



Mentoring Guide

For Potential Apprentices

Adapted with permission from the Stanford Alumni Mentoring Program, Career Development Center, Stanford University.



CONTENTS

How the ACDA Mentoring Program Works	3
Once a Match is Made	6
The Mentoring Experience: Benefits and Expectations for the Apprentice	8
Suggested Mentoring Activities	9
Thank You for Signing up with ACDA Mentoring!.....	10
Appendix A Mentoring Agreement: Suggested Talking Points	11
Appendix B Goal Setting.....	12
Appendix C Goal Setting Worksheet	13

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HOW THE ACDA MENTORING PROGRAM WORKS

ACDA Mentoring: Overview

Mentoring relationships are ongoing and one-on-one. You search our database and request a mentor based on mentor profiles. Once matched, you and your mentor work together for six months, after which the match is “released” in our system. You can only request one mentor during each six-month session. After the six-month session, you can request a different mentor.

The Matching Process

Potential apprentices register with Lodestar: The ACDA Mentoring Program and review the program benefits and expectations. After completing and submitting your profile, you search the mentoring database based on search criteria that you select and you pick an interesting mentor. We do not match a mentor with you – you define what you are looking for and take the first step.



Steps for participating in the mentoring program.

Step 1: Registration

If you have not done so already, please go to <http://mentoring.acda.org> and start the registration process for the program.

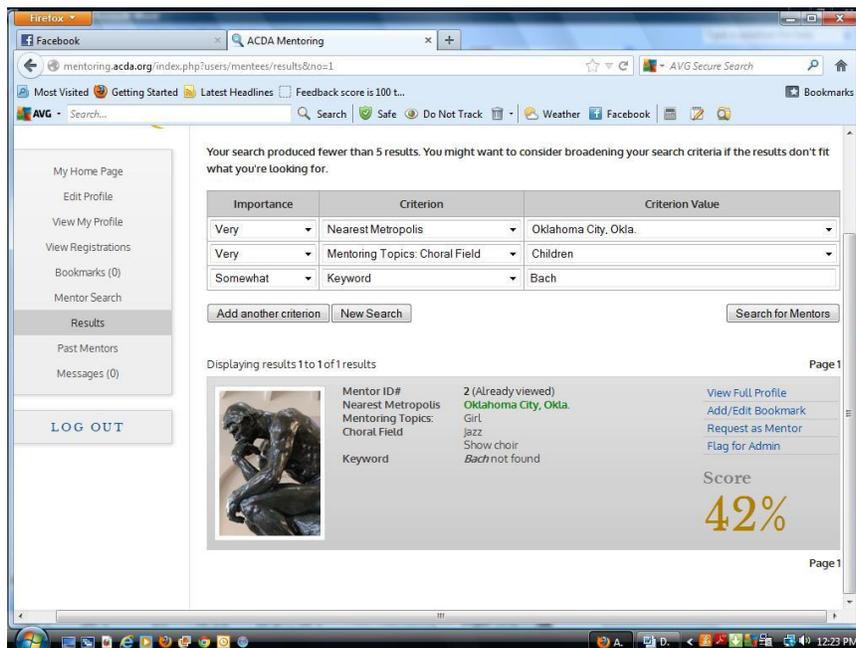
Step 2: Review the Mentoring Guide

Reviewing this guide is the best way to familiarize yourself with the basics of how the program works, and the process you will follow to participate. We ask you to completely read this brief guide, then email mentoringacda@acda.org to tell us that you have completed the guide. You will be sent an email with the subject line “Search for Mentor,” which will include a link to create your online profile.

Step 3: Create Your Profile

Your online profile is what a potential mentor will see when you request them as a mentor, so it is a big part of their decision-making process. When you receive the email instructing you to complete your profile, you will be able to link to your “Edit Profile” page. Please complete all four pages. You can click “View Profile” to see your completed profile in the format that a mentor will see it.

Step 4: Mentor Search



The next step is to go to “Mentor Search” on the ACDA mentoring website sidebar, where you will be able to specify a number of criteria, ranging from location to choral interests, for use in searching for potential mentors. You can select as many criteria as you would like. You can also specify the relative importance of each criterion you select. A results page will appear showing you potential mentors and how

closely they matched your criteria. We suggest you try a variety of searches to find what you are looking for in a potential mentor.



