



WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
MIKE ILITCH
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
Mentorship Program

Ilitch School Mentorship Program Mentee Handbook

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Welcome to the Ilitch School Mentorship Program

We're excited to welcome you to the Wayne State University (WSU) Ilitch School of Business Mentorship Program (ISMP). We look forward to collaborating with you throughout your journey as a mentee! The ISMP assists undergraduate business students in exploring potential career paths, while building confidence and preparing them for life after graduation. This program partners Mike Ilitch School of Business students with business professionals to guide them through career planning, resume development, job shadowing, networking, and the establishment of long-term professional relationships.

Mentorship is more than offering advice. It's about unlocking potential, inspiring confidence, and guiding a young professional as they discover their true capabilities.

Program Requirements and Expectations

As a mentee in the ISMP, you are expected to:

- Conduct an introduction interview with an ISMP administrator before September 11
- Attend one mandatory in-person orientation session from September 21-24
- Introduce yourself to your mentor when matched
- Complete all required milestones in [Xinspire](#)
- Meet your mentor at least **once a month**, September through April
- Maintain regular contact with your mentor between meetings
- Reach out to ISMP administrators immediately if you run into any problems or have questions

Program Format

Online one-on-one mentoring through [Xinspire](#). The program runs from **September through April**.

Open to all business students at all levels. Freshmen through seniors. Focused on real-world skills, personalized guidance, and long-term professional relationships.

Time Commitment

Meet your mentor at least once a month from September through April. Give at least 48 hours' notice if you need to reschedule. Once a meeting is set, maintaining it is your top priority.

Be respectful of your mentor's time. They are volunteering to support you.

Professional Expectations

The ISMP complies with the ethical standards of NACE. All mentees must abide by the WSU Student Code of Conduct and act professionally at all times.

- Represent the WSU Ilitch School community with integrity

- Maintain confidentiality of your mentor’s workplace and work-related information
- Do not post about your mentor or their workplace on social media without explicit permission
- Dress [appropriately](#) when visiting your mentor’s workplace. Ask at least 24 hours in advance what the dress code is
- Arrive on time and prepared; do not conduct personal business during meetings
- Follow through on commitments and communicate honestly and respectfully
- Seek feedback, accept constructive criticism, and continuously strive to improve
- Report any uncomfortable or unethical situations to the Program Administrators immediately

Who are the Mentors?

Mentors in the ISMP are experienced business professionals who share common interests with their mentees. They volunteer their time and knowledge to serve as coaches and advisors, providing access and opportunity.

- Monthly meetings via phone, video conference, or in-person at an agreed upon location
- Support and encouragement through guidance, advice, and constructive criticism
- May provide access to their professional networks and organizational circles
- Provide goal clarity by assisting in better understanding your path and how to achieve it

Meeting Your Mentor

You are responsible for reaching out and setting up the initial meeting. **Contact your mentor within the first 10 days of being matched.**

1. View mentor’s profile in Xinspire
2. Reach out to your mentor to introduce yourself and exchange contact information and preferred communication methods
3. Establish a time to meet when both are available

Important: Requests for a different mentor based on academic background will not be accommodated. Keep an open mind. Mentors bring years of experience applicable across many fields and careers.

Navigating Your Mentorship

Meeting regularly is critical to establishing a strong relationship. Plan to connect at least once a month. This program is very much **“what you put into it is what you get out of it.”**

It is YOUR responsibility, not your mentor’s, to lead the relationship.

