



COMPANY MENTOR HANDBOOK

Match made in Finland group mentoring program
for international talents.

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Match Made in Finland - Handbook for Mentors

MATCH MADE IN FINLAND is EK's group mentoring program aimed at international university students studying in Finland. The program helps students understand Finnish work practices, expand their professional networks, and improve their employment opportunities in Finland.

Finland faces a significant skills shortage in the future, which can slow down economic growth and weaken our competitiveness in international markets. As the population ages and the workforce decreases, it is increasingly important to attract and integrate international talents into the Finnish workforce. Immigration plays a key role in solving this challenge, as it brings diverse skills, new perspectives, and innovations that are vital for Finland's growth and development.

The Match Made in Finland mentoring program offers a unique opportunity to connect international university students studying in Finland with companies. The program aims to help students understand Finnish work practices, expand their professional networks, and improve their employment opportunities in Finland. At the same time, the program provides companies with the opportunity to get to know international talents and utilize their diverse skills. This leads to more positive attitudes and reduces prejudices against international talents.

Together, we can build a stronger and more diverse workforce that supports Finland's economic growth and competitiveness in the future.

This handbook provides comprehensive information on mentoring and group mentoring, their processes, benefits, and practical implementation. It is specifically aimed at universities of applied sciences, companies, and international students studying in Finland, helping them adapt to Finnish culture and working life.



Mentoring

Mentoring is a process where a more experienced person, the mentor, provides support, guidance, and advice to a less experienced person, the mentee. This guided learning and professional development is based on a confidential and reciprocal relationship that promotes the mentee's skill development and career progression.

Mentoring is a valuable and versatile tool that supports the development of both individuals and organizations. It is based on a confidential and open relationship where the more experienced person shares knowledge, skills, and experiences for the benefit of the less experienced person. Mentoring promotes skill development, confidence growth, career progression, and networking, and its various forms offer flexible ways to utilize the benefits of mentoring.

The mentoring process usually begins with setting goals, where the mentor and mentee together define what they want to achieve during the mentoring. After this, the mentor provides guidance and support, which can include various activities such as personal meetings, feedback discussions, workshops, and networking events. Mentoring can be either formal or informal, and it can last from a few months to several years.

Forms of mentoring include one-on-one mentoring, group mentoring, and peer mentoring. One-on-one mentoring is the traditional form of mentoring, where the mentor focuses on guiding one mentee. In group mentoring, one mentor guides multiple mentees simultaneously, allowing for the utilization of group dynamics and peer support. In peer mentoring, individuals of the same experience level provide support to each other, promoting mutual learning and collaboration.

The benefits of mentoring are manifold. It helps mentees develop their professional skills, grow their confidence, and achieve their career goals. Mentoring also provides an opportunity to network and create valuable professional relationships. Mentors, in turn, get the chance to share their expertise and learn new perspectives from their mentees. Organizations benefit from mentoring by improving employee engagement, skills, and satisfaction.

Mentoring is beneficial, for example, for career changers, young professionals, and international students who need support to adapt to a new environment and develop their professional networks. In Finland, mentoring programs have become more common in various fields, and they provide valuable support and resources for a wide range of individuals and groups.

Group Mentoring

Group mentoring is a form of guided learning and professional development where a more experienced person, the mentor, provides support, guidance, and advice to a group of less experienced individuals, the mentees. This process is based on a confidential and reciprocal relationship that supports the growth, skill development, and career progression of the mentees.

Group mentoring has many benefits:

- **Diverse learning:** Learning in a group offers the opportunity to hear different experiences and perspectives, which can broaden one's thinking and skills.
- **Peer support:** Working in a group provides the opportunity to utilize the experiences and tips of other mentees. This can help handle challenging situations and provide emotional support.
- **Networking:** Group mentoring offers the chance to create networks with both the mentor and other mentees. This can open new doors and opportunities in working life.
- **Efficiency:** For the mentor, group mentoring is an efficient way to share knowledge and support multiple individuals simultaneously, which can be time efficient.
- **Group dynamics:** Working in a group develops teamwork skills and collaboration, which is valuable in a professional context.

