



## Counsel Guiding Counsel: The Path to Excellence CCCA Mentoring Program FAQs

### I. What is the purpose of the “Counsel Guiding Counsel: The Path to Excellence” Mentoring Program?

The *Counsel Guiding Counsel: The Path to Excellence* mentoring program offers a unique opportunity and benefit for CCCA members.

As mentees, in-house counsel who choose to be mentored are matched to experienced in-house counsel who act as mentors, sharing the expertise and wisdom they’ve gained in this vital organizational role.

Knowledge transfer, fostering collegiality, and encouraging excellence among Canada’s in-house counsel are the intended outcomes of the mentoring program.

### II. What is this program’s approach to mentoring?

The CCCA mentoring program engages experienced counsel to be mentors who offer advice and guidance to less experienced counsel committed to establishing short and longer term career goals and pursuing development in real-time as mentees.

Mentees drive the mentoring conversations. You identify, and make known to your mentor the specific professional skills, knowledge, attributes or capabilities you want to address that you believe will enhance your success and effectiveness at this point in your career.

Mentors, through conversations; asking good questions; actively listening; possibly reviewing material or assigning specific development tasks, gain an understanding of mentee’s work context; approaches taken; strengths; or challenges to be overcome. Using your own experiences as in-house counsel, you may challenge their assumptions; provide candid feedback; suggest alternatives; and offer appropriate advice and guidance.

### III. How do I know if I’m ready to be a mentor?

It’s easy to think we don’t have enough expertise to offer someone else! In-house counsel who have been in the role for five years or more, have likely gained hard-won experience a mentee can benefit from. You may be the kind of person whose colleagues inside or outside the organization readily seek out to ask for an opinion, advice, or a point of view. Someone may have said you are a great listener, or that you would be an effective mentor. You may have reflected on your own career and noted moments where others helped you along the way and feel it’s time to give back, even if that means learning as you go!

### IV. What time commitment is a mentee or mentor expected to make?

Both mentees and mentors are actively involved in their mentoring relationship.

You are asked to meet on a regular basis for six months—ideally, at least once a month. This allows time to build a trusted relationship, which is at the core of a valuable mentoring experience. The focused and limited time allows mentees to try new approaches, get feedback, develop new capabilities, and see results!

Mentees and mentors determine the specific time commitment each can make. Mentoring pairs may be able to meet for a two-hour lunch once a month. Another pair may prefer to meet weekly by Skype for 30 minutes. Another pair may meet face-to-face every other meeting with phone meetings in between. There are lots of possibilities and the key is that your arrangement work for you!