

The Mentoring Handbook

A Brief Guide to Your Mentoring Journey

Centria University of Applied Sciences mentoring program

CROSS-CULTURAL CAREER CATALYST

funded by the Regional Council of Ostrobothnia



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PARTICIPATION DIPLOMA

This certifies that

has participated in
Centria University of Applied Sciences
Mentoring Program
Cross-Cultural Career Catalyst

A program dedicated to fostering growth,
collaboration, and knowledge sharing.

Together, we inspire and grow.



Issued on

Coordinator's Name

WELCOME TO CROSS-CULTURAL CAREER CATALYST - CENTRIA'S MENTORING PROGRAM

We're glad that You have decided to be part of this program arranged by Centria University of Applied Sciences (Centria).

This handbook supports mentor pairs throughout the program. It provides guidance on mentoring, theme suggestions, useful links, a glossary and space for your own notes and doodles.

Additionally, it includes tips and information on useful places and websites in the region to enhance your everyday life.

In the last gathering, the Summit Mingle the Centria representatives will sign your Participation Diploma.

**“Today the
lines between
mentoring and
networking are
blurring.
Welcome to
the world of
mentworking.”**

Julie Winkle Giulioni

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01

MENTORSHIP IN A NUTSHELL

Mentor: An experienced individual from business life in Finland

Student mentee: Centria's student

Mentoring is a beneficial relationship where an experienced individual, or **mentor**, guides someone less experienced, known as the **student mentee**. This relationship is vital for transferring knowledge, offering emotional support, and assisting mentees in setting goals, learning new skills, building confidence, and making wise career decisions.


Studies show that effective mentoring brings many benefits, such as improving mentees' attitudes, behaviors, health, social skills, and professional motivation. These advantages depend on a mentor-mentee relationship characterized by **trust, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to growth**.

Mentorship provides a dynamic environment where both mentor and student mentee actively learn, experiment, and reflect. To foster a strong bond, both parties should display behaviors that encourage trust and respect. The mentor's support and mutual interactions can enrich the mentorship experience, helping the mentor gain new perspectives and deepen the relationship with the student mentee.

Cross-Cultural Career Catalyst (4C) by Centria aims to strengthen ties between education and local businesses, helping bridge the gap between local employers and international students. This project helps students expand their professional networks and encourages them to remain in the region post-graduation. It also allows mentors to develop leadership skills, gain new insights, and contribute to a more inclusive society.

Overall, mentoring is about **forming strong personal connections that benefit all participants**. Through this collaborative process, mentors and mentees explore, reflect, and grow together.

MY GOALS:



Take a moment to jot down what you hope to achieve by participating in this program in the space provided on this spread.

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EFFECTIVE MENTORSHIP PRACTICES

In mentorship, it's very important to **build a strong base of mutual respect, trust, and understanding**. This helps both mentors and mentees benefit and grow from the relationship. Keeping everything discussed private, unless agreed otherwise, **creates a safe space for open sharing**.

Good communication is key. Both mentors and mentees should make sure they speak openly and listen well to understand each other better. Building trust takes time, so it's important to start by really getting to know one another.

It's also important to respect each other's time. This means being punctual and letting the other person know in advance if you need to reschedule. Everyone should keep an open mind and respect differing viewpoints, which can enrich the mentorship experience.

If anything is unclear, especially if there are language differences, it's crucial to **ask for clarification to avoid misunderstandings**.

Each person should handle their own expenses unless you've agreed otherwise. For example you can meet in a café or restaurant.

The mentor is advised to introduce the mentee to Finnish culture and working life. However, the mentor is not expected to arrange a job or internship for the mentee. Mentors can instead provide tools for the student to handle challenges.

By following these simple rules, the mentorship experience can be rewarding and lead to personal and professional growth for both mentors and mentees. If any issues come up, they should be resolved promptly. **We encourage you to reach out to the program organizers with a low threshold for support, ideas, or advice.**

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MENTORING PROGRAM



Utilize this space to create a mind map that captures your vision for the mentoring program.