Group mentoring can be implemented in various ways, such as regular meetings, workshops, or networking events. The most important thing is that the mentor and mentees agree on common goals and methods to make the mentoring as fruitful and productive as possible.

Benefits of Group Mentoring for International Students in Finland

Mentoring has been studied in various ways in integrating international students into Finland. Mentoring can help international students integrate into Finnish working life and society more effectively, and it has the following benefits:

1. **Skill development and confidence growth:** Mentoring promotes skill development and confidence growth. International students get the opportunity to learn about Finnish working life and its specific features, which helps them adapt better to the local work environment.
2. **Networking:** Mentoring provides students with the opportunity to network with both the mentor and other mentees. This can open new doors in working life and help create important professional contacts.
3. **Career planning:** Through mentoring, students can plan their careers and set realistic career goals. They receive practical tips and advice on career planning and job search in Finland.
4. **Job search process:** Mentoring helps students understand the stages of the job search process in Finland and provides tips for effective job search. Students receive personal feedback on their LinkedIn profile or CV, for example.
5. **Cultural adaptation:** Mentoring supports students' cultural adaptation and helps them better understand Finnish culture and work practices.

Instructions for Mentors for Successful Mentoring

Clear Expectations and Goals

It is important that mentors understand their role and tasks in the mentoring program. Go through the program's goals and the roles and expectations of the mentor and mentee. Make a mentorship agreement.

The **Mentorship Agreement** (ready-made template) is an agreement between the company and the student, aimed at providing mentoring to understand Finnish work practices and expand networks. The company commits to providing a mentor, arranging regular meetings, and offering practical experiences. The student commits to actively participating, completing tasks, and receiving feedback. Both parties commit to open communication and agree on the location of meetings. Mentoring does not guarantee employment. The agreement can be terminated with 7 days' written notice.

Interaction Skills

A good mentor knows how to listen and give constructive feedback. Invest in interaction skills and use concrete examples of how you can best support the mentee.

Building Trust

The success of the mentoring relationship is based on trust. Discuss the importance of trust and think about how you can build a trusting relationship with the mentee.

Setting and Monitoring Goals

At the beginning of the mentoring relationship, it is important to set clear goals and monitor their progress. Use tools and methods for setting and monitoring goals.

Continuous Feedback

Giving feedback is very important in mentoring, as it promotes the mentee's learning and professional development. Good feedback helps the mentee understand their strengths and areas for improvement, which in turn improves performance and confidence.

In mentoring, giving feedback is a continuous process. This helps ensure that the mentee receives the necessary support and guidance throughout the mentoring relationship.





Framework and Content of the Match Made in Finland Mentoring Program

The ideal size of the mentoring group is 6-8 students. Scheduling dates should start as early as possible, and the most suitable time is in the afternoon due to studies. The program is scheduled for two hours per meeting. Meetings can be held either remotely or in person.

Before the actual mentoring begins, it is good to hold a **Kick-off event** where the mentees meet the mentor, especially if the mentoring is to be held remotely. In the kick-off event, the framework and goals of the program can be reviewed, and students can be motivated to participate actively. It is also important to further clarify that the goal of the program is to expand networks and lower the threshold for employment. The program cannot promise jobs or internships.



Mentoring 1

Initial Meeting and CV Workshop

Introductions and Setting Goals (30 min)

- Participants and mentors introduce themselves.
- What are your personal goals for the mentoring program?
- What are the group's common goals and methods of operation?
- Each participant sets personal goals for the program (other than employment).
- Groups define their common goals and the contents and forms of their activities.
- Mark the dates in the calendar.

Finnish Working Life (10 min)

- The mentor presents the specific features and practices of Finnish working life.
- Discuss the mentor's own field and its specific features.
- The importance of summer jobs and other work experience (volunteer work) for Finnish employers.
- What specific features have you noticed in Finnish working life?
- Discuss the current development of working life.

Learning Finnish (10 min)

- The importance of the Finnish language in Finnish working life in different fields.
- Although many companies operate in English, knowing Finnish can be a significant advantage in job search and working life.
- Supporting Finnish language learning and practical tips for practicing it.

LinkedIn/CV Workshop (40 min)

- Students receive personal feedback on their LinkedIn profile or CV.
- Learn how to make the profile or CV more attractive to Finnish employers.