- Schedule all meetings, confirm each one, set the agenda, and follow up afterward
- Email, call, or arrange to meet at your mentor’s workplace or another professional setting

- Proactively check in regularly throughout the semester

Best Practices for Mentees

- **Be on time:** Text, email, or call if you're running late. Punctuality is your first impression
- **Come prepared:** Write down 3-5 questions or updates before every meeting
- **Set an agenda:** You own the meeting structure, so come with a plan
- **Listen actively:** Receive feedback with an open mind, even when it's hard to hear
- **Follow up:** Send a quick email recap with next steps or key takeaways after each session
- **Say thank you:** Acknowledge your mentor's time and contributions

What to Do and Ask

Ideas to spark great conversations with your mentor:

- Tour your mentor's facility or shadow them for the day (if possible)
- Have your mentor review your resume and give honest feedback
- Conduct a mock interview
- Discuss what your mentor would do differently if graduating today
- Ask about your mentor's first job and the transition from school to work
- Ask to sit in on a business meeting (if possible)
- Discuss what prospective employers look for during recruiting
- Ask about professional organizations and publications to follow in your field
- Discuss the pros and cons of graduate school after graduation
- Talk about how to balance career, family, and community service
- Share and create professional career goals and get feedback on your expectations
- Ask your mentor to recommend books related to your field
- Discuss networking strategies and ask for introductions to their network
- Review your LinkedIn profile together and discuss your online presence
- Develop and practice your elevator pitch

Steps to a Successful Relationship

Establish the relationship

Set goals, agree on meeting frequency, and discuss what you both hope to achieve. Be professional and positive.

Focus on your goals

Keep your career direction in mind. Ask how your mentor got started and what paths they would recommend today.

Seek professional advice

Use your mentor's expertise for resume reviews, interview preparation, elevator pitch development, and career fair preparation.

Evaluate and reflect

Discuss feedback honestly. Let your mentor know what's working and whether you need a different approach.

Communicate with staff

The ISMP team is here to help! Share concerns early and don't let issues go unaddressed.

If your mentor hasn't responded within 2 weeks, contact program administrators at ilitchmentorship@wayne.edu right away. Do not wait.

Your Month-By-Month Guide

Know what to focus on every month, September through April.

Each month has suggested focus areas to help you get the most out of your meetings. You don't have to follow this exactly. Instead, use it as a starting point and adapt it based on your goals and what's most relevant to you at the time.

September 1: Foundation

- Contact your mentor within 10 days of being matched
- Introduce yourself, exchange contact information, set communication preferences, and ask if they'll be attending the Kickoff Breakfast October 6
- Share your goals and discuss expectations for the year
- Schedule your October meeting before you end the session

October: Identity and Personal Brand

- Have your mentor review your resume
- Discuss how you present yourself professionally
- Start building or refining your LinkedIn profile
- Attend the Kickoff Breakfast on October 6 at the Mike Ilitch School of Business

November: Career Exploration

- Explore career paths with your mentor's insight
- Ask about your mentor's own career journey and turning points
- Research internships and job opportunities together
- Conduct a mock interview

December: Skills and Growth

- Identify your top skill gaps before the Fall semester ends
- Ask your mentor what skills matter most in your field
- Reflect on the Fall semesters wins and challenges
- Stay in touch over winter break – send quick updates

January: Networking Opportunities

- Ask your mentor about their professional network
- Discuss how to approach networking events with confidence
- Request an introduction to someone in their circle
- Update your LinkedIn and connect with your mentor

February: Financial and Lifestyle Planning

- Talk about your salary expectations and negotiation basics
- Discuss what life after graduation actually looks like
- Ask about work-life balance in your target industry
- Review any job applications or offers together

March: Reflection and Preparation

- Reflect on how far you've come since September
- Discuss your post-graduation plan and next steps
- Ask for any other advice before the program wraps up
- Attend the Dining Etiquette event on April 7 and invite your mentor

April: Closing and Staying Connected

- Plan and hold your final meeting before April 30
- Express genuine gratitude for your mentor's time
- Send a thank-you email within 24 hours of your last session
- Discuss how to stay in touch after the program ends

Your Mentee Toolkit

Resources available to support you throughout the program.

You have more support than you might realize. Beyond your mentor, the [Ilitch School Career Services](#) team and the ISMP [Resource](#) webpage are here to help you every step of the way.

