



SCCA Mentorship Programme

Programme Guide for Mentors and Mentees

1. About the Programme

The SCCA Mentorship Programme connects in-house counsel across different stages of their careers for a year of structured conversation. It is run by the SCCA Academy and is open to SCCA members. There is no fee.

A mentoring relationship in this programme is four scheduled conversations, a goal the mentee has written down, and whatever informal exchanges in between the two of you decide are useful. It is deliberately light. The value comes from the conversations, not from the structure around them.

The 2027 cycle is limited to 10 mentoring pairs, so that every match can be made on what the mentee wants to work on rather than on who happens to be available.

2. What This Is and What It Is Not

This programme is	This programme is not
A place to think out loud about your career with someone who has been further down the same road	Career counselling, therapy, or psychological support
A source of perspective on situations you are handling now	A source of legal advice. No solicitor-client relationship is created
A way into a wider professional network	A recruitment channel, a job board, or a route to a referral
A chance for experienced counsel to give something back to the profession	Performance management, appraisal, or supervision
Confidential between the two of you	A forum for discussing your employer's confidential or privileged matters

3. The Year at a Glance

When	What happens	Who
December	Match confirmed. You receive your mentor's or mentee's profile, this guide and the Conversation Guide	SCCA
Early January	Mentee completes the Agreement and Goals form and sends it to their mentor	Mentee
Late January	Kick-Off. Programme briefing, then Conversation 1 , in person	Both
Before leaving the Kick-Off	Diarise Conversations 2, 3 and 4	Both

When	What happens	Who
March/April	Conversation 2. One real situation, worked through in depth	Mentee arranges
May	Two-minute check-in survey. Last point at which a rematch can be arranged	Both
June/July	Conversation 3. Step back from the immediate and look at the wider picture	Mentee arranges
August/September	Conversation 4. Review, close and plan beyond the programme	Mentee arranges
September	Feedback form	Both
September/October	Closing and recognition session	Both

4. What is Expected of You

If you are a mentor

- Hold four conversations of about an hour across the year. About four hours in total.
- Share what your own experience actually was including the parts that did not go well.
- Give your mentee room to work out their own answer before you give them yours.
- Keep what is said between you confidential.
- Give reasonable notice if you need to move a meeting and propose an alternative when you do.
- Tell SCCA if your circumstances change and you can no longer continue. This is not a failure and it will be handled quietly.

You are not expected to be a trained coach, to be available between meetings, to review your mentee's work, to make introductions, or to help them find a job.

If you are a mentee

- **Drive the relationship.** Propose the dates. Send the agenda. Follow up afterwards. Your mentor has volunteered their time, the scheduling is your job.
- Complete the Agreement and Goals form before the Kick-Off and send it to your mentor.
- Bring something specific to each conversation. For example a live situation, a decision, a question you have been sitting on.
- Send a short agenda or brief at least 48 hours before Conversations 2, 3 and 4.
- Follow up on what you agreed and tell your mentor what happened. Mentors stay engaged when they can see their input landing.
- Say so when advice does not fit your situation. Disagreeing well is part of the point.

5. The Four Conversations

Each has a different job. The Conversation Guide gives prompts for each one.

	Purpose	You should leave with
1. Set the direction At the Kick-Off, late January	Understand each other's background and agree what this year is for	A signed Agreement, an agreed goal, and dates for Conversations 2, 3 and 4

	Purpose	You should leave with
2. Work the problem March – April	Take one real situation the mentee is facing and go deep on it	One concrete action the mentee will take before Conversation 3
3. Broaden the perspective June – July	Step back from the immediate: strengths, capability gaps, where the career could go	A clearer view of what to build, and what is worth saying yes to
4. Review and close August – September	What changed, what did not, and what the next twelve months should look like	A view on what happens next, and whether you continue informally

Four is the minimum, not a limit. Many pairs meet more often, and some speak briefly in between. Agree what suits you both at Conversation 1.

6. Your First Two Weeks

- A. **Mentee:** email your mentor within five working days of the introduction including who you are, that you are looking forward to the Kick-Off, and that the Agreement and Goals form will follow.
- B. **Mentee:** complete the Agreement and Goals form and send it to your mentor at least a week before the Kick-Off.
- C. **Mentor:** read it before you arrive. Fifteen minutes is enough, and it changes the first conversation completely.
- D. **Both:** if either of you cannot attend the Kick-Off, watch the recorded briefing and agree a date for Conversation 1 before the end of January.

7. Making the Conversations Work – For Mentors

What tends to work

- **Ask before you advise.** "What have you already tried?" and "What would you do if you weren't worried about how it lands?" get further than a recommendation.
- **Talk about what went wrong.** Mentees learn more from the deal you mishandled at their stage than from your current role.
- **Name the unwritten rules.** How decisions actually get made, who has to be consulted before a meeting rather than in it, what the organisation punishes quietly. This is what is hardest to learn alone and easiest for you to give.
- **Be concrete about your own experience** rather than general about the profession. "Here is what I did in a similar situation and here is what it cost me" is more useful than "you need to build trust with the business".
- **Say when you do not know.** Suggest someone who might, if you can.

