



# AIEN YN Mentor Manual

Welcome to the 2025 AIEN Mentoring Program. Below you will find more information about the program and how the mentoring relationship will work. The program will run from February through December 2025. Please contact AIEN if you have any questions at [education@aien.org](mailto:education@aien.org).

## PROGRAM AT-A-GLANCE

- Mentors help guide the career exploration process and manage the mentoring relationship.
- Mentees are responsible for making the first contact with their mentor, via an introductory email or phone call.
- Mentor/mentee partnerships are monitored by AIEN through periodic emails to ensure that contacts have been made and relationships are on track.
- Mentoring can continue beyond the established program dates by mutual agreement of the mentor and mentee.

## INTRODUCTION

The mentoring program is AIEN's endeavor to provide the Young Negotiators (YN) with an opportunity to ask for guidance and advice about career development. Mentors can assist YNs in understanding the variety of possibilities in their chosen career fields, where there is demand, and what skills, activities and courses are necessary for them to succeed.

This manual was developed to provide mentors with an overview of the mentoring program and to guide mentors through the mentoring relationship.

You should take the lead in guiding the relationship through the following activities. Your mentee will be learning what it is like to work in your field and to:

- set short and long term goals;
- identify strategies to meet goals;
- measure progress;
- communicate;
- explore career options;
- make choices.

Enjoy the process; both you and your mentee will experience benefits.

## THE MENTORING PROCESS

Mentoring relationships progress through predictable states: preparing, managing the connection, reflecting and transitioning. These stages build on one another to form a developmental sequence, which varies in length from one relationship to another.

Awareness of stages is a key factor in successful mentoring relationships. When they are taken for granted or skipped over, they can have a negative impact on the relationship. Being aware of them provides significant signposts.

## PREPARING

- Mentors and mentees should reflect on their motivations and goals for the mentoring relationship.

- Mentors are matched with an appropriate mentee based on the preference and availability of both parties.
- AIEN informs both the mentor and mentee about the match by emailing each person mutual contact information.
- **It is the mentee's responsibility to make the first contact via email or phone call within one month. During this first meeting, mentee and mentor will agree on 3-5 goals for the year in the mentoring program and submit those goals to [education@aien.org](mailto:education@aien.org). It is ok if these goals change during the course of the year, however they will allow you to set an initial course for the mentoring relationship and measure your progress at the end of the program.**
- Mentor and mentee begin communicating by expressing expectations and agreeing upon some common procedures—for example, determining the frequency of contact and availability of both mentor and mentee.
- AIEN YN will periodically send a short list of suggested topics for discussion that should be helpful in continuing a dialogue.

### MANAGING THE CONNECTION

The mentor's early emails set the tone for the relationship. The mentor should ask the mentee how he/she can best help.

- Determine the kind of support that is needed by the mentee.
- Set goals and expected outcomes with the mentee.
- Decide, with the mentee, what steps will be taken to reach the mentee's goals.
- Make use of the following communication success strategies:
  - **Paraphrase and Restate:** This helps to clarify what you are reading or hearing.
  - **Summarize:** This reinforces what has transpired and allows you to verify your understanding of the discussion that took place.
  - **Be an active listener.**
    - Focus your attention on the mentee.
    - Listen for mentee's concerns.
    - Provide responses that enable the mentee to explore options.
    - Keep discussions focused on career issues.
  - **Ask open ended questions, for example:**
    - What are some characteristics you are proud of that will provide me with a sense of who you are?
    - What are your career plans?
    - How can I best help you as a career mentor?
- Be a positive role model by providing mentees with ethically-based responses. Keep your suggestions focused to help the mentee make career decisions.
- Practice email etiquette. Certain approaches to emailing can ensure that your messages are understood and appreciated, and not misinterpreted.
  - Avoid using jargon.
  - Think carefully when wording an email; reread emails for clarity, accuracy and tone.
  - Ask no more than 2-3 open-ended questions about the same issue, and ensure your next email builds onto the previous one to show you have understood and reflected on the previous communication.
  - If you are offended by the content of an email, ask to have it clarified-the meaning may be very different than your interpretation.
- Other considerations:
  - Help the mentee examine ways to overcome barriers they may face on their career path.
  - Take charge of keeping the relationship moving forward.
  - Keep the relationship focused on the mentee's career path.

- Be as clear as possible about anything that may hinder regular communication. For example, let the mentee know in advance if there will be any long periods during which you are not available.
- AIEN highly recommends meeting face to face with your mentee at least once every quarter, if geographically possible.

### **REFLECTING**

Relationships proceed with consistent communication. Periodically, the mentor and mentee should reflect on the learning *progress* and *process* to ensure that the mentee's learning goals are being met. Determine if your initial goals and agreements should be re-evaluated, and make adjustments as necessary.

- What do you feel is going well during your mentoring sessions?
- What obstacles do you face that may be preventing establishment of a good relationship with your mentee?
- What positive impacts do you feel you have in helping your mentee?
- What are you learning about yourself during this process?

### **TRANSITIONING**

Keep in mind that relationships will progress, change, or end. This transitioning takes time. Transitioning involves:

- evaluating the process and the mentee's accomplishments;
- acknowledging the learning that has gone on;
- discussing future options (more formal relationship, ongoing mentoring relationship).

### **TROUBLESHOOTING**

#### **Role of the Administrators**

AIEN is available for support when:

- You don't hear from your mentee.
- You, your mentee, or both of you truly feel it would be best to end the relationship early. Then your goal should be to make the ending positive. Here are some tips that will help:
  - Write to your mentee and be honest and respectful about why you think it is time to end the relationship.
  - Emphasize what has gone well-the learning that has taken place.

To contact AIEN for these or any other questions or challenges, please call 281-558-7715 or email [education@aien.org](mailto:education@aien.org).