



# ICT Mentorship Program for Immigrants

*Guiding Canadian Tech Careers*



## MENTORSHIP GUIDE 2024



*Funded by the Alberta Immigrant Mentorship Innovation Grant*

[AB.CIPS.CA/MENTORSHIP](https://ab.cips.ca/mentorship)  
[ALBERTA@CIPS.CA](mailto:ALBERTA@CIPS.CA)

## Table of Contents

1.	Introduction .....	3
2.	What is a Mentor? .....	3
2.1	Benefits for a Mentor .....	3
2.2	Benefits for a Mentee .....	4
3.	The Value of Mentoring.....	5
3.1	Expectations of Mentors.....	5
3.2	Expectations of Mentees .....	5
3.3	Common Expectations.....	5
4.	Time Commitment.....	5
5.	A Mentor’s Guide for Success.....	6
5.1	Mentor’s Personal Evaluation .....	6
5.2	Sample Activities for Mentoring .....	6
5.3	Confidentiality Agreement.....	6
6.	Mentor Checklist .....	7
6.1	Your first meeting.....	7
6.2	During the program .....	7
6.3	Summary of Mentoring Duties .....	8
7.	A Mentee’s Guide for Success .....	9
7.1	Core Objectives .....	9
7.2	Responsibilities .....	9
7.3	Do .....	9
7.4	Don’t .....	10
8.	Mentee Checklist.....	10
8.1	Summary of Mentee Responsibilities.....	11
	Mentee Career Planning Reflections .....	12

## 1. Introduction

The **CIPS Alberta ICT Mentorship Program for Immigrants** creates Mentorship relationships with Alberta immigrant Mentees seeking guidance in their Canadian IT professional career with experienced Canadian IT professional Mentors. The Alberta Immigrant Mentorship Innovation Grant funds this program.

The CIPS Alberta ICT Mentorship Program for Immigrants is flexible in its design so it can be adapted to accommodate the availability of both Mentors and Mentees. The program speaks to the creation of a Mentoring culture to enable CIPS members with greater self-understanding, confidence, and improved capability to advance their careers.

The program is committed to promoting professionalism and ethical behaviours of its participants, to make an impactful contribution to the local economy through support of newcomer skilled IT professionals, who want to make a difference. This guide helps to understand both roles and proposes how to establish and maintain the mentorship relationship, along with leveraging **SkillsTX** skills assessments to better understand a mentee's capability based on the universal common language of **SFIA**.

## 2. What is a Mentor?

Throughout the years the term Mentor has come to mean a more experienced person who helps guide, support, and counsel a less experienced person through the world of work. Mentors share their experience and expertise with a Mentee to assist them in their career development and planning. Mentoring is not just teaching or counseling - it involves fostering a Mentee relationship with a person of experience and helping them prepare for their future.

### 2.1 Benefits for a Mentor

Mentors gain insight while working with Mentees who are entering their field of expertise or interest. Mentors make positive contributions to their Mentees' learning experience when they share their knowledge and experience. Mentors also have an opportunity to gain experience from their Mentees and to assess their own critical thinking capability. Listed below is a sample of Mentor benefits:

- **Contribute** to the social and professional development of a Mentee.
- **Reflect** on your own career, summarize your journey, and formulate your views on success in business.
- Spend time with Mentees full of **passion and energy**.
- Gain a fresh outside **perspective**.
- **Influence** future business leaders.
- **Promote** your organization to potential employees.
- Get an inside track to **recruiting** talent.

## 2.2 Benefits for a Mentee

Mentees receive career planning guidance and insight into employment trends in today's workplace. Mentees also discover what skills and technical preparation is required for success in their chosen field. Mentees will find a wealth of information to help them become better employees, entrepreneurs, and leaders in the professional field they choose. Listed below is a sample of Mentee benefits:

- **Learn** from someone with a similar educational background who has similar interests.
- **Explore** potential career paths, career goals, and advancement strategies.
- Obtain a **realistic understanding** of what their chosen career path entails.
- **Prepare** for the transition to the world of working in Canada.
- **Gain insight** into developing corporate strategy and meeting difficult challenges.
- Meet professional **role models** through IT Professional events and conferences.
- **Enhance** cultural awareness in the areas of social, personal, and professional environments.

### 3. The Value of Mentoring

Successful professionals usually have had a Mentor influence over their careers. Mentors are role models who guide and encourage Mentees. Mentoring relationships can facilitate the Mentee's transition from student to business professional or enhance the career of someone already in the workplace.

#### 3.1 Expectations of Mentors

- Creates a comfortable learning environment for their Mentee.
- Challenges the Mentee to explore career paths and assumptions.
- Is accessible and responds to the Mentee in a timely manner.
- Sets clear boundaries – identifies any areas of confidentiality at the outset of the relationship.
- Indicates their preferred method(s) of communication and what response time the Mentee can expect when they initiate contact.

#### 3.2 Expectations of Mentees

- Refrains from requesting internship positions or job offers from Mentors.
- Establishes and maintains contact with their Mentor.
- Prepares for each meeting with an agenda and relevant questions for discussion.
- If a relationship reaches an end before the program ends, the Mentee should close off the relationship in a professional manner and under the direction of the Program Manager.

