapter, willingness to provide time and accept guidance, complete MPI D/FW Mentee Profile Form online

Coaching vs. Mentoring

“Coaching is used when there is a well-defined goal that is based on improving skills or performance.”

Mentoring is used for career planning, general guidance, setting and achieving goals or helping with problem solving.

Mentoring and Career Development

The Program provides an opportunity for mentees to explore different facets of the meetings & events industry, including career paths which they may not be aware even exist. Not everyone has to be a planner or supplier. There are now career opportunities, and even college courses and degrees designed around, event production, experiential design, event technologies such as app development and learning management systems – all of which did not exist just a few years ago. It is also an opportunity for mentors to sharpen their skills, reframe their thinking from new and different perspectives, and reinfuse themselves with energy for their chosen profession which may have faded or grown stagnate.

Putting It All Together – How the Program Works

Mentors and mentees are recruited from the chapter membership base. The Mentorship Committee chairs pairs applicants based on common interests or preferences. The goal is to garner enough participation to create 20-25 mentor-mentee pairings. Pairs are encouraged to meet at least monthly, and are invited to participate in the “Mentorship Café”, an in-person meeting often featuring a speaker or facilitator, held in conjunction with the chapter’s recurring luncheon event.

The mentee drives the relationship. It is up to the mentee to maintain contact with their mentor, communicate their goals and set expectations. The mentor is expected to be as open and available possible in order to help the mentee achieve their goals. At the end of the annual term (May/June), program participants are invited to a celebratory event to commemorate their “graduation” from the program.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The mentoring relationship is based on trust and communications between the mentee and mentor must be kept confidential.

BENEFITS

Mentoring is primarily a relationship, not a process. At the heart of mentoring is the ability to create in another person an insight that causes the individual to view the world in a different way.

Benefits to the Mentee include: real-world insight, exposure to new ideas, perspectives, learning experiences, and resources, and networking opportunities.

Benefits to the Mentor include: the gratification of passing on a legacy to another generation, exposure to new ideas and perspectives, and improvement of leadership and coaching skills.

PROGRAM PROCESS

Recruitment and Enrollment for the Mentoring Program

Mentoring program is free of charge for the MPI D/FW members. Members get information in chapter meetings and as part of chapter newsletters in July and in December with instructions for signing up by filling out mentor/mentee application on chapter website. The Mentee/Mentor deadlines are August 15 and January 15 (mid-year).

Matching Mentees to Mentors

Mentoring program is governed by MPI D/FW Chapter Leadership Committee. The Director and Co-Chairs create the matches based on information in the applications. Mentor pairs are notified via email of the matches.

Mentor Café

The Mentor Cafe is held between 11:00-11:45 am prior to the MPI D/FW Chapter's Monthly Experience that include an educational program. These informal gatherings of 4-20 new and experienced people include various discussion topics in relaxed atmosphere.

Duration of Mentor-Mentee Commitment

Mentees are paired for a time period of their own discretion with an industry professional, typically for 9 month period. The amount of time spent and type of development activities pursued are flexible and dependent on the needs and schedules of both the mentee and mentor as mutually agreed upon.

Frequency of Contact

Frequency of interaction is solely dependent on the mentor pair. As a general guideline the frequency depends on time availability and how much and how quickly the mentee wants to reach the set goals. The key to success is to plan a regular meeting each time of the month. The amount of time spent and type of development activities pursued are flexible and dependent on the needs and schedules of both.

Ways to keep in contact

The mentor pair should establish together how they prefer to use to keep in contact: in-person, phone, email, web conferencing or social media.

Electronic guidelines

- Be respectful of communication/personality styles. Discuss and determine the guidelines for communication during the mentoring relationship.
- Avoid covering several topics in one message. Instead, while keeping frequency of emails in mind, send several messages so the receiver can respond to each topic separately.
- Use mixed upper- and lower-case letters. Avoid using control characters or special keys.
- Begin the text of your message with the real name of the person to whom you're writing, and end the text with your real name.
- Include all or parts of a mail message to which you are replying.
- Do not use words others might find offensive, and avoid personal attacks or name calling.
- Do not participate in conversations that are not appropriate
- Do not engage in conversations that you are not comfortable with. Immediately report offensive or troubling electronic mail messages that you receive to [name and email address].
- Remember that an electronic mail message is easy to forward to others and, therefore, is not appropriate for very personal messages.
- Make sure to spell check your email
- Review your email before you send it

GETTING STARTED

The mentor should take the initiative to make the initial contact with the mentee as soon as the match is made. After the initial meeting Mentee is responsible for moving the relationship forward.

First Meeting – Plan This First Impression Well:

- MPI D/FW Mentor Committee will facilitate the introduction via email
- Pick a convenient a relaxed atmosphere location quiet enough to talk and without interruptions
- Plan on meeting for one full hour
- Introduce yourself and get to know each other
- Dress in business attire
- Bring business cards

Suggested Discussion Items for First Meeting:

- Share personal backgrounds, look for similar experiences

- Discuss professional backgrounds
- Compare and contrast what each person hopes to get out of the Mentor/Mentee relationship
- Explore how each person can contribute to the relationship
- Where do you see yourself in 3 years, in 5 years?

Set mutually agreed upon SMART goals:

SMART goal setting not only helps to define your goal, it helps you to focus on each individual step so that you can drive forward without the immensity of staring at the end goal without a roadmap.