MENTEE

MENTOR

05

PRACTICALITIES

Each mentoring relationship is unique, reflecting the individual needs of the mentee as well as the skills and experiences of the mentor. The most important thing is to be authentic—be yourself. Listen actively, ask questions, and share your own experiences openly. While it can be helpful to draw inspiration from other mentor-mentee pairs, it's crucial not to fall into the trap of excessive comparison, as each pairing has its own dynamics.

In the context of one-on-one meetings, these should occur once a month, allowing for a consistent yet flexible interaction rhythm. While the student mentee is in charge of managing these meetings, both mentors and mentees have the flexibility to arrange them according to their schedules and can decide whether to meet in person or online.

Within this handbook, there is space provided for reflection and making notes. Use this space to jot down any insights, questions, or thoughts that arise during your mentoring journey.

As for the topics of discussion, these can vary widely depending on the needs and interests. Some suggested topics include career development strategies, skill enhancement, overcoming professional challenges, and setting long-term career goals.

Joint meetings, on the other hand, are arranged by Centria and are mandatory for all participants. These meetings serve multiple purposes: they facilitate networking, cover relevant topics, and allow participants to exchange experiences. The schedule for these includes a kick-off meeting and three additional gatherings focused on networking and learning from experts.

Before attending each one-on-one meeting, take some time to consider what topics you wish to discuss with your pair. This preparation helps you make the most of each session. Remind yourself of the goals you've set for the mentoring program and assess how the meetings are helping you progress towards these goals.

After each meeting, take a moment to reflect on the topics discussed, key takeaways, practical applications, challenges encountered, and areas for improvement for the next meeting. This continuous loop of preparation, engagement, and reflection is essential to getting the most out of the mentoring process.

FINNISH TIME CULTURE – WHY EVERY MINUTE COUNTS

In Finland, time is highly respected, and being on time is considered a sign of professionalism and respect for others.

Here are some key points to keep in mind:

Arrive on time – Being late can be seen as disrespectful. If a meeting starts at 14:00, it means you should be ready before that time, not arriving at 14:05.

Plan ahead – Check the schedule in advance and allow extra time for any delays (public transport, finding the meeting room, etc.).

Inform if you are late – If you are delayed for any reason, please notify your mentor or organizer as soon as possible.

Respect everyone's time – Finnish culture values efficiency, and meetings usually start and end as planned.

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SCHEDULE FOR ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS

Date, time, place:

Add reminders in your digital calendar as well.

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SELF-REFLECTION:

During the program, think about the goals you've reached so far, what you're learning about yourself, and what you can improve.

Visit Kokkola's guide to must-see places and unforgettable experiences



www.visitkokkola.fi/en

Neristan – the old wooden town of Kokkola

The Old Wooden Town Neristan is a gem at the centre of Kokkola and it is one of our country's most extensively preserved historical area of wooden houses. Enjoy the walking along the ready-planned route and learn about the interesting history of seafaring town of Kokkola.

Boat houses along Sunti

Bike along the bay of Sunti or enjoy the 2km walk from the city centre towards the sea. Close to the sea you find almost hundred old red boathouses. Some of the boathouses are built at the end of 19th century. Due to the land uplift in the region the boat houses are today remarkably higher up than the waterline.

The lighthouse island of Tankar

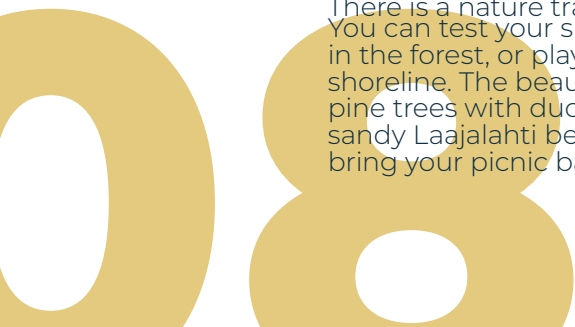
The picturesque island is a living example of seafaring and fishing tradition in Kokkola. M/S Jenny cruises to Tankar Osland from Meripuisto from June to September. It is possible to stay overnight on this remote island.

