



OPRA Mentorship Program Outline

Purpose

The purpose of the mentorship program is to provide each mentee with professional development opportunities and to build a local network of support and guidance throughout one's career.

Overview

OPRA will provide oversight of the Mentorship Program. Students and professionals (mentees) are matched with more experienced and/or distinguished professionals (mentors) to create mentee/mentor relationships. OPRA will match professionals as mentees/mentor pairs and upon notification, pairs will determine a schedule of consistent meetings to discuss career development goals, progress, and any other topics of interest. Benefits for participants include personal and professional development, improved networking within OPRA at the state agency level, a chance to give back to the profession, career advice and feedback, the opportunity to exchange perspectives, trends and best practices, and more.

Eligibility

Participant must be current OPRA member.

The Process

Participants must submit an application to OPRA and will be matched based on individual objectives and geographic location. Mentorship meetings could take place in any format, and mentorship pairs will set their own agenda and explore any topics of interest. A minimum of five meetings/meet-up events over a 12 month period is suggested to provide each mentor team time to set goals, build professional relationships, and share experiences. Mentor teams will be encouraged to continue to meet informally after the conclusion of the mentorship program to hone skills and grow professionally.

Monitoring and Evaluating the OPRA Mentorship Program

OPRA will mitigate any issues that may arise with matches. If a Mentor or a Mentee feels uncomfortable with their match, they should direct their comments to OPRA. All participants will be asked to provide feedback at the end of the program via an online evaluation form.



OPRA Mentorship Guidelines and Responsibilities

Mentors/mentees share responsibility for making the mentorship experience a success. It is important for both mentors/mentees to be positive, respectful, open, honest, dependable, and prepared for each mentoring session. By participating in the OPRA Mentorship Program, mentors/mentees agree to meet the following standards and to follow guidelines to the best of their ability.

As a mentor/mentee in the OPRA Mentorship Program, I agree to:

- Be approachable, engaged and available.
- Prioritize my mentorship relationship and honor my commitments and meeting times.
- Maintain open, honest communication and discuss meeting conflicts in a timely manner.
- Support the goals of my mentor/mentee.
- Maintain a professional relationship and respect the confidentiality of mentoring discussions. A Mentor/Mentee may share information that would not otherwise be shared outside of the mentorship relationship; be conscious of this and do not share information publicly that was shared within the mentoring relationship.
- Not use any ideas, products or materials that my mentor/mentee has, or may develop, to further my business or financial interests.
- Maintain a high standard of personal and professional conduct with my mentor/mentee and avoid the intent or appearance of unethical or compromising practice in relationships, actions, and communications. Encourage the same of my mentor/mentee.
- Refer my mentor/mentee to other professionals for issues or questions for which I feel unqualified.

Mentee Guidelines

- Take responsibility for initiating and maintaining contact with your Mentor.
- Welcome advice, but carefully consider it when making your own decisions.
- Demonstrate confidence. Your Mentor can gain just as much from you as you can from your Mentor, and your knowledge, skills, and abilities provide valuable input.
- Share honest perspectives and ask questions.
- Consider your Mentor's goals and try your best to assist them in meeting them.

Mentor Guidelines

- Provide guidance on career development, but respect your Mentee's autonomy.
- Share your experiences and tell your stories – personal scenarios offer valuable, and often unforgettable, insight.
- Share your failures and successes – both are powerful lessons for learning.
- Ask questions that make the Mentee think - good questions require comparison, evaluation, and reflection.
- Consider your Mentee's goals and try your best to assist them in meeting them.
- Be open to learning from your mentee.