- **Specific:** A goal that is designed to achieve a specific objective.
- **Measurable:** The way to quantify the progress toward your goal.
- **Attainable:** This goal is achievable by yourselves and doesn't depend on anyone else.
- **Relevant:** This goal reflects the values of your life.
- **Time:** This is the amount of time it will take to achieve your goal – create a timeline.

Suggested Activities for Mentor-Mentee Pairs

- Plan activities to enhance your goals.
- Attend industry events, education, etc. together and learn on location.
- Attend Mentor/Mentee Pairs functions developed by the MPI D/FW Mentor committee
- Have an online/email/phone relationship
- Visit to Mentor's business location or meeting/event they are working on.
- Develop a shadowing opportunity for Mentee to follow Mentor for 3-4 hours.
- Setup meetings where Mentee and meet other managers, colleagues or partners to widen their contacts.

If Things are Not Going Well - Dealing with a Mentee-Mentor Mismatch

In rare occasions the mentoring relationship does not work out. The causes for this can be a result of bad fit, a mentor or mentee who does not actively participate in the relationship, or communication issues. In the event this happens, the best way to approach it is to first address the issue with the mentor/mentee. If this does not rectify the problem, contact Mentor Committee contact.

At the end of the year (or nine-month period)

At the end of the year or nine-month mentoring period, the mentor and mentee will be asked to complete a survey evaluating their experience with the mentoring program. After this point, the mentoring relationship can

continue informally, when both parties agree. However, after this point, the mentoring relationship is no longer under the formal program and its guidelines.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

During the months of December and June, a program evaluation will be sent to all Mentors and Mentees to obtain valuable information. The feedback provided will allow the Mentor program chairs to make improvements to the program and to “check-in” and address any concerns with the pairings. Feedback can be anonymous or the individuals have the option of providing their name on the survey.

RECOGNITION

Mentor and Mentees are eligible for several awards during the term. Recipients of the MPI D/FW “Spirit Award” are nominated by the board of directors and awarded to individuals who embrace all aspects of MPI including volunteerism, positive attitude and a giving spirit. Mentors are eligible for the “Fred H. Kneiberg Mentor of the Year” program awarded at the Gala in June as selected by the Gala awards committee based upon submission of feedback of accomplishments by the Mentor. Other awards not limited to the Mentor Program include “Rising Star”, “Supplier of the Year” and “Planner of the Year”.

FORMS

As part of this Playbook, we have included an example of the application used to participate in the Mentor program. The application process opens in July. Additionally, evaluations are sent to all members of the Mentor program in December and June and we have included an example of the evaluation survey.

TESTIMONIALS

We are pleased to provide testimonials from our chapter members summarizing what the Mentor program has meant to them:

“Gaining a champion: Early in my career mentorship relationships were important as I was figuring out how to navigate the work place and how to deal with various business situations. I sometimes even consulted with my mentor when taking on a new project.

To my surprise now in mid-career it helps having a champion in my corner to be able to look at situations in a new way. MPI formal mentorship program connected me with a meetings industry expert and I gained the benefit of her perspective and experience. She helped me to assimilate to my new position and gave me an insider’s view. Joining the MPI mentoring program has truly enhanced my MPI experience as well.

I am also grateful for the many “unofficial” mentor relationships as many MPI members are there when I need them. I know that at some point I will be able to pay it forward and help someone else in the areas where I have more experience.” – **Tuula Westlake, Mentor**

“As a mentee I am given the opportunity to once a month reach into the mind and experiences of my mentor. As I was new in my role and in the city my mentor enriched me in her knowledge of balance, and when the time came, shared ways I can shine for my new boss. My mentor also pushed me to think on the things I could obtain in my current role and how to approach conflict within the workplace. I am grateful for this opportunity!” – **Abigail Montanez, Mentee**

“When I started this program I really did not know if I would have time. I changed jobs and things became more demanding. One thing stayed the same. CASSIE... Her warmth and genuine interest to make this industry better is a breath of fresh air. We try and meet once a month and I look forward to these meetings to catch up on her travels and her journey. She give me the strength and renewed energy after being in this industry for over 20 years, something I thought I had lost. I not only love having her as my mentee; but I enjoy more calling her a true friend. We will continue our friendship and mentorship well past this year, for I am excited to see where she goes from here. This program brings people together that can grow, learn and mentor each other. This is not a one way street at all. I have learned so much from Cassie without her even realizing it.” – **Angela Roberts, Mentor**

“My mentor, Angela Roberts, is absolutely amazing and her passion for what she does and who she works with is evident in everything she does. Every time we meet, I feel re-energized! She takes a genuine interest in everything I am doing and it is through her leadership and advice that I have gained more confidence. As a result, I have taken on more roles within my company but also the chapter by accepting to co-chair the 40th Anniversary Gala. The meeting industry can feel extremely BIG and its nice when you know you have someone that is looking out for you and helping nurture you along the way. Beyond being my mentor, I consider her a true friend. I am very lucky to have been paired with her and I know our relationship will continue well beyond the mentor program.” – **Cassie Poss, Mentee**

“Being part of MPI/DFW’s Mentor/Mentee program has been an extremely rewarding experience. As a mentor, I have been honored to be able to exchange thoughts and collaborate with my mentee. We’ve talked about everything from meeting planning, to our individual industries, to our families. I have been able to provide guidance when she has needed it. I have also learned much from her. This experience has given me the opportunity to pay it forward. I’ve had great mentors before; and now that I serve as a mentor, I appreciate even more the time and assistance others have provided me. I’m grateful for the opportunity to give back and impact someone else in return.” – **Corina Balsells, CMP, CMM, Mentor**