

# **SEAONC SE3 Long-Term Mentorship Program**

## 2023 Mentorship Program Information Package



## **What to Expect from the Program**

### **Program Goals**

The SEAONC SE3 Mentorship program works to offer younger engineers opportunities to meet with more experienced mid-level engineers and seasoned professionals. This program encourages open and honest dialogue while helping individuals define their career goals, identify roadblocks, and take ownership of their own growth and development. It also allows current and future leaders an opportunity to share practical insights and to improve their leadership proficiency.

### **Mentorship Defined**

Traditional mentoring consists of a developmental relationship between a mentor, an individual with professional experience, skills, and knowledge; and a protégé, who is less experienced or skilled. This relationship may take the form of non-threatening training, coaching, supporting, discussing, and/or counseling, across time and work contexts.

### **Group Format**

Groups generally consist of:

- One “seasoned” professional (approx. 13+ years of experience)
- One or two mid-level professional(s) (approx. 5-12 years of experience)
- One or two entry-level professional(s) (approx. 0-4 years of experience)

### **Expected Level of Commitment**

- **The program is a nine-month long commitment.**
- **Groups are encouraged to meet monthly.** However, each group can establish its own preference.
- **The seasoned professional is the “anchor” of the group.** The seasoned professional is committed to the group and the success of the program.
- **Mentoring is a two-way street.** We hope that engineers of all levels of experience will benefit from the group format and that each person can learn from one another.
- **Each group has a liaison.** The entry-level engineer with the fewest years of experience will be our default point person to see how the group is going and what the needs are.

### **Confidentiality**

The information given and received among group members should be held in confidence. Confidentiality can help to ensure open communication.

## Tips and Tricks

*The suggestions below were shared by past participants of the long-term mentorship program.*

- **Setting expectations:**
  - Discuss each member's goals for the program.
  - Some members may prefer a more structured approach, while others may prefer more casual, spontaneous conversation. Consider starting more structured as you figure out what works best for your group.
- **Scheduling meetings:**
  - Set a recurring meeting time – for example, the 1st Wednesday of each month.
  - Afternoon or evening meetings may work better, as lunch meeting times fill up fast.
  - Polls such as When2meet and Google Forms can help with establishing an initial meeting time.
  - At the conclusion of each meeting, confirm the time for the next meeting.
- **Discussion topics:**
  - Choose a meeting topic ahead of time.
  - Consider sending out articles or other resources ahead of each meeting as a starting point for discussion.
  - Refer to the Suggested Topics and Resources on the last page of this document.
- **Group organization:**
  - Consider assigning roles for each meeting that rotate through the group. Some examples are: a leader or facilitator (sets the agenda) and a note-taker (responsible for sending out minutes).
  - Consider creating a shared resource for your group on Google Drive for meeting notes, topics, and resources linked for the group to read.

## Mentee Resources and Guidelines

### Best Practices

- Come prepared with questions for your mentor(s)
- Think through the topics listed below
- Be open to advice and maintain a positive attitude
- Have personal goals that can be discussed with mentors

### Characteristics of Good Mentees

- Dedication to self-improvement, commitment to learning and growing
- Accepts responsibility for career goals and personal development
- Demonstrates a positive attitude
- Honest, respectful, and flexible
- Accepts constructive criticism graciously and learns from mistakes
- Excellent communication skills, including being an active listener
- Values continuous learning and enthusiastic about long-term development
- Accepting of differing points of view
- Open about their needs to the mentor, provides feedback to mentor

### Things to Think about Beforehand

- How will you introduce yourself to your mentor(s)? (What field do you work in? Where do you work?)
- How do you see the trajectory of your career in structural engineering? (It is okay not to be able to see this clearly)
- What are your personal strengths and weaknesses in your profession?
- What are your short-term goals? (licensure, expanded knowledge of certain topics, professional society involvement, networking within the industry, etc.)
- What are your long-term goals?
- Are you moving towards your goals in your current position?
- Are you interested in working on a specific type of project?
- What are you hoping to get out of a mentorship relationship?

### Sample Questions for Mentors

1. What was instrumental for you in getting to your current position in your company?
2. What skills should I try to develop or enhance if I want to become a leader in my firm (or in the profession)?
3. What competencies are critical to success in your current job?
4. What impresses you as an employee?
5. How can I improve my professional visibility?
6. How have you handled work-life balance?
7. What obstacles have you faced in your career and do you have any advice for young engineers in terms of avoiding or getting through those obstacles?
8. What's been your biggest career struggle and how did you overcome it?
9. What is your involvement in professional organizations and how have those helped you in your career (in technical knowledge, soft skills, networking, exposure to role models, etc.)?
10. Have you ever felt pigeonholed into tasks that were not moving you towards your professional goals? How did you deal with this?
11. Have you ever switched firms and what prompted you to make this change?
12. Did you have a mentor(s) early in your career? If yes, how did you benefit from this? If not, how do you feel you could have benefited from mentorship?
13. What is your favorite part of your job? What is your least favorite part?
14. What do you wish you knew as a younger engineer?
15. Do you have any general tips for time-management? Professional development and/or soft skills that are particularly useful in becoming an excellent structural engineer or leader?