Group Discussion and Q&A (15 min)

- Group members share their views and experiences on the development of working life.
- The mentor answers participants' questions and gives additional tips.

Summary and Next Steps (15 min)

- Summarize the key lessons and decisions of the meeting.
- Ensure the date and themes of the next meeting. Students can think about questions in advance and send them to the mentor before the next time.

Mentoring 2

Networking and Career Planning

The Importance of Networking (30 min)

- Discussion on the importance of networking and sharing practical tips.
- What kind of networks should mentees aim to build?
- Finland is a trust society – the importance of recommendations is emphasized.
- The mentor can guide mentees to directly contact people in their network who may have answers to questions of interest to the mentee.

Practical Tips for Networking (30 min)

- How to start networking?
- What are the most effective ways to create and maintain professional networks?
- How to start networking and what are the most effective ways to create professional networks?
- The importance of LinkedIn in networking.
- Examples of successful networking situations.
- Group members network with each other.

Career Planning (30 min)

- Workshop where students create their personal career plans.
- What are the most important steps in career planning?
- What are your career goals in the short and long term?
- What positions can you apply for with your education?
- What are the most important steps in career planning?
- How to set realistic and achievable career goals?

Group Discussion and Q&A (15 min)

- Group members share their views and experiences on networking and career planning.
- Discuss what job opportunities and future prospects the fields of interest to mentees offer.
- The mentor answers participants' questions and gives additional tips.

Summary and Next Steps (15 min)

- Summarize the key lessons and decisions of the meeting.
- Ensure the date and themes of the next meeting. Students can think about questions in advance and send them to the mentor before the next time.

Mentoring 3

Job Search and Job Interview

Job Search Process in Finland (30 min)

- The mentor presents the stages of the job search process in Finland and gives tips on where to look for jobs in Finland.
- What are the stages of the job search process in Finland?

There are many job search channels in Finland that you can use in your job search. Here are some key channels:

- **Työmarkkinatori:** A digital meeting place where job seekers and employers can find each other, manage work-related matters, and receive support at different stages of their careers.
- **Duunitori:** Finland's largest job search engine that gathers open job positions from various sources. Duunitori also provides a lot of useful information on job search and career development.
- **Kuntarekry:** Open job positions in municipalities and cities can be found through Kuntarekry.
- **Valtiolle.fi:** Open job positions in the state are listed on this website.
- **Monster.fi:** International job search website that also offers open job positions in Finland.
- **LinkedIn:** Professional networking site where you can search for jobs, network, and follow companies.
- **Recruitment companies:** Many private recruitment companies, such as Adecco, Eezy, Manpower, and Barona, offer job search services and open job positions.

English-speaking job positions in Finland can be found from various sources. Here are some key channels:

- **Indeed:** Indeed website has a wide range of English-speaking job positions in different fields.
 - **LinkedIn:** LinkedIn is an excellent place to search for international and English-speaking job positions. You can also network and follow companies that offer jobs in English.
 - **Jobs in Finland:** This website is specifically aimed at foreign job seekers and offers English-speaking job positions in Finland.
 - **The Hub:** The Hub focuses on startup companies and offers many English-speaking job positions in technology companies.
 - **Glassdoor:** Glassdoor offers job positions and employer reviews, and you can search for English-speaking job positions in Finland.
 - **Monster:** Monster website also has a wide range of job positions, including English-speaking positions.
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- Discuss the transition to working life and how to utilize what you have learned in your studies in working life.
 - The importance of professional development and continuous learning. Discuss what things are worth studying at work and alongside work after graduation.
 - How to prepare for a call to the recruiting manager during the application phase?
 - The mentor shares their own career path and gives practical examples.

Job Interview (30 min)

- How do I prepare for a job interview?
- Workshop where the student thinks about their elevator pitch about themselves.
- What do I bring to the room when I walk in? What can I offer the employer?
- The importance of courage and personality in the interview.