Search Results. You will see multiple results when you search for a mentor, and the score shows how closely the mentor profile matches the search criteria you identified. Click on “View Full Profile” to see detailed information about each mentor.

Reviewing Potential Mentors. Be sure to pay attention to meeting frequency, location, and mentoring topics to ensure a good fit. Bookmark profiles on the sidebar if you are not yet ready to request one, and want to refer back to it later (but please note that the mentor could be requested and unavailable later).

Requesting Mentors. You can only request one mentor at a time. Click “Request Mentor” when you have selected a mentor from among the options. An email will then be sent to your requested mentor with a link to your profile.

Mentor Request Response. A mentor has the option to accept or decline a mentoring relationship with you will receive an email with their decision. If the potential mentor declines your request, you will receive an email and have the option to search for and request a different mentor. If they accept, you will receive an email with mentor contact information and the mentor will receive an email with yours.

If your mentor doesn’t respond to your request within one week, you can cancel your request on your homepage in the “Status” box. You can cancel a request any time after you request. If you cancel, your mentor will be notified and you can search for and request another mentor.



ONCE A MATCH IS MADE

Initial Contact with Your Mentor

You are expected to initiate contact with your mentor once the match is made.

- ✓ We encourage you to send an **introductory email** to your mentor, and they will wait until you make that contact. We suggest sending the email within a few days of your match.
- ✓ If your mentor **does not respond** to your messages or you have any other problems, please contact the program staff at mentoringacda@acda.org.

What Should I Expect of the First Conversation?

We strongly suggest that you have a conversation early on in the relationship in-person, over the phone, or via Zoom or Skype. This personal interaction will go far in creating a connection and setting up a good foundation for your relationship. Here are some guidelines for the conversation:

- ✓ Tell your mentor that you are **excited** about being their apprentice! Sharing your enthusiasm will help reassure them that you are committed to making the relationship succeed.
- ✓ **Build rapport** with your mentor by asking questions about their background and experiences, and share your interests and background. Remember, you have ACDA in common and that is a great place to start!
- ✓ It is important at the beginning of the relationship to talk about expectations and goals for the mentoring experience. Make sure to either start this dialogue in this first conversation or set up another time to do so. You can use our ACDA Mentoring Program Agreement, which can be found at on the mentoring website.

Developing the Mentoring Relationship

The mentoring sessions run for approximately six months. What you do and how you do it is pretty open for you and your mentor to determine (and look over the “Suggested Mentoring Activities” page for ideas). Just keep in mind some general guidelines:

- ✓ Keep an open mind.
- ✓ Ask good questions.
- ✓ Prioritize the relationship.
- ✓ If a mentor contacts you, please respond! If you are busy, write a quick email.
- ✓ Be appropriate in your requests.

Adapted with permission from the Stanford Alumni Mentoring Program, Career Development Center, Stanford University.



For example, if you are searching for a job or internship, do NOT directly ask for a position. DO ask for help and advice. Asking questions like “Is there a job at your company?” or “Do you know of any leads?” can be awkward for apprentices and inappropriate for a mentoring relationship.

So what should you do if you are looking for job or internship? You want to let your mentor know that you are looking and what you want. Ask what advice they would give you about the job search. For example, “Here is what I am looking for. Do you have any suggestions about my search?” If they know of opportunities in their organization or elsewhere, they will likely tell you, but it is not appropriate for you to ask directly. You could also ask there are any people they would recommend that you do an informational interview with.

At the end of the mentoring session we formally release you so that you are able to work with another mentor and your mentor can work with a new apprentice. The program goal, however, is to develop ongoing relationships, so we encourage you to continue your relationship on an informal basis.

Please remember to say “thank you” to your mentor.

There are a number of online resources for you, which you can access from our homepage under the “For Apprentices” tab:

- ✓ Introductory Email Template
- ✓ First Conversation Guide
- ✓ Mentoring Activities List
- ✓ Apprentice Tips!

The FAQ tab can also answer many of your questions.

