

Mentor Tips & Preparation Guide



Startup Tucson’s vision is to have a diverse, growing group of mentors and subject matter experts who are consistently involved with entrepreneurs in ways that they find personally fulfilling and that work for their busy schedules. We offer a variety of opportunities for mentors to engage with mentees, including on-demand meetings, Action Advising, judging at pitch events, and serving as panelists and guest speakers.

Our programs and services work together to help founders reduce risk, increase profits, and minimize growing pains, with the Lean Business Model Canvas as the foundational tool. Our mentors play a vital role in helping entrepreneurs apply these concepts to their real life business decisions. They're in it TOGETHER with the entrepreneur to find the best solution for their business.

We are Industry Agnostic and support All-Stages and Types of Entrepreneurs. Because of this, entrepreneurs will interact with us at various points in their journey. We work with them directly through programming and 1:1 coaching, and once they are ready and depending on their needs, we may then pair them with a mentor to get additional support from subject matter experts.

- Mentors Provide Industry Insights
 - Mentors Connect to Resources
- Mentors Make Introductions
 - Mentors Provide Feedback

"Founders who are mentored are 2x more likely to thrive."

Mentoring Basics: Your Role



- Provide Feedback and Advice:** Provide specialized recommendations based on your industry knowledge and personal expertise.
- Listen. Guide.:** Ask them questions to help them get to the answers they need -- both on what they already have done, their conclusions/assumptions but also on what they might do next. Help them find a path -- don't just tell them what to do or give away all of the answers.
- Advocate / Support:** Give constructive feedback while also providing support and enthusiasm. You're in it TOGETHER with them to find the best solution for their business.

Remember, Mentors are Coaches, Not Consultants!

Mentoring Basics: Best Practices



Mentoring Tips

- Use and establish clear communication expectations and clarify at the beginning the time you can spend and the limitations of your support
- Keep It Simple - Don't assume they know as much as you or are starting with the same assumptions
- Approach the relationship with Honesty and Empathy
- Define your expertise upfront - tell them when something is outside of this area
- Keep Startup Tucson in the loop - we have new programs, resources, worksheets, etc. all the time, refer them back to us for additional support/follow-up

Mentoring Don'ts

- Offer opinions as facts
- Guess - offer what sounds like reasonable advice
- Launch into stories before asking questions that draw out the important details of the problem
- Assume things about your mentee
- Skip the obvious
- Interrupt or give feedback that breaks their confidence
- Value your time more than theirs

Sample Feedback Format: I like | I wish | I wonder

Mentor Agreement & Rules



Come prepared.
We'll do our best to share mentee info in advance and encourage you to research your mentee online and check out their LinkedIn.

Important things to remember from the Mentor Agreement:

- If a mentee **chooses to hire your services**, you must let the **Startup Tucson team know** that the nature of the relationship is changing.
- Mentors shall have **no financial interest** in a mentored company while they are serving as mentors for a Startup Tucson program.
- Mentors should **disclose to Startup Tucson any possible or potential conflicts** in any mentoring relationship.
- Mentors **should not solicit for any services or products** (that is, not sell any products or services to the mentees) while acting in an advisory capacity.