### Additional Resources

- Introduction to Mentoring: A Guide for Mentors and Mentees  
<http://www.apa.org/education/grad/mentoring.aspx>
- Corporate Mentoring Tips: 7 Habits of Highly Successful Mentors & Mentorees  
[https://www.cals.vt.edu/content/dam/cals\\_vt\\_edu/alumni/mentoring/Corporate-Mentoring-Tips.pdf](https://www.cals.vt.edu/content/dam/cals_vt_edu/alumni/mentoring/Corporate-Mentoring-Tips.pdf)
- 10 Killer Questions To Make The Most Of Your Mentor Meeting  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/theyec/2014/02/28/10-killer-questions-to-make-the-most-of-your-mentor-meeting/#726bb2e14817>
- 21 Questions to Ask at Speed Networking Events  
<http://www.hustlesummit.co/single-post/2016/09/09/21-Questions-to-Ask-at-Speed-Networking-Events>



### Setting SMART Goals

Setting goals, whether for yourself or for your group, is a great way to understand what you want to gain from this mentorship program, and to track your success. The goals do not need to be directly related to your group discussions, but could rather be career related goals that your mentorship group can help you work to achieve over the length of the program.

SMART is a common framework for goal-setting. It stands for the following:

<b>S</b>	Specific <i>Be clear about your goal</i>
<b>M</b>	Measurable <i>What defines success?</i>
<b>A</b>	Attainable <i>Set goals that you can achieve</i>
<b>R</b>	Relevant <i>Make sure the goals are career-based</i>
<b>T</b>	Time-Based <i>Set a deadline</i>

### Suggested Topics and Resources

We encourage you to find your own articles or topics based on the interests in your group. The topics and linked resources below can provide a starting point.

Topics	Articles/Resources
Career goals and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://engineeringmanagementinstitute.org/goal-setting-think-big-be-mindful/#more-29951">https://engineeringmanagementinstitute.org/goal-setting-think-big-be-mindful/#more-29951</a></li> </ul>
Project management, leadership skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.structuremag.org/?p=12042">https://www.structuremag.org/?p=12042</a></li> </ul>
Networking, business development, professional associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.structuremag.org/?p=16413">https://www.structuremag.org/?p=16413</a></li> <li><a href="https://www.structuremag.org/?p=11536">https://www.structuremag.org/?p=11536</a></li> </ul>
Client service, communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://engineeringmanagementinstitute.org/stellar-client-service-engineering/#more-24363">https://engineeringmanagementinstitute.org/stellar-client-service-engineering/#more-24363</a></li> </ul>
Work flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://makeworkbetter.substack.com/p/5-things-we-learned-from-the-4-day">https://makeworkbetter.substack.com/p/5-things-we-learned-from-the-4-day</a></li> <li><a href="#">NCSEA SE3 Work Flexibility Topic Brief</a></li> </ul>
Core values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/core-values">https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/core-values</a></li> </ul>
Career opportunities, negotiation, promotions, preparing for a performance review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/performance-review-go-for-the-gold">https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/performance-review-go-for-the-gold</a></li> </ul>
Starting a company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.asce.org/publications-and-news/civil-engineering-source/article/2020/08/06/startup-part-4-10-dos-and-donts-for-starting-your-own-engineering-firm/">https://www.asce.org/publications-and-news/civil-engineering-source/article/2020/08/06/startup-part-4-10-dos-and-donts-for-starting-your-own-engineering-firm/</a></li> </ul>
How to have difficult conversations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.forbes.com/sites/ashiraprossack1/2018/10/28/how-to-have-difficult-conversations-at-work/#75adca3010b7">https://www.forbes.com/sites/ashiraprossack1/2018/10/28/how-to-have-difficult-conversations-at-work/#75adca3010b7</a></li> </ul>
Diversity, equity, and inclusion within the industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.se3committee.com/se3news">https://www.se3committee.com/se3news</a></li> <li><a href="https://www.se3committee.com/se3news">https://www.se3committee.com/se3news</a></li> </ul>
State of the economy and world affairs and impact on the industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://fmicorp.com/insights/fmi-quarterly">https://fmicorp.com/insights/fmi-quarterly</a></li> <li><a href="https://www.acec.org/last-word-blog/">https://www.acec.org/last-word-blog/</a></li> </ul>
Effective work relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.thebalancecareers.com/developing-effective-work-relationships-1919386">https://www.thebalancecareers.com/developing-effective-work-relationships-1919386</a></li> </ul>
“SMART” Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">University of California HR</a></li> <li><a href="https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/smart-goals">https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/smart-goals</a></li> </ul>