Ohtakari fishing village and Vattaja sand dunes

The red fisherman huts reflecting in the rough northern sea is the iconic picture taken in Ohtakari village. There is an easy nature trail and bird tower for great views. Along the same road is located Vattaja sand dunes. It means 15 kilometres of untouched beaches.

Laajalahti

There is a nature trail in the area and two birdwatching towers. You can test your skills on a full 18-hole disc golf course hidden in the forest, or play a game of beach volleyball near the sandy shoreline. The beautiful dune landscape is framed by huge pine trees with duckboards running between them to the sandy Laajalahti beach. There are many grill huts in the area, so bring your picnic basket with you.



Visit pietarsaari's guide to must-see places and unforgettable experiences

Visit one of many museums in Jakobstad

Jakobstad is full of fascinating museums. Have you already visited The Arctic Museum Nanoq, The Tobacco Museum or The Malm House? Remember to bring your student card or museum card with you.

Discover the cafés in Jakobstad

Looking for a place to study or to enjoy a cup of coffee with pastries? Visit for example Fiika Café or Music Café After Eight for a nice study session or get the city's best cinnamon buns at Café Skorpan in the old wooden house neighborhood Skata.

Combine culture and outdoor recreation

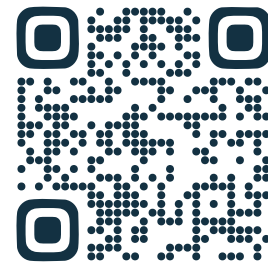
At the old harbor area you can find lots of maritime history, a marina with beautiful wooden boat houses, a beach and fitness facilities. Go for a walk along the sea and discover many beautiful views.

Take a scenic stroll in Fäboda

Find peace in the beautiful forests of Fäboda by walking one of the many nature trails. People come here all year round to enjoy all kinds of outdoor activities: swimming, sunbathing, berry-picking, fishing, hunting, hiking, biking and cross-country skiing. If you get thirsty or hungry you can stop by Fäboda Coffee House to get your energy up again.

Discover beautiful gardens

Jakobstad is the city of parks. Visit Aspegren Garden or The School Garden in the city center to find numerous flowers with various shapes and colors. If you want to buy floral decorations for your home or experience an idyllic garden world you can visit Sunds Trädgård.



www.en.visitjakobstad.fi

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MORE USEFUL INFORMATION

Centria's integration services have compiled a comprehensive resource bank on their website, containing useful information and links to everything from local leisure activities to starting a career in Finland.

The page also features a well-detailed FAQ section and provides easy access to the career and work-life services offered to Centria students, both of which are definitely worth exploring.



<https://net.centria.fi/en/for-students/students-guide/integration-services/>

MORE USEFUL INFORMATION

Information and guidance:

kokkola.fi/en/city-of-kokkola/customer-service-and-advisory-services/welcomeoffice/
- Welcome Office Kokkola

<https://en.jakobstad.fi/new-residents/integration-of-immigrants-in-the-jakobstads-region/information-and-guidance-services-for-immigrants-the-integration-port>
- Integration Port Pietarsaari

Career and job seeking sites:

www.kokkolaworks.fi/en/
- Kokkola Works campaign site

www.jakobstadsregionen.fi/en/work-here/
- Work places and open jobs in the Jakobstad region

www.workinfinland.com/en/open-jobs/
- Nationwide open jobs site

www.tyomarkkinatori.fi/en
- Nationwide open jobs site

Other:

Glocal talents:
<https://www.ostro.chamber.fi/en/current-affairs/glocal-talents/>

Business advisors:
Concordia: www.jakobstadsregionen.fi/en/

Kosek: www.kosek.fi/en/

Startup Refugees: <https://startuprefugees.com/>

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NOTES:

NOTES:

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NOTES:

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Favorite Foods:

Share experiences with traditional (Finnish) dishes and favorite local restaurants.

Cultural Festivals and Events:

Talk about local festivals, events, or traditions, and share experiences attending them.

Outdoor Activities:

Discuss favorite outdoor activities in Finland, such as hiking, skiing, or enjoying nature.

Travel Adventures:

Share travel stories within Finland or other places, and discuss must-visit spots.