THE MENTORING EXPERIENCE: BENEFITS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR THE APPRENTICE

“As a protégé, I didn’t expect my mentors to tell me the secrets of their success. I only appreciated their willingness to give me proximity to them and to observe their process of work so I could discover those axioms and secrets on my own.”

– Tim Sharp, *Mentoring in the Ensemble Arts*

For mentoring to be successful there must be a reciprocal, comfortable relationship between mentor and apprentice. Both parties must work at the relationship to make it successful by being open-minded, respectful, and keeping to the expectations they have set for the relationship. Ideally, the mentoring relationship will be mutually beneficial one, as the mentor learns from the apprentice and the apprentice from the mentor.

How Will the Apprentice Benefit?

Following are some general ways we hope students and new choral conductors and educators will benefit from being in a mentoring relationship:

- ✓ Build a professional network.
- ✓ Develop and enhance professional and communication skills.
- ✓ Connect academics and career; acquire advice on experiences and courses that would be of greatest benefit.
- ✓ Explore new ideas and areas of interest.
- ✓ Gain exposure to career options, advice, and job search tips.

What Is Expected of the Apprentice?

Before an apprentice can search for a mentor, they agree to the following expectations:

- ✓ Spend at least two hours per month building the mentoring relationship.
- ✓ Make the first contact with the selected mentor and respond to *all* communication.
- ✓ Set specific goals for the mentoring relationship with mentor.
- ✓ Agree and commit to expectations and goals set with the mentor.
- ✓ Be appropriate in their requests of their mentor, in particular, in NOT asking for a job.
- ✓ Approach the mentoring relationship with an open mind, professionalism, and respect.
- ✓ Be receptive to suggestions and feedback.
- ✓ Communicate problems with the mentoring relationship to the mentoring program staff at mentoringacda@acda.org.

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SUGGESTED MENTORING ACTIVITIES

You may know as a mentoring pair what you want to do during your time together. But if you need some ideas on what to do, the following list is a great place to start.

Career Conversations

- ✓ Discuss the mentor's educational background and the role of educational preparation in their field.
- ✓ Talk about a current event or issue in the mentor's field.
- ✓ Schedule a shadow visit, if appropriate.

Job Search Process

- ✓ Review the apprentice's resume and/or cover letter.
- ✓ Lead the apprentice through a mock interview.
- ✓ Discuss how to best look for jobs/internships in the mentor's field.

Graduate School Consultations

- ✓ Share what the mentor learned about navigating graduate school.
- ✓ Discuss how the mentor worked with advisors.
- ✓ Talk about how the mentor prepared for the transition from school to the professional world.

Mentor's Story

- ✓ Talk about how the mentor has balanced personal life and career and what to expect.
- ✓ Discuss what the mentor would have done differently at university if they could do it over again.
- ✓ Talk about how the mentor has dealt with personal or professional challenges.
- ✓ Discuss the ways in which being active in a professional association has helped the mentor.

Networking Pursuits

- ✓ Introduce the apprentice to colleagues or other contacts.
- ✓ Attend a professional association meeting or conference together (ACDA national, region, and state conferences are great opportunities).
- ✓ Guide the apprentice in how to conduct an informational interview.



THANK YOU FOR SIGNING UP WITH ACDA MENTORING!

This guide will evolve with the mentoring program. As we work together, we welcome your suggestions for improving our written materials as well as our program. Your participation in this process will help the ACDA Mentoring Program make a valuable contribution to our field.

Next Steps

1. Email mentoringacda@acda.org and indicate that you have reviewed this guide.
2. You will receive an email with the link to create a profile.
3. Complete your profile.
4. Search for and request a mentor.

Additional Resource

Sharp, Tim. 2011. *Mentoring in the Ensemble Arts: Helping Others Find Their Voice*. Chicago: GIA.

Contact Us

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at mentoringacda@acda.org or 405-232-8161, ext. 200.

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In preparing this Mentoring Guide, we relied on the work and experience of the Stanford Alumni Mentoring (SAM) Program and their materials. SAM, in turn, used material from its sister institutions. They particularly acknowledge using material from University of Minnesota Alumni Association Mentoring Handbook 2008 and Cornell University Alumni-Student Mentoring Handbook 2008.

