



BLOCH

MENTORING PROGRAM

MENTEE HANDBOOK

UMKC

BLOCH

Career Center

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Bloch Mentoring Program is designed to bring together students and professionals that share common professional interests. This mentoring relationship will enable business students to be better supported as they explore varied career opportunities and assist them as they navigate those early years of professional life. Overall, an effective mentorship can provide career assistance to mentees by enhancing a sense of professional competence and career identity.

TIMELINE

Before submitting information about their career interests through our online mentoring community, every student mentee is encouraged to meet with the program coordinator for a brief orientation session. The program coordinator will send formal email introductions to each pair, and provide conversation starters, guidelines and topics throughout the mentoring process. Each pair will be matched up for four months, and matching rounds are at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters.

After the mentoring relationship, the program coordinator will conduct follow-up emails and send online evaluation surveys to program participants. The results of the evaluation survey will be used to assess and improve the mentoring program. We welcome any feedback and comments regarding the program.

ELIGIBILITY

This program is open to any student currently enrolled at the Henry W. Bloch School of Management at UMKC. E-mentoring over email, phone, the Roo Network, video chat, text message, or social media is very common, and welcomed!

BENEFITS OF MENTORING

The benefits for a student involved in a mentoring relationship can often be immeasurable. The opportunity to gain professional insights via a formal and organized structure is valuable, but students may also be surprised to learn of the potential for personal development as well. Strong mentoring relationships can offer many benefits and below is a list of just a few of the ways mentors can impact a student. **Research has found that mentoring relationships can be significant factors in positive career development and satisfaction**, and are key to exploring career opportunities.

- Benefit from their knowledge, experiences, and wisdom
- Access their valuable academic, career, and personal contacts
- Develop curiosity and confidence by being presented with new ideas, opportunities, and challenges
- Grow and achieve by being offered an open and supportive environment
- Explore talents and interests that will assist with reaching academic, career, and personal goals
- Gain a role model that is committed your development
- Acquire organizational knowledge of your mentor's employer, associated companies, and industry



COMMUNICATION

It is the responsibility of the mentee to initiate the conversation and reach out to the mentor after the first introduction email from the Program Coordinator. We encourage mentors and mentees to develop a communication strategy that best fits the relationship.

This being said, we expect that students and mentors **will be in touch at least every 3-4 weeks** via email, phone, video chat or meeting in-person. We encourage you to find what communication method is most appropriate for your situation and go with it!

No matter the method, know that you might not get immediate responses all of the time, but that you should reply as quickly as possible. As this is a professional relationship, professional communication regarding topics and language is expected.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

- **Mentoring is a two-way street**; your mentor may look to you to learn more about what is happening currently at UMKC or to learn about new industry information you may be learning in your coursework. Know that you can often teach them as much as they teach you.
- Understand that your mentor's time is valuable (and so is yours!)
- Be sure to thank your mentor for his/her time and effort; mentors are volunteers!



MENTEE EXPECTATIONS

DO:

- Be committed to the mentoring relationship
- Be prepared—look up your mentor on LinkedIn and know their background, industry, and company
- Have an agenda—consider your goals and what you would like to learn before meeting your mentor
- Ask thoughtful questions and reflect on feedback and answers.
- Accept feedback and learn from it!!
- Communicate openly with your mentor
- Be open-minded to opportunities, new experiences and different ideas
- Show professionalism!
- Be respectful of your mentor's time and generosity
- Be careful of having unrealistic expectations (such as acquiring work experience, job offer, etc.)
- Contact the Program Coordinator if you have any questions about mentoring, networking, or getting in contact with your mentor. If you have ANY concerns about your mentor, contact the Program Coordinator.

DON'T:

- ***Neglect agreed commitments without explanation. If you are unable to make a meeting, let your mentor know and suggest a new time to meet!***
- Hesitate to contact your mentor if you have not heard from him/her for a while! Everyone gets busy and it's very okay to follow up!
- Expect your mentor to identify your goals for you
- Ask for a job from your mentor or other business contacts
- Share mentor contact information without their permission

SETTING GOALS

Before meeting with your mentor, it is important to do some self-reflection and prepare in order to make the most out of your time with your mentor.

This can be easy to do by asking yourself a few simple questions:

- What are my goals and what do I hope to learn from my mentor? (Be sure to make your goals SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, & Timely)
- What are my short term or long term career plans? (It's okay if you don't have any!)
- What are my interests and hobbies?
- How would I like to step outside my comfort zone? Are there areas in which I could grow?
- What are my strengths?
- What does success and leadership mean to me, and how can my mentor help me accomplish my goals?
- What do I value and how does that influence my career? Consider what is important to you in life (family, financial resources, friends, health & fitness, home & place, leadership, leisure activities, personal growth, community service, spirituality, work satisfaction, etc.)