Hobbies and Interests:

Explore each other's hobbies, whether it's sports, arts, music, or something unique.

Finnish Language Fun:

Share funny or interesting Finnish phrases and any language-learning tips.

Coping with Homesickness:

Discuss ways to handle homesickness and maintain connections with home.

Studying Abroad Experiences:

Share experiences and challenges of studying in a foreign country.

Local Customs and Etiquette:

Talk about interesting customs or etiquette quirks that might differ from each other's cultures.

Movies and TV Shows:

Discuss favorite films or series, especially those from Finland or the mentee's home country.

Music and Arts:

Explore each other's music preferences, favorite artists, or local art scenes.

Weather and Seasons:

Share thoughts on the Finnish weather and favorite seasons, along with seasonal activities.

Social Life:

Talk about making friends in a new country and tips for socializing.

Books and Literature:

Discuss favorite books or authors, particularly those from Finland or their home country.

Technology and Gadgets:

Share opinions on tech trends or favorite gadgets, especially in a Finnish context.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Favorite Projects:

Discuss the mentor's favorite projects or roles they've worked on and what made them special.

Impactful Mentors:

Reflect on the mentors who have influenced the mentor's career and what they learned from them.

Personal Development:

Share insights on the importance of continuous learning and personal development throughout their career.

Navigating Challenges:

Discuss challenges the mentor has faced in their career and how they overcame them.

Workplace Trends:

Share observations on how their industry has evolved over the years and what the future might hold.

Advice for New Graduates:

Offer practical advice for students entering the workforce, based on the mentor's experiences.

Expectations of Studying Abroad:

Discuss initial expectations before coming to Finland and how they compare to reality.

Cultural Shock:

Share experiences of cultural differences that stood out, both positively and negatively.

Academic Challenges:

Talk about specific challenges faced in their studies and how they're addressing them.

Career Aspirations:

Share long-term career goals and aspirations, including industries of interest.

Adaptation Strategies:

Discuss how they are adapting to Finnish culture and society.

Making Friends:

Share experiences with making friends in a new country and any tips they've found helpful.

Work Experience:

Talk about any internships or part-time jobs they've had and what they learned from those experiences.

Favorite Aspects of Finland:

Discuss what they love most about living in Finland, from scenery to lifestyle.

Personal Growth:

Reflect on how studying abroad has changed their perspective and contributed to personal growth.

Support Systems:

Talk about the support systems such as friends, family, or university resources.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Cultural Differences in the Workplace:

Share experiences and discuss how cultural backgrounds influence work styles and communication.

Career Pathways in Finland:

Explore various industries and career opportunities available in Finland, including local job market trends.

Networking Strategies:

Discuss effective networking techniques, including leveraging LinkedIn and local professional associations.

Work-Life Balance in Finland:

Share insights on balancing work responsibilities and personal life, highlighting Finnish work culture.

Job Search Tips:

Offer advice on crafting resumes and cover letters tailored to Finnish employers and tips for acing interviews.

Mentoring Experiences:

Share personal experiences with mentorship, discussing what has worked and what hasn't.

Building Professional Skills:

Identify key skills that are valuable in the Finnish job market and discuss ways to develop them.

Language Skills:

Discuss the importance of Finnish and Swedish language skills in the workplace and resources for learning them.

Cultural Integration:

Talk about adapting to Finnish society, including social norms, traditions, and public services.

Innovation and Startups:

Explore the Finnish startup ecosystem and how international students can engage with it.

Workplace Diversity:

Discuss the value of diversity in the workplace and how to promote inclusive environments.

Personal Development Goals:

Set and discuss personal and professional development goals for the mentee.

Career Journey:

Share the mentor's personal career path, including challenges and milestones along the way.

Lessons Learned:

Discuss significant lessons the mentor has learned from their experiences in the workplace.

Workplace Anecdotes:

Share interesting or funny stories from past jobs that highlight workplace culture.

Balancing Work and Personal Life:

Talk about strategies the mentor has used to maintain a healthy work-life balance.



**REGIONAL COUNCIL
OF OSTROBOTHNIA**

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