



IxDA Mentoring - Mentee's Guide

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For more details, please contact

IxDA Sydney Mentoring Team

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Introduction

Congratulations and welcome to the IxDA Sydney mentoring programme. It's a great opportunity to be able to be mentored by someone. We hope that you learn and gain the benefits of this program.

This document is to help you get started with your mentoring session. Use this as a guideline rather than a rule. Modify them as you see fit.

As a mentee, we expect you to:

- Work with your mentor in achieving your goals
- Participate and commit to do your best in the program
- Let us know as early as possible if you can't start or continue the program. It might give us the possibility to match a mentee on the waiting list to your mentor.
- Respect the time and commitment that your mentor has done for you
- Help with feedback after the program to improve it for everybody

How often should I meet my mentor?

There's no set rules on this. It's up to you and your mentor to decide what's appropriate.

We encourage you to meet your mentee face-to-face at least once a fortnight night because we believe you get the best outcomes by meeting this way.

However, we know that this isn't always possible. Fortunately, the technology has come along way. You can use Skype, Facetime, Google Hangouts, etc. to do video calls. Of course, emails and phone calls are another method to get in touch.

When things gets busy, often your meetup arrangement would get affected. To reduce the risks of this, be up-front with your mentor about your commitments. Discuss this in your first meeting together (more about this in the next section).

1st Meeting

We highly recommend that your 1st meeting to be face-to-face. **Please get in contact with your mentor within the first week to set up your first meeting.** You should have your 1st meeting within the 1st to 2nd week after it's being announced. If you are having issues getting in touch with your mentor, please contact the IxDA mentoring team as soon as possible so we can help you resolve it or match you with a different mentor. We can't promise you'll get a replacement but we certainly do our best.

The focus of your 1st meeting should be about:

- Getting to know each other
- Defining the goals and outcomes of the program

- Having an agreement on how you would like to work together
- Deciding if this is for you - i.e. Whether you want to continue mentoring the mentee we assigned for you.

There are a lot to discuss in your 1st meeting. Some of the topics you might want to discuss in your 1st meeting, such as:

- **Introduction on each other**
 - Tell your mentor about your background, skills, experience, etc.
- **Determine your goals and outcomes during the program**
 - Be prepare to do this before the meeting. Have a think about why you want to be mentored. Use the tools below to help you
 - Discuss with your mentor about what you would like to be able to do/learn;
 - Discuss with your mentor about what you would like to do more of and less of;

TOOLS: Mentoring Canvas - by Alastair Simpson

<https://ixdasydney.org/mentoring/mentoring-canvas/>

You can use this mentoring canvas as a framework to help you and your mentee determine the goals and outcomes of the program by understanding the problems that your mentee's need help with. Do this exercise together with your mentee on your 1st meeting.

Think a bit about these questions before your first session.:

- Where do I see myself in five years?
 - What methods, areas and types of jobs interests me the most?
 - What are my strengths and interests?
 - What are my weaknesses and dislikes?
 - What does success in UX look like?
- **Have an agreement on the time commitment**
 - Discuss with your mentor on how often and for how long you would like to meet. There's no set rules for this. It is up to you and your mentor to decide.
 - **Have an agreement on how are you going to meet/work together**
 - Discuss and decide together on what methods works for both of you - e.g. Face-to-face, over Skype, emails, phone, etc.
 - **Have an agreement on what happens if one of you can't meet at schedule time/day**
 - Discuss and decide together on how you would handle the situation when one of you have to cancel. For example, you might have an agreement that whoever who needs to cancel the meeting would need to notify the other party at least 24hr prior and organise another suitable time as a replacement. It's important to discuss this so you don't fall off the track when time gets busy and you can still have a productive meeting.

TIPS for keeping up your commitment

Once you've decided how often you both would like to meet, create a repeat schedule in your calendar. You would be less likely to cancel if you already have them in your calendar!

- **Activities**
 - Depending on your goals, your mentor might discuss any appropriate activities to help you achieve your goals during the program
- **Have an agreement on any follow ups**
 - Discuss and decide together if any follow up needed between meetings and how your mentor is going to reach you (vice versa) between meetings.

- **Decide if you want to continue**

Your 1st meeting doesn't guarantee the commitment. It's not too late to back out! We understand that things may not go as smooth as planned. So, it's ok to say no!

If you don't think this isn't going to work out for both of you by the end of your 1st meeting, please let the organiser know ASAP so we can help you find another mentor/mentee (if possible). We can't always guarantee that you'll get another mentor but we'll try our best.

Have an honest conversation together and decide if you would like to continue or back out. We want you to enjoy the experience as well as being able to learn.

- **Next step**
 - If you decided to continue with the program, don't forget to discuss the next step.
 - Decide together what activities you need to do before the next meeting
 - Discuss a draft agenda for the next meeting
 - If possible, schedule the next meeting in your calendar

2nd Meeting, 3rd, 4th....

By this time you should be working towards your goal

Your focus for the sub-sequent meetings:

- Follow up on what activities you've decided together
- Follow up on your progress towards achieving your goals
- Ask your mentor for help/support on any issues or concerns

TIPS

Prior to the meeting, have an agenda on what you're going to discuss so it can be more productive.

Set the agenda for your next meeting together at the end of each meeting.

Bring in a project that you worked on. Ask for help with specific problems you encountered. Find out how the mentor would have approached the problem.

If you have any concerns/issues, need any assistance, please contact the IxDA mentoring team so we can help you.

Keep notes on meetings and be prepared to review the notes prior to the next meeting.

Set goals & actions. Review your action items before and after each meeting.

Try out things that your mentor suggested. Bring back the feedback to the next session so you both know if it worked. Explain in detail what you did and reflect what went well and what didn't.

Sample questions

Here are some questions you can ask the mentor to start a conversation:

- How did you become interested in our field?
- How/why did you decide to pursue the career in which you are working?
- What training/education have you had? How did it help prepare you?
- If you could start all over again, would you change your career path in any way? Why?
- What are your main projects and responsibilities?
- What kinds of problems are you encountering often?
- What are your strengths and how have these influenced your career progression?
- What skills do you use on a daily basis?
- How do you approach situations and scenarios that you haven't encountered before?
- Are there any resources you can recommend? Books, blogs, news, websites etc.
- What books, people, experiences have influenced you the most?

Last meeting

Finally, you've reached your last meeting! In this meeting, it's all about wrapping up and retrospectives.

Some of the topic for discussion for this meeting:

- Discuss the outcomes of the program.
 - Have you achieved the goals you've set at the 1st meeting?
- What have you learnt?
- Anything you could do better?
- Any suggestion/feedback to put forward to the IxDA Sydney Mentoring committee (We always love to hear your feedback - good/bad!)

GOOD LUCK! AND WE HOPE YOU ENJOY YOUR MENTORING EXPERIENCE