Rules and Practices of Working Life (30 min)

- The rules and practices of Finnish working life, such as working time legislation, employment contracts, and employee rights and obligations.
 - ✓ Working time legislation: Finnish working time legislation defines working hours, overtime, and rest periods that the employer must consider.
 - ✓ Employment contracts: Employment contracts are written agreements between the employer and the employee that define the terms and obligations of the work.
 - ✓ Employee rights: Employee rights include, among other things, the right to a safe working environment, salary, and occupational health care.
 - ✓ Employee obligations: Employee obligations include, among other things, the obligation to comply with working hours, perform work carefully and follow workplace rules.
 - ✓ Occupational health care: Occupational health care provides employees with preventive health care and maintenance of work ability.
 - ✓ Family leave: Family leave allows employees to take time off to start a family and care for children.
 - ✓ Salary and benefits: Salary and benefits include the salary received by the employee and other benefits, such as holidays and bonuses.

Group Discussion and Q&A (15 min)

- Group members share their views and experiences on the job search process.
- Students share their own job interview experiences.
- The mentor answers participants' questions and gives additional tips.

Summary and Next Steps (15 min)

- Summarize the key lessons and decisions of the meeting.
- Ensure the date and themes of the next meeting. Students can think about questions in advance and send them to the mentor before the next time.

Company Visit

Visit to the mentor's company

Students get to see a Finnish workplace and see in practice how working life works.

- What kind of work-related expectations and wishes do mentees have?
- What kind of tasks are they interested in?
- What kind of work environments do they find pleasant?

Questions to Help Mentoring

Questions are a central part of mentoring because they help the mentee reflect on their thoughts, feelings, and goals. Well-formulated questions can open new perspectives and promote deep discussion. In mentoring, questions can help the mentee find their own answers and solve problems independently.

Open questions are particularly useful because they encourage broader and deeper answers. Here are some examples of open questions that can activate students to discuss in a group:

1. **What do you think about this topic?**
2. **How would you describe your experience with this matter?**
3. **Can you tell more about this situation and how it affected you?**
4. **Why did you choose this approach?**
5. **What challenges do you see in this method?**
6. **How could we improve this process?**
7. **What new ideas do you have for solving this problem?**
8. **How has this experience changed your views?**

These questions help students reflect more deeply and share their thoughts openly, which can lead to richer and more diverse discussion.

Here are some open questions that can help activate students to discuss job search and career development in Finland:

Job Search in Finland

- How have you experienced job search in Finland?
- What do you think are the biggest challenges in job search here?
- What tips would you give to other job seekers in Finland?
- How have you utilized different job search channels?
- How have cultural differences affected your job search in Finland?

Own Career Development in Finland

- How have you planned your own career development in Finland?
- What factors have influenced your career choices here?
- How have you utilized opportunities to develop professionally in Finland?
- How do you maintain motivation and develop your skills in your work?
- How has networking helped you in your career in Finland?

Structure of the Discussion

A coaching mentoring discussion can be divided into four main phases: topic of discussion, mapping the initial situation, setting goals, and creating an action plan. In each phase, different questions are used to help the mentee reflect on their situation and progress towards their goals.

1. Choosing the Topic

General questions:

- What do you want to discuss today?
- What is the topic of today's discussion?
- What has already been started and what should be done next?

2. Mapping the Initial Situation

In this phase, the aim is to understand the mentee's current situation, strengths, weaknesses, and possible obstacles. The goal is to get a comprehensive picture of the initial situation.

Questions:

- How would you describe your current situation?
- What are your biggest challenges at the moment?
- What works and what doesn't work?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What resources do you have available?
- How have you reached this point in your career?

3. Setting Goals

In this phase, clear and concrete goals are defined that the mentee aims to achieve. The goals should be realistic and measurable.

Questions:

- What do you want to achieve during the coaching?
- Why is this goal important to you?
- How do you know you have achieved your goal?
- What are the intermediate goals on the way to the main goal?
- How does this goal affect other areas of your life?

4. Creating an Action Plan

In this phase, a concrete plan is created to help the mentee achieve their goals. The plan includes step-by-step actions and schedules.

Questions:

- What concrete actions do you need to take to achieve your goal?
- What are you going to do now?
- What options do you choose?
- When will you start (each phase)?
- What could prevent you from progressing and how will you overcome it?
- What are the first steps you need to take?
- What resources do you need to implement the plan?
- How will you monitor your progress?
- What will you do if you encounter obstacles or challenges along the way?