Ilitch School Career Services

ISMP is housed in the Ilitch School Career Services office and offers a full range of career support throughout the academic year to all Mike Ilitch School of Business students and alumni. Take advantage of these alongside your mentorship for maximum impact.

- Career readiness workshops throughout the fall and spring semesters in [Handshake](#)
- Fall and Winter Career Fairs and employer networking events
- One-on-one career coaching [appointments](#)

ISMP Resource Webpage on Xinspire

The ISMP team has curated a Resource [webpage](#) on Xinspire specifically for mentors and mentees. It's a one-stop shop you can reference when working with your mentor.

Key Dates 2026-2027

Mark your calendar for the full program year.

All dates are subject to change.

Registering and Matching

- June 1: Mentee registration opens
- September September 11: Student registration deadline
- September 30: Mentor-Mentee matching takes place

Events and Milestones

- September 21-24: Orientations
- October 6: Kickoff Breakfast for both mentees and mentors at the Mike Ilitch School of Business
- April 7: Dining Etiquette event for both mentees and mentors at the Mike Ilitch School of Business
- April 30: Conclusion of the Fall and Spring 2026-2027 Mentorship Program

Ending the Mentorship

When the program concludes April 30th, you'll need to formally close your mentoring relationship. Handle this thoughtfully. Your mentor volunteered significant time for your growth.

- **Meet face-to-face (virtually or in-person):** Tell your mentor the formal mentorship is ending. Plan 5-10 minutes at the end of a session for this.
- **Be clear and honest:** Share how your situation has changed. For example, "Thanks to you, I have a much better understanding of..."
- **Reflect and appreciate:** Express genuine gratitude. Let me know specifically how their guidance helped you.
- **Be flexible:** Ending the formal relationship doesn't mean ending the connection. Ask if you can stay in touch.
- **Say thank you:** Send a personal thank-you email within 24 hours of your final session.

Frequently Asked Questions

Answers to questions mentees ask most.

- **How do I reach out to my mentor for the first time?** Keep it simple and professional. Introduce yourself, mention the ISMP, share a little about your background and goals, and suggest a few times to meet on a medium that works best for both of you.
- **What is my mentor doesn't response?** Give it one week, then follow up once. If you still haven't heard back after two weeks, contact the ISMP administrators at ilitchmentorship@wayne.edu.
- **What if I feel like my mentor and I aren't a good match?** Give it 2-3 meetings before drawing that conclusion. Many great mentoring relationships take time to find their rhythm. If things still aren't working, reach out to the ISMP administrators at ilitchmentorship@wayne.edu. Note that rematching is not guaranteed.
- **Who is responsible for scheduling meetings?** You are. Mentees are responsible for scheduling all meetings, setting the agenda, and following up.
- **What should I do if I need to cancel a meeting?** Give your mentor at least 48 hours' notice and propose a new time in the same message. Canceling without rescheduling is not acceptable.
- **What if I don't know what to talk about?** Check the "What to Do and Ask" section of this handbook, your monthly guide in this handbook, or your Milestones in [Xinspire](#). Coming with 3 prepared questions, objectives, or goals to each meeting is always enough to fill a great session.
- **Can my mentor help me get a job or internship?** Possibly, but that's **not their primary role and should never be your primary goal**. Focus on learning from their experience and building a genuine relationship. Opportunities often follow naturally from that.

- **What happens at the end of the program in April?** You'll hold a final meeting to reflect on the year, express gratitude, and discuss staying in touch. Send a thank-you email within 24 hours. Many mentor-mentee relationships continue informally long after the program ends.

ISMP Program Team Contact Information

Email us at ilitchmentorship@wayne.edu if:

- Problems arise with your mentor
- You have questions navigating the mentor-mentee relationship
- You haven't heard from your mentor in more than 2 weeks
- You feel uncomfortable or encounter anything unethical

Ilitch School Career Services | Wayne State University, Mike Ilitch School of Business

Reach out anytime for questions, concerns, or just to let us know how things are going.

Uplifting. Empowering. Transforming.