#### 3.3 Common Expectations

- Maintain the relationship for the duration of the program.
- Communicate periodically with the Program Manager about the successes and/or problems of the match.

### 4. Time Commitment

The form and frequency of the interactions between Mentors and Mentees will vary. Although there is no rule about frequency of Mentorship engagements, the following is recommended as part of boundary setting:

- **Meet biweekly or monthly** face-to-face and/or virtually depending on mutual agreement.
- **Plan for minimum 6 hours over a 3-month duration.**
- **Contact each other** by email or call between meetings **if any issues arise.**

## 5. A Mentor's Guide for Success

The following is a brief explanation of your responsibilities, a few suggested activities, and a checklist for you to capture thoughts, ideas, and meeting notes. Mentors are encouraged to have some fun with the program and always keep the Mentee's education, career, and overall best interests in mind.

Do not be afraid to be a Mentor. Many people underestimate the amount of knowledge they have about the academic system, their field or industry, and the avenues they can use to help someone.

### 5.1 Mentor's Personal Evaluation

Before starting your Mentoring relationship, it is important to step back and ask yourself a couple questions about where you are and how you are doing.

- Think back to when you were a similar age or in a similar situation as your Mentee. Try to recall how you behaved and what your goals were. What were your top three strengths that helped you reach where you are today?
- What are three areas for improvement that you had to address to reach where you are today?
- What are three opportunities that would have been available to you then and how do they compare to the opportunities that are available for you today?
- What are three threats to your career that you would have faced when you were where your Mentee is and how do they compare with the threats your Mentee faces today?
- What are three important things you can do over the next few months to help your Mentee overcome their challenges?

### 5.2 Sample Activities for Mentoring

Recommend activities that expose Mentees to many different professional situations to help them gain a better understanding of the dynamics of the business community. The following are potential activities to consider:

- Coffee / Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner meetings depending on location of Mentor and Mentee.
- Professional development events and seminars.
- Practice interviews.

### 5.3 Confidentiality Agreement

Should you invite your mentee to your office, be mindful of any confidentiality or security requirements for visitors. Be prepared should a confidentiality agreement be required for your mentee to sign for your organization. This would set clear expectations of your Mentee when in your work environment.



## 6. Mentor Checklist

### 6.1 Your first meeting

- ☐ **Believe in your ability** to Mentor.
- ☐ Enter the relationship with a **positive attitude** – encourage a positive approach to goals with humor and enthusiasm, believe in achievement and have confidence in yourself.
- ☐ Create an **agenda** with your Mentee.
- ☐ **Prepare** a list of things you would like to share with your Mentee in your first meeting. Your list should include information about yourself (as the Mentor), your organization, and your position.
- ☐ **Review** your Mentee's **SkillsTX** skills profile online or shared .pdf report, and resume.
- ☐ **Share expectations** for your relationship up-front with your Mentee.
- ☐ **Share experiences**, mistakes, struggles, and successes; be open and up-front about the realities of growing up, real-life etc.
- ☐ Demonstrate **active listening** – keep communication open, be an attentive responsive listener. Ask questions and encourage the consideration of other opinions, be a stimulating responder.
- ☐ **Invest time** in learning about the aspirations, attributes, and preferences of your Mentee. The more you get to know your Mentee the more detailed guidance you can provide.

### 6.2 During the program

- ☐ Periodically **identify special learning opportunities** in your professional networks for your Mentee.
- ☐ **Actively assist** the Mentee in developing their **network** of contacts.
- ☐ **Honor the commitments** and confidences of your Mentee.
- ☐ **Listen and confirm understanding** if Mentee's first language is not English.
- ☐ Periodically **request feedback** from your Mentee on the value of the information and counsel you are providing.
- ☐ Provide honest, caring, regular, and diplomatic **feedback** to your Mentee.
- ☐ Maintain and respect **privacy, honesty, and integrity**.
- ☐ **Understand** the relationship is temporary; if you wish to continue the partnership it should be a **mutual agreement** between you and your Mentee, outside the Program.
- ☐ Be **open-minded**, consider alternatives before making judgments, make choices on a well-formulated value system and be open to role-reversal, the Mentee teaching or you.

- ☐ **Encourage independent thinking** and discovery – Be innovative, translate imaginative ideas into action; encourage your protégé to develop a dream and use what talent you possess to encourage him or her to develop their talents; take calculated risks, and be pro-active.
- ☐ **Be flexible** – Adapt to the situation; Adjust plans if something takes longer or takes you in a different direction.
- ☐ **Familiarize yourself** with the accepted standards, ethics, and code of professional conduct.
- ☐ **Keep track of engagement time.**
- ☐ **Consider** using **SkillsTX ACTION PLAN** to track activities and meetings.
- ☐ **Keep a journal** about your experience with the program. The Program Manager may occasionally contact you to find out how the relationship is progressing.
- ☐ **Advise** the Program Manager if you are having difficulty in communication or time so action can be taken to improve the relationship.