These questions can help the mentee understand their current situation, set clear goals, and create an effective plan to achieve them.

Evaluation on a Scale

Scaling in its simplest form means getting the mentee to measure or rate a specific question. The most commonly used scale is 0–10 because it provides enough room for variation. These questions can help the mentor and mentee get a clearer picture of the current situation and progress, and serve as a basis for deeper discussions.

Goal: On a scale of 1–10, how good would you like your job search skills to be?

Current State: On a scale of 1–10, how would you rate your current job search skills?

Current State: What do you need more or less of to improve your skills?

Action Plan: What is the first step you will take to improve your skills? When will you do it? Who can help you with it?

Question Set for Mentors at Different Stages of the Process



Open Questions

Open questions are used to gather information, clarify, and enhance collaboration between the mentor and the mentee.

Open questions start with words like:

- How?
- What?
- When?
- Where?
- Who?
- What else?

The idea of coaching mentoring is to encourage the mentee to speak most of the time, and you can support this with open questions. Open questions invite the mentee to think, reflect, doubt, and be inspired.

Topic Questions

- What do you want to talk about?
- What is the topic of today's discussion?
- What is on your mind today?

Goal-related Questions

- Why do you want to achieve this goal?
- What are the possible alternative ways to achieve the same?
- What is the goal of this discussion?
- What is the long-term goal?
- What is the short-term goal?
- If everything went as well as possible, what would be the best possible outcome?
- How do you know you have achieved your goal?
- How do you measure your goal?

Current Situation Questions

- What is happening now?
- What is the current situation like?
- What works and what doesn't?
- Do you have enough time to achieve your goal?
- How easy is it to handle things?
- How often have you tried?
- Who is involved?
- What is your role in the team?
- What has already been started?

Option Selection Questions

- How long does it take to achieve each option?
- What resources would be needed?
- What are the risks of each option?
- What criteria do you use to choose the best option?
- What should you do first, next, last?
- What are the costs and benefits of each idea?
- If you had more confidence, what would you try?



Action Plan Questions

- What are you going to do now?
- What options do you choose?
- Where do you start first?
- When will you start (each phase)?
- What could prevent you from moving forward?
- And how will you overcome the obstacle?
- What else are you going to do?
- Who needs to know about your goal or action plan?
- Who could help you?
- What really excites you about starting this project?

Ending the Mentoring Process

The mentoring process is always of a certain, predetermined length. When the set goals or date are achieved, the mentoring relationship is ended. Ending the mentoring process can be as significant as starting it, and it provides an opportunity to reflect and celebrate the shared journey. This can include a final evaluation where both parties assess achievements and learning experiences. A well-planned ending process ensures that the mentoring relationship ends positively and that both parties feel they have achieved something meaningful. This can also lay the foundation for future mentoring relationships and continuous professional development. Here are some key things to consider:

- 1. Summary and Evaluation:** It is important to review the goals and learning experiences achieved during the mentoring process. This helps both parties understand what has been learned and where there is still room for improvement.
- 2. Feedback:** Both parties should give and receive feedback. This can help improve future mentoring relationships and develop the mentoring program in general.
- 3. Thanks and Celebration:** It is important to recognize the contributions of both parties and celebrate achievements. This can be a formal event or a simple thank you message.
- 4. Networking:** Encourage the mentee to continue networking and utilize the contacts made during the mentoring relationship.

A well-planned ending process ensures that the mentoring relationship ends positively and that both parties feel they have achieved something meaningful. This can also lay the foundation for future mentoring relationships and continuous professional development.

Final Words and Thanks

Mentoring is a valuable and versatile tool that supports the development of both individuals and organizations. This guide has provided a comprehensive overview of the processes, benefits, and practical implementation of mentoring and group mentoring. We hope you have found useful tips and inspiration for your own mentoring work.

By sharing your expertise with international students, you are doing both socially and personally good. Immigration brings diverse skills, new perspectives, and innovations that are vital for Finland's growth and development.



Thank you

We want to thank all the mentors and mentees who have participated in this program and shared their valuable time and expertise. Your contribution has been invaluable, and we hope you have gained as much as you have given.

Thanks also to everyone who has supported and enabled the implementation of this mentoring program now and in the future.



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