

The Monthly Mentor

CREATING A CULTURE OF MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

By: **Ffiona Rees**

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Without going into too much detail, I find it's helpful to understand the origin of the term "mentor." It originated in Greek mythology and is often believed to refer to someone who serves as an experienced or trusted teacher, adviser, or guide.

While this is true, it is often forgotten that, in its original form, the role of Mentor was actually multiple people serving independently as a teacher, adviser, coach, AND guide. Personally, I find this distinction to be a small but critical one. We all need multiple mentors who will challenge, support, and encourage us in multiple ways and in a variety of professional and personal settings. We should never be dependent on one or two individuals to serve as our mentors, but rather have a number of people who are mentoring us on a regular basis.

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Don't forget!



MYP Shared
Resources



Links of interest:

[5 Ways to Become a Better Mentor](#)

[Top 10 Ways for Being a Good Mentee](#)

[NACAC: Professional Certificate - International University Advocate](#)

[NACAC: Professional Certificate - College Admission for Emerging Leaders](#)

[NACAC: Tons of great on-demand Webinars for all sides of the desk](#)

Next All Group Meeting:

Tues, November 23
(9:00 am EDT, 3:00 pm CET, 10:00 pm SG)

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So, every few years, I ask myself the questions below and take the time to write down my answers.

However, there are a few rules...

1. Think about colleagues (past and present), people in your workplace AND professional colleagues through organizations like International ACAC, and consider people who may work for you. (I learn just as much from my team as I do my colleagues.)
2. You can't list your direct supervisor for any of these questions. (Your supervisor should automatically be doing most of these things for you. And if they aren't, that's a whole different conversation!)
3. You can't list the same person more than twice. Ideally, you should have more than four different people listed. If you're struggling to find more than your supervisor and/or the same person, then you're overdependent on the same people to serve as mentors.

Without further ado, the questions are:

Who do I turn to when:

- I need professional advice?
- I've had a professional challenge and I'm unsure of next steps?
- I'm looking for support?
- I need someone to tell me the truth, even when it's hard to hear?
- I want career advancement tips?

Who will expose me to:

- A professional challenge in my workplace that I wouldn't see for myself?
- New opportunities professionally, that are outside my direct workplace?
- Perspectives/projects/conversations that I'm unlikely to hear otherwise?
- New colleagues whom I may not otherwise easily meet?

Once completed, this exercise should challenge you, help identify areas where you need to find new or more mentors, and focus your attention on the plethora of mentorship opportunities available to you.

Personally, I'm constantly amazed by how much mentorship, support, and growth I've received through my workplace, but also through my involvement in organizations like International ACAC and NACAC. Friendships and conversations started over coffee, on the road, and even virtually have often inspired new opportunities for me—more introductions to new colleagues and new thoughts, inclusion in a panel presentation, and/or the suggestion to join a committee/work group/leadership group. I'm hopeful that you, too, will have the same experience, and I'm certain that joining the Mentor Program is a great step.

-- **Ffiona Rees**

MENTOR/MENTEE SPOTLIGHT

Heidi Buffington, Director of Admissions, Saint Louis University-Madrid Campus (Spain)

Shandin Rickard-Hughes, Regional Manager - Americas, University of Gloucestershire (UK)

Shandin and Heidi, both U.S. Americans living in Europe, have found commonalities within their institutions despite one being a small U.S. branch campus in Spain and the other a medium-sized public university in the UK. They're both dedicated to student recruitment and helping other U.S. students to study abroad – something they agree to be an incredible, life-changing opportunity.

"I think IACAC did a great job of pairing us together, because in our first meeting we ran out of time and hadn't even gotten to talk much about work. This kind of comradery and ease of conversation makes for a great working relationship." – Heidi Buffington

The pair established goals around shared challenges: identifying efficiencies when one "wears many hats," advocating for international students (and international offices), and they're hoping to tackle the eternal question of how much helicopter parenting is okay, and when (and how) does one draw the line. They start our meetings by sharing a success, a challenge, and something they've learned or pulled from the shared resources. Then they dedicate remaining time to talking about their goals.

"I didn't hesitate to sign up when the call came – I have had informal mentors as well as a formal coach and every such relationship has been incredibly impactful in my career. I loved the structure of the Mentor Year Program – I find it difficult to network, especially globally, without some structure (I'm a big ol' introvert). Right away on meeting Heidi, I knew I'd made a great choice to get involved." – Shandin Rickard-Hughes

"We're excited to see where our conversations take us, not only in our work but also our own professional development as leaders and international educators." – Heidi and Shandin

**Shandin
Rickard-
Hughes**



**Heidi
Buffington**

INTERNATIONAL ACAC EVENTS -- What's on for November:

Strategic Planning work for International ACAC continues, with a number of upcoming engagement opportunities for members through the end of 2021! The next step is a series of focus groups (Nov 8 - 19th) to build on the feedback gathered to date. Be sure to watch your email for more information and plan to participate – your involvement is important to shaping the future of the organization!

Events Calendar [Linked Here](#)

Re-engage with the 2021 Conference Sessions during the upcoming Conference Watch Parties!