### 6.3 Summary of Mentoring Duties

#### 1. Guidance and Support

- Provide advice, feedback, and support to help the mentees achieve their goals.
- Offer insights from personal experience and knowledge.

#### 2. Goal Setting

- Help the mentee set realistic and achievable goals.
- Assist in developing a plan to reach these goals.

#### 3. Skill Development

- Identify areas for improvement and provide resources or training opportunities.
- Share knowledge and skills relevant to the mentee's development.

#### 4. Networking

- Introduce the mentee to relevant contacts and networks.
- Help the mentee understand and navigate organizational dynamics.

#### 5. Listening and Understanding

- Actively listen to the mentee's concerns and aspirations.
- Offer empathy and understanding to build a trusting relationship.

#### 6. Feedback

- Provide constructive feedback on the mentee's performance and progress.
- Encourage self-reflection and continuous improvement.

#### 7. Role Modeling

- Demonstrate professional behavior and attitudes.
- Serve as an example of integrity, ethics, and dedication.



## 7. A Mentee's Guide for Success

A Mentee is motivated to assume responsibility for their own professional and personal growth and development. The partnership between a Mentor and Mentee is built upon a foundation of trust, respect, and professionalism.

### 7.1 Core Objectives

- **Obtain** guidance about conducting yourself in business settings.
- **Create** a focused development plan with your Mentor and work towards achieving the stated goals.

### 7.2 Responsibilities

- Communicate your interests/needs/problems clearly.
- Accept Mentor advice and feedback without becoming defensive.
- Set realistic expectations of the Mentor.
- Use the **Mentee Career Planning Reflections** (page 12) to set the agenda for meetings.
- Appreciate the mutual respect, trust, and openness between Mentee and Mentor (including confidentiality).

### 7.3 Do

- Initiate contact with your Mentor.
- Plan an agenda for each meeting – be focused.
- Receive constructive feedback about personal and business skills.
- Learn about specific jobs, career paths, organizational cultures, and industries.
- Keep appointments with your Mentor and be punctual.
- Approach discussions with an open mind.
- Maintain a high level of trust and professionalism.
- Respect confidentiality.
- Accept constructive feedback from your Mentor.
- Thank the Mentor for their time.
- Maintain consistent contact with your Mentor, even when you do not have a pressing issue to discuss.
- Contact the Program Manager if you are having trouble connecting with your Mentor or if there are any problems.

## 7.4 Don't

- Ask for or expect a job or internship from your Mentor!
- Neglect contacting your Mentor to set up or confirm meetings.
- Expect miracles.
- Expect your mentor to do the work or tell you what to do.
- Become dependent on your mentor.
- Be over-awed by your mentor – mentors are doing this because they want to.
- Be too passive.
- Break trust.
- Ask for advice on everything.
- Cancel meetings at short notice.

## 8. Mentee Checklist

Complete your **Mentee Career Planning Reflections** (page 12) prior to meeting your Mentor. You will want to discuss it during your meetings.

### ☐ Obtain Mentor Contact Information:

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Arrange the first meeting.
- ☐ Set clear expectations of preferred methods of communication and response time.
- ☐ Discuss both of your expectations and goals.
- ☐ Review and discuss your Mentee Learning and Development Plan.
- ☐ Share your resume.
- ☐ Review calendar of events and schedule regular meetings in advance.
- ☐ Meet in person once a month. Use email and events to supplement your development beyond the monthly meeting.
- ☐ Make Notes...

Following each meeting, consider noting **your reflections** about your Mentor's personality, goals, questions, and concerns. How did the conversation go? Who did most of the talking? Icebreaker that worked well? What were the barriers? Are there any questions that you want to ask in your next meeting? Any follow-up commitments made? Anything you would have done differently?

## **8.1 Summary of Mentee Responsibilities**

### **1. Goal Setting**

- Clearly define personal and professional goals.
- Communicate these goals to the mentor and seek their input.

### **2. Active Participation**

- Engage actively in the mentoring relationship.
- Take initiative in scheduling meetings and following up on action items.

### **3. Open Communication**

- Be honest and transparent about challenges, needs, and expectations.
- Seek feedback and be receptive to constructive criticism.

### **4. Preparedness**

- Come prepared for mentoring sessions with questions, updates, and relevant materials.
- Take notes and track progress on goals and tasks.

### **5. Self-Reflection**

- Reflect on feedback and experiences to identify areas for growth.
- Be willing to adapt and change based on insights gained.

### **6. Commitment**

- Show dedication to the mentoring process and respect the mentor's time.
- Follow through on agreed-upon actions and tasks.

### **7. Professionalism**

- Maintain a professional demeanor and uphold confidentiality.
- Respect the mentor's expertise and experiences.

**Mentee Career Planning Reflections** *(use form from [Resources for CIPS Alberta ICT Mentorship Program for Immigrants – CIPS Alberta](#))*

*To be completed prior to meeting your Mentor; May be revisited and updated on a regular basis.*

1. My main strengths are:

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2. My main areas for development are:

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3. My goals for the Mentorship Program are:

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4. Ways in which my Mentor can assist me:

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5. Ways in which I can contribute to our Mentoring relationship:

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**Additional comments/points:**