

Guidelines for Mentoring in SIL SOA

Dear mentor, thank you for being ready to invest in the next generation of consultants and specialists in or outside SOA! I am sure you will grow through this experience too. Your supervisor is committed to supporting you while you are developing your mentee(s).

Investing in others, so that they can contribute to the Bible Movement in Southern Africa with their full potential, is at the heart of our vision in SOA.

Dear mentee, you are given the opportunity to learn from someone who has more experience than you in the areas you want to grow in and has decided to invest in you. Grab it and invest in the relationship and the tasks before you. Your supervisor and mentor are committed to your development.

Following are some guidelines for both of you, which will help you navigate your relationship and collaboration. In our mentoring library on the Google drive you will find further useful documents for that purpose.

I wish you an enjoyable and successful journey together!

Desired Approach to the Mentoring Relationship

Mentoring is set up for success in the context of an open, trusting relationship, where mentor and mentee design their learning journey together. An attitude of humility, openness, and willingness to engage in mutual growth in the mentoring relationship is essential. The mentor doesn't need to be an expert in every area of their domain who has all the answers. The mentor acknowledges the unique strengths of their mentee and supports them in developing these further in alignment with the required competencies. In general, the mentor should take the posture of a coach, drawing out the mentee's knowledge and experience and helping them apply it to new and challenging tasks and situations, while offering his insights and suggestions, when they seem useful. Should the mentee expect or desire a stronger guidance at the beginning, flexibility is appreciated. Each mentoring relationship is unique.

Role of Supervisor

You are supported in your task by the supervisor of the mentoring relationship.

The *supervisor* is a leader of SOA who requests the services of a mentor for the development of the mentee into a specific role. They are supported in their responsibilities by the leadership team. Usually they are the mentee's supervisor but it could be the Mentoring Coordinator, too.

The *supervisor* supports mentor and mentee in their mentoring relationship through:

- accompanying them in the matching process and in setting up their relationship.
- encouraging and enabling a face-to-face meeting at the beginning of the relationship.
- defining the end goal of the mentorship in agreement with mentor and mentee.
- providing guidelines for the mentoring relationship (see document).



- providing the necessary resources.
- liaising with partner organizations in order to provide training grounds for the mentee (e.g. location of work, permission for supervised consultant check or to take the mentee along as assistant facilitator of a workshop/training).
- providing accountability, making sure that the tasks of mentor and mentee are outlined in their PRDs, so that the progress towards agreed goals is monitored and evaluated on a regular basis.
- continuously encouraging both mentor and mentee.
- stepping in when there are difficulties in the relationship or effectiveness of their work.
- supporting mentor and mentee in evaluating their success and closing their relationship well.

Types of Mentors

*The **primary mentor*** is responsible for all of the below mentioned areas and invites further mentors to either support the mentee in developing special skills in which they cannot offer the mentee sufficient guidance or to offer the mentee supervised practical experience they cannot provide.

*The **session mentor*** offers the mentee guidance and supervision in the preparation, performance and evaluation of a practical task/event like facilitating a workshop, training local translators, SE or literacy and education staff.

*The **specialist mentor*** offers the mentee support and guidance in their area of expertise (e.g. dialogue education, mentoring, discourse analysis)

Role of Mentor

*The **mentor*** supports and challenges the mentee in the process of completing the certification for their aspired role, using the growth plan as orientation for setting goals and for the requirements, which need to be fulfilled.

*The **mentor*** has the main responsibility *for guiding the process* in the mentoring relationship. At the beginning of the relationship they meet (preferably face-to-face) with the mentee to get to know the mentee (better), to build trust and to negotiate the ground rules of the relationship (e.g. preferred media of communication, boundaries, confidentiality).

Either the mentor or the mentee takes the responsibility for scheduling regular meetings with a jointly set agenda (ideally monthly). Never finish a meeting without having scheduled the next one!

*The **mentor*** uses the actual meetings to catch up with the mentee, pray for each other, discuss recommended readings, review progress in the growth plan, revise or set new goals jointly with the mentee and to celebrate small successes.

*The **mentor*** agrees with the mentee the level and process of accountability which happens in the relationship. The use of a Mentoring Activity Log may be helpful, to record a brief summary of the discussion, decisions made, and due dates.

The mentor helps the mentee grow in their self-awareness and confidence through sensitive feedback, the setting of appropriately challenging tasks and constant encouragement.

The mentor offers to follow up and debrief the mentee (focusing on new learning, either positive or negative) after a conference, training or supervised consultant check. This reporting forms part of the mentee's PRD, too.

The mentor introduces the mentee to other persons or resources, which might support them in their growth.

The mentor keeps the supervisor informed about progress made and asks the supervisor for support or resources necessary for the mentee's growth (e.g. to arrange the participation in a workshop as assistant facilitator for the mentee or to negotiate with partners about it).

The mentor offers the mentee practical training opportunities under their guidance and makes sure that the learning experience is maximized.

The mentor informs the supervisor about the completion of the growth plan and writes a recommendation for their certification in the aspired role.

Mentor and mentee agree, in consultation with the supervisor, on a time when the formal mentoring relationship comes to an end, for celebrating the successes of the mentee, for evaluating their journey together and for deciding about how to continue their relationship afterwards.

Role of Mentee

The mentee is expected to prioritize progress on the growth plan, and to keep the growth plan up to date. The mentor should talk about it, ask about it, and remind them about it, but the mentee should own the responsibility for it.

The mentee discusses short and mid-term goals with the mentor, ways to reach them and together they decide about the next steps forward.

The mentee should be proactive in asking questions, getting help and communicating needs.

The mentee answers communication from the mentor promptly and is reliable and diligent in working towards the agreed goals.

The mentee should be open to feedback and willing to grow and give appropriate feedback to mentor.

Time required for mentoring

Primary Mentor:

The length of the commitment depends on the end goal of the mentoring relationship and could vary from one to several years. A change of main mentors is possible, if the current main mentor is not available for the whole length of time or for other valid reasons.

Invest time at the beginning to build trust and negotiate the ground rules of the mentoring relationship.

Spend 2-3 hours to explain process of working with growth plan and filling in already accomplished tasks, skills.

Regular mentoring meeting (either virtually or in person): 1-2 hours/month, or as needed

Responding to Emails: 1-2 hours/month

Session Mentor:

Mentor and mentee prepare together the respective event weeks or months ahead depending on the nature of the event.

The mentor

- assigns certain tasks to the mentee (e.g. preparation of materials or teaching sessions)
- supports the mentee in their tasks as necessary
- gives feedback to the mentee about preparatory work delegated
- assigns portions of the event for the mentee to facilitate.

During the practical training event: Debrief the day/session with the mentee in the evening and preparing the work for the next day together.

After practical training event: 1-2 hours to write an evaluative report of mentee's performance.

Mentoring Persons from Other Organizations

- Inform your supervisor and the Mentoring Coordinator about the request.
- Discuss availability and if mentor and prospective mentee might be a match.
If yes...
- Mentoring Coordinator and mentor request conversation with the supervisor/responsible person of the mentee's organization to clarify expectations.
- Decision is made jointly (mentor and their supervisor), if mentoring relationship should be pursued.
If yes, a ...
- Mentoring Agreement is negotiated with the involved parties.
- Mentoring task is added to your PRD.