What to avoid

- Giving legal advice on a matter your mentee is handling.
- Commenting on your mentee's employer, their manager or their colleagues as though you had the full picture. You are hearing one side.
- Recruitment in either direction, including "let me know if you ever want to move".
- Telling your mentee what to decide about their career. Widen the options; do not narrow them to one.

- Letting a cancelled meeting become a lapsed relationship. Propose a new date in the same message you cancel in.

8. Making the Conversations Work – For Mentees

What tends to work

- **Bring the specific version of your question.** Not "how do I become a GC" but "my GC has asked me to present to the audit committee and I do not know what they actually want from me".
- **Send something in advance.** A paragraph is enough. It lets your mentor think before they arrive, and it doubles the value of the hour.
- **Propose three dates,** not "when are you free". Senior people answer the first and ignore the second.
- **Report back.** A two-line email saying what happened after you took their advice is the single thing most likely to keep a mentor engaged.
- **Push back.** If the advice does not fit your organisation or your temperament, say so and explain why. That is a better conversation than polite agreement.

What to avoid

- Treating the relationship as a job search or asking for an introduction in the first conversation.
- Asking your mentor to review a contract, a memo or a piece of work.
- Cancelling more than once. If you have to, rebook in the same message.
- Waiting for your mentor to drive. They will not, and they should not have to.
- Arriving with nothing and hoping the conversation finds its own shape. It will, but it will find a shape neither of you needed.

9. Confidentiality and Boundaries

What is said between you stays between you. Mentors and mentees agree that discussions between them are confidential and will not be disclosed outside the mentoring relationship, either during the programme or after it ends.

Neither participant should disclose information that is confidential to their employer or their employer's clients, or that is subject to legal professional privilege. Where a discussion would require such disclosure, participants should discuss the situation in general terms only.

If a mentee raises a matter on which they need advice such as a dispute with their employer, a regulatory exposure, a grievance, the mentor should decline and point them to proper channels. Doing so is not unhelpful, it is the correct answer.

This obligation does not apply where disclosure is required by law, by a court or regulator, or by a participant's professional obligations, or where the information is already in the public domain.

SCCA may disclose information about a mentoring relationship where it is necessary to administer the programme, to respond to a concern raised by a participant, or where required by law.

10. If Something is Not Working

Not every pairing fits, and a pairing that does not fit is nobody's fault. Email: learning@scca.org.sg if:

- You have tried twice over three weeks and cannot get a response.
- Your circumstances have changed and you cannot continue.
- A professional conflict has arisen since the match was made.

- The conversations are not useful and you would rather stop.
- Anything has happened that made you uncomfortable.

SCCA will handle it discreetly, will not attribute blame to either party, and will not tell the other participant what you said. Depending on the circumstances we will offer guidance, close the arrangement, or offer a rematch where a suitable alternative is available.

Rematch requests are accepted until the end of May, immediately after the participant check-in. After that there is not enough of the cycle left to make a new pairing work, and we will carry the request into the next intake instead.

11. Contact

SCCA Academy: learning@scca.org.sg

We aim to respond within three working days.

12. Commonly Asked Questions

Question	Answer
Can we meet more than four times?	Yes. Four is the minimum. Many pairs meet more often, and some speak briefly between meetings. Agree what suits you both at Conversation 1.
What if my mentor stops responding?	Try twice over three weeks, then email us. We will follow up on your behalf, and you will not be identified as having complained.
Can I continue after the programme ends?	Yes, and many pairs do. From October the relationship is yours to continue independently of SCCA.
Is there a fee?	No. The programme is free to SCCA members.
Can I have two mentors?	No. One pairing per cycle.
What if I change jobs during the programme?	Tell us. In most cases the pairing continues. We will only revisit it if the move creates a conflict.
Can I nominate someone as my mentor?	You can tell us a preference on the application form and we will take it into account, but matches are made by the Academy and we cannot guarantee a particular pairing.
I am a mentee now. Can I mentor later?	Yes, and we hope you will. We ask about this on the feedback form and keep a list.
Why are places limited?	Every mentee place depends on a mentor volunteering first. We would rather tell you honestly that we cannot match you well this year than make a pairing that wastes both people's time.

Important information about this programme

The SCCA Mentorship Programme is a voluntary professional development initiative. SCCA facilitates the programme by matching participants and providing materials and guidance. SCCA does not supervise, monitor or take part in individual mentoring discussions.

Mentors participate in a personal capacity as volunteers. Their views are their own and are not those of SCCA or of their employers.

Nothing said or done in the course of the programme constitutes legal advice, and no solicitor-client relationship arises between participants. Mentors do not provide employment advice, recruitment services, career placement, counselling or psychological support, and do not act as an advocate for a mentee within the mentee's organisation.

SCCA reviews applications for eligibility but does not verify the information participants provide about themselves, and does not endorse or warrant the experience, judgement or suitability of any participant. Participants should exercise their own professional judgement in deciding what weight to give to anything discussed.

Participation is at each participant's own risk. To the fullest extent permitted by law, SCCA accepts no liability for any loss or damage arising out of participation in the programme, including any advice, views or information exchanged between participants, or any decision taken as a result.

SCCA may decline an application, end a mentoring arrangement or remove a participant from the programme at any time and at its discretion.