After considering these questions, write down your thoughts on a notepad. Be sure to also complete research on your mentor, their company, and their industry. Consider developing an agenda for your first conversation and sending it along to your mentor beforehand—make sure to check in with them to see if they have any topics they would like to cover!

Each mentoring pair will be provided with a Professional Development Plan (PDP). We encourage you to meet with your mentor to talk about your goals and use your PDP to set action steps towards those goals.

THE FIRST CONVERSATION

The first conversation with your mentor can set the tone for the rest of your relationship.

What should you talk about during your first meeting? Here are a few suggestions:

- Set expectations for the mentoring relationship—what goals would you like to accomplish? Example: “I was hoping that we could learn a bit about each other’s career paths and determine...”
- Discuss and define common goals and focus.
- Decide how you will interact in the future.
- Discuss any questions or concerns.

Getting to know each other and establishing expectations for how you both plan to build your partnership are two critical activities that begin at your first meeting. Don't forget to be gracious--make sure to say thank you to your mentor!

After the meeting: Follow up and let your mentor know what you learned from the conversation. For example, consider talking about something resonated with you, or looping them into how their advice shaped your career plans.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- How long have you been with your company?
- What do you enjoy most about your current position?
- How long have you worked in this industry?
- Where did you grow up? Where do you currently live?
- How do you spend your time away from work? What are your interests and hobbies?
- Can I tell you about my personal and professional development goals? Discuss your interest in obtaining a mentor.
- When, where, how long, and how frequently will we meet/talk/correspond?
- Will we create a written agenda and document action items?
- How often will we communicate between meetings?
- Tell me about your personal communication style—how do you prefer to communicate?
- Will we communicate via phone, e-mail, or voice mail?
- What is the purpose of our mentoring relationship? Consider creating a mutual understanding of what you want to accomplish together.

ACTIVITIES

- **Discuss industry relevant books, web resources, articles, or other resources.** Resources on career development, especially ones that focus on skills you may want to develop (such as cross-cultural communication, conflict resolution, creativity, organization, etc.) or professional goals you may have can be great too!
- **Ask your mentor about job shadowing opportunities** or an on-site company visit.
- **Discuss training and educational opportunities.** For instance, would an advanced degree or professional certificate be helpful in your industry?
- **Invite your mentor to attend** a campus or other related activity.
- **Share your resume and ask your mentor for feedback.** What are “power” phrases or key words to use in your resume? Does your mentor notice any ways to supplement your education? Can they identify potential gap areas in your experience?
- **Attend an industry-related networking event** together.
- **Discuss current industry-related cases** or new stories.
- **Share your career plans** with your mentor and discuss your skills, interests, strengths, and experiences and how those may fit into your career plan. Request long-term career guidance and ask for feedback on your career goals.
- **Discuss possible areas of weaknesses** and how you may develop in that area.
- **Conduct a mock interview** with your mentor to practice interviewing skills and explore interviewing types.
- **Discuss the recruitment timelines and processes** for your mentor’s industry or organization.
- **Conduct informational interviews** with contacts from your mentor
- **Participate in informal outings**, such as sporting events, volunteering, UMKC-affiliated events, or meeting up for coffee, lunch, or dinner.
- Ask your mentor to **evaluate your LinkedIn profile.**
- Team up to **attend a business function** with your mentor.
- **Problem solve together.** Have there been recent professional situations where you have struggled and needed some advice? Talk it out with your mentor!
- Consider **inviting them to a class or extracurricular presentation** that is important to you (or even one that you may be facilitating!), and debrief afterward! This can help them get to know your communication and interpersonal skills.

OTHER QUESTIONS

- Can you tell me more about your career path? What led you to your current position?
- What can I do now as a student to prepare for a career in ____?
- What qualities or personality characteristics are present in individuals who succeed in your industry?
- What have been some challenges you have faced in your career?
- What were some of your early roles in the field?
- What are some big projects you're working on now or that you've finished up in the last few months?
- What do you enjoy most about the work you do? / What are you most excited about right now?
- Do you think there's a personality type that's not well-suited for this kind of career?
- Are there any questions I'm not asking that I should be?
- What trends have you been seeing in your industry?
- Are there ways to become involved in professional associations?
- What are types of professional development I can consider?
- Do you have any tips or advice about the internship/job search?
- How did you identify and choose this career path?
- Do you have any advice on courses I can pursue to help me become more marketable?
- What are the top companies in your industry?
- How would you describe your leadership style?
- How do you balance work and life?
- Can you tell me more about your office's norms, culture, and practices?
- Are there "unwritten" rules you have observed in your workplace regarding professionalism?
- How would your teammates and manager describe your work?
- Do you use LinkedIn? How is this tool used in your industry? How do other social media tools play a part in your industry?
- Why did you choose UMKC?
- What is the most important thing you did this year?
- What do you value in a co-worker? Do you value similar or different traits in a manager?
- What do you want to learn to do better?