



# Canada's Emerging Cooperators (CEC) Mentorship Program Mentor Information Package

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## Part 1: Program Information

### Background:

The Canada's Emerging Cooperators (CEC) Mentorship Program (formally the National Young Co-operators Mentorship Program) is based on the highly successful Credit Union Central of Canada (CUCC) National Mentorship Program (NMP). The CEC mentorship program is complimentary to the NMP, as the program is project specific and the mentor/mentee relationship is based on one of five project categories (engagement, governance, human resources, marketing, and operations). In 2012-2013, the National Young Co-operators (NYC) successfully launched and implemented the NYC Mentorship Program as a pilot project. Following the pilot project, the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada (CHF Canada) provided sponsorship to support the growth and development of the NYC Mentorship Program. The sponsorship from CHF Canada allowed the program to grow the number of participants and project areas; the length of program; and transition to a bilingual program. The NYC and Jeunes coopérateurs et mutualistes du Canada worked in co-operation to implement this bilingual program.

### Program Goal:

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- To implement a project-based mentorship program to include both the co-op and credit union sectors. Project areas include engagement, governance, human resources, marketing, and operations. Mentees will have the opportunity to receive direction from mentors regarding specific projects under the project areas. Mentors will have the opportunity to strengthen the future of the co-operative sector.

### Guidelines for Participation:

- Applications and expressions of interest for the 2015-16 CEC Mentorship Program will take place in September 2015
- Matching of mentors and mentees will take place in October 2015; the mentoring relationship will run for five months from November 2015-March 2016
- The monthly time commitment will be approximately four hours per month for the mentor (including meetings, meeting preparation, and related work). Please note this time commitment is a guideline that is based on previous programs.
- The mentor and mentee will meet between one to four times per month, depending on the mentee's specific project and mentor/mentee schedules; the mentee creates the agendas for these meetings
- Mid and final evaluations will take place for both mentor and mentee
- Mentees will fill out an online application form (CMC website) to apply for the program and be matched with a mentor



- The CEC Mentorship Committee provides the mentor and mentee with supporting documents to guide the process and/or complete
- Communications costs (and other associated costs) are the responsibility of participating organizations; however, if required, associated costs can be subsidized by the CEC Mentorship Program
- The mentor/mentee must sign a *Code of Conduct*, provided by the CEC Mentorship Committee, to participate in the program

## Evaluation:

During the program the CEC Mentorship Committee will complete a mid and final evaluation with participants. The CEC Mentorship Committee will communicate these evaluation results with the CMC Executive Director and compile a final report.

## Part 2: Mentorship Information

### Are You Ready To Be A Mentor?

This is an important question to ask yourself, if you are considering becoming a mentor. You can address it in a number of ways:

- Recognize and reflect on the mentoring you already do and on your formal or informal experiences as a mentee.
- Talk to other mentors about their experiences.
- Talk to the people you have already mentored either officially or unofficially.
- Consider the differences between mentoring and managing.
- Consider other ways of helping, such as counselling, coaching, appraisals, etc.
- Reflect upon your own experience of being a mentee.

You can also address this question by comparing your attributes with those of effective mentors:

- Relevant job-related experience and skills
- Well-developed interpersonal skills
- An ability to relate well with people who want to learn
- An open mind, flexible attitude, and a recognition of their need for support
- Time and willingness to develop relationships with mentees



## Mentor's Roles and Responsibilities

Mentoring is a mutual relationship primarily focused on the needs of the mentee - their welfare, development, and progress, within the context of their responsibilities and ambitions with the organization.

- Encourage the mentee to bring issues and challenges forward
- Willing to share experiences both good and bad
- Help open doors in networking
- Encourage self-assessment by the mentee
- Provide encouragement
- Respect privacy, time and boundaries
- Follow through on commitments
- Act as a positive role model
- Not expected to be experts in all areas
- Not expected to "do the work" for the mentee

4 A person may seek a mentor because he/she recognizes the need for mentoring support. The need for mentoring support can also be recognized or identified by a third party such as the person's manager or supervisor.

## Experience

As a mentor you will draw on your experience of:

- Facing difficulties
- Meeting new challenges
- Being helped, being a mentee
- Working with others, contributing to an organization
- Achievement, success, failure
- A variety of organizations/working practices
- Being responsible for yourself as well as your actions and reactions to other people and situations
- Coping with stress



## Personal Qualities

- Enthusiastic - genuinely interested in the mentee and his/her concerns, needs, dreams and aspirations
- Motivating and encouraging - to channel the mentee's energy into constructive change, new challenges and overcoming difficulties
- Open - prepared to share your own experience of similar issues, be honest about yourself, be honest about the mentee
- Empathetic - able to appreciate how the mentee thinks, feels and behaves
- Positive in your outlook - able to appreciate the mentee's point of view and see solutions
- A good listener - able to really focus on what the mentee is saying without your own thoughts crowding out the mentee's words.

## New and Inexperienced Mentees May Expect to:

- Be managed
- Be given answers to problems
- Be told what to do
- Have an easy ride
- Receive favours
- End the relationship when the immediate problem or issue appears to be sorted out
- Gossip
- Complain
- Use you only as a sounding board
- Not have to make any real change in their own behaviours

An inexperienced mentee may need a lot of support and gentle challenging of ideas. As a mentor, you will need to provide the support and direction to divert the relationship away from these types of expectations



## What Your Mentee Needs

Having a systematic approach and well-defined expectations increases the effectiveness of mentoring. At the same time, your mentee may look to you to be:

- A sounding board
- A giver of encouragement
- A critical friend
- A source of emotional support
- A confidant
- A source of knowledge

## Areas of Discussion

You and your mentee may talk about:

- The mentee's work-related challenges and opportunities
- The mentor's work-related challenges and opportunities
- Career development
- Time management
- Decision making
- Relationship building
- Work-related experiences

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## Areas of Development

A mentor can help a mentee to:

- Understand appropriate behaviour in social situations
- Understand the workings of the organization
- Acquire an open and flexible attitude towards learning
- Understand different and conflicting ideas
- Be aware of organizational politics
- Overcome setbacks and obstacles
- Acquire technical expertise
- Gain knowledge and skills
- Develop personally
- Adjust to change
- Enhance workplace values



## Powerful Questions

In mentoring, questions are used as a specific form of intervention; they aim to get the mentee thinking, to shift perspective, to discover information the employee did not know he/she had, to speculate, to wonder, to make a new step in growing and transforming him/herself.

Some questions trigger an internal search in the mentee. The Mentor does not always know the answer, and often the mentee is surprised with the question. Such questions push the boundaries of the discussion so that together the mentor and the mentee find themselves genuinely exploring unknown territory. This is where many of the real breakthroughs of mentoring occur. A simple question “What stops you?” A mentee said “I’ve never done that” and the mentor asks “What would happen if you did?”

Powerful questioning is about asking questions that reveal the information needed for maximum benefit for the mentoring relationship and for the mentee.

## 10 Tips for Mentors

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1. Maintain regular contact.
2. Always be honest.
3. Avoid being judgmental.
4. For support, seek assistance from your manager.
5. Don't expect to have all the answers.
6. Help your mentee access other resources and further support.
7. Be clear about expectations and boundaries.
8. Stand back from the issues your mentee raises, work together to address them.
9. Respect confidentiality.
10. If the relationship falters - hang in there!





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and mutuels | et mutuelles  
**canada**

### Part 3: Contact Information:

If you have any questions, please contact:

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<sup>i</sup> Information used in this document was provided by Credit Union Central of Canada's (CUCC) National Mentorship Program (NMP)

*The CEC Mentorship Program is sponsored by the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada*



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