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Appendix A

MENTORING AGREEMENT: SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS

To get the most out of your mentoring experience, the ACDA Mentoring Program recommends that you talk about the expectations and goals that both the apprentice and mentor have for the mentoring relationship.

Agree on Expectations: How will the relationship work?

1. **Meeting together:** What works best? (Remember, you want to have at least one real-time meeting or conversation.) Will we meet:
 - In person
 - Zoom or Skype
 - Phone
 - Email
2. In general, **how often** would we like to meet/interact (e.g., once per week, every other week, once a month)? Renegotiate as needed.
3. If an **email/voice mail** is received, we will get back to our partner within:
 - 24 hours
 - 1-2 days
 - 3 days
 - Other
4. If we can't make an expected meeting/interaction, how will we get in touch?
5. When will we meet or talk **next**?

Agree on Goals: What do you hope to gain from the relationship?

1. What are the **apprentice's goals** for this mentoring relationship? (See ACDA registration form.) Is there any clarification needed?
2. What are the **mentor's goals** for this mentoring relationship?
3. What **actions** can you and your mentoring partner take to achieve these goals?

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Appendix B

GOAL SETTING

“Intentional mentoring requires deliberate and thoughtful planning. Choosing a mentor and choosing a protégé is like investing. . . . Purposeful protégés will identify the particular lessons and skills they desire to attain from the more experienced mentor, and will seek to honor those shared values with an investment of a part of their own life of learning and modeling.” – Tim Sharp, *Mentoring in the Ensemble Arts*

Purpose of Goal Setting

Setting goals helps people strive to achieve. Although goal setting may be challenging, it is worthwhile. The intention is to increase efficiency and effectiveness by specifying desired outcomes. Hellreigel, Slocum & Woodman (1992) and Martens (1987) find goals to be important because they:

- ✓ Guide and direct behavior
- ✓ Provide clarity
- ✓ Reflect what the goal setters consider important
- ✓ Help improve performance
- ✓ Increase motivation to succeed
- ✓ Instill pride and satisfaction in achievements
- ✓ Provide challenges and standards
- ✓ Bolster self-confidence and decrease negative attitude

Goal-Setting Model

The SMART guidelines can help set effective goals that will help you to achieve success.

SMART means:

Specific – A goal of getting a choral conducting position is too general. Specify how this will be accomplished.

Measurable – Establish criteria for how to achieve a goal. Measurable does not refer to a timeline; it means determining a way to measure your success in completing the long-range goal.

Action-oriented – Be proactive in taking action that will result in reaching the desired goal.

Realistic – Strive for attainable goals; consider the resources and constraints relative to the situation.

Timely – Allow reasonable time to complete each goal, but not so much time that you lose focus or motivation.

Source: University of Minnesota Alumni Association, *2008 Mentor Handbook*. SMART adapted from *Discovery Focus on Your Value and Accomplish Your Goals* (1996).

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Appendix C

GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

First, discuss the mentor's background. Then discuss the apprentice's major coursework and/or work experience to date.

Next, the apprentice can indicate their level of interest in the following activities. Rate interest level as low (L), medium (M), or high (H).

Insight into mentor's own academic experience	L	M	H
Introduction to colleagues or contacts	L	M	H
Attending a professional meeting or program with mentor	L	M	H
Critiquing apprentice's resume/portfolio/CV	L	M	H
Developing interviewing or informational interview skills	L	M	H
Discussion of how personal and professional life can fit together	L	M	H
Review of mentor's resume/CV	L	M	H
Decision to attend graduate school	L	M	H
Guidance on how to seek a job or internship in the field	L	M	H
Discussion on how mentor navigated graduate school/working with advisors	L	M	H
Shadow mentor at workplace	L	M	H
Discussion of academia vs. industry	L	M	H

After completing the above, discuss ways that the mentor might be able to help the apprentice with items rated high or medium interest.

Using the SMART model, determine two short-term and one long-term goal that the apprentice wants to work on.

Source: University of Minnesota Alumni Association, 2008 Mentor Handbook.

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