



# MicroMentor Mentoring Toolkit: Help for Entrepreneurs

This section provides support for entrepreneurs in the following topics

- Mentor Readiness
- Connecting with a Mentor
- Printable Business Model Canvas

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## Mentor Readiness

**One of the best ways to get potential mentors excited about your business and ideas is through some preliminary preparation.** Doing so helps to demonstrate your competence and ambition—both of which will help your mentor feel more confident in the viability of your business and their ability to help you achieve your goals.

The worksheet below is designed to make sure you are mentor-ready by helping you articulate your business plan and create a profile that stands out. Completing each section will contribute to the corresponding icons in your 'Business Model Canvas', found at the end of this section, which you can then share with your mentor.

### 1. Create a simple and succinct explanation of your business

<b>What industry is your business in?</b>	
<b>What products &amp; services do you offer and what are their applications?</b>	
<b>What are the benefits to your customers/clients?</b>	

## 2. Prepare a statement about your goals

<p><b>What are your long-term business goals?</b></p>	
<p><b>What is the ideal response you would like to gain from your customers and industry?</b></p>	
<p><b>What do you personally want to achieve through your business?</b>            E.g., positioned yourself as a thought leader, achieving better work/life balance, etc.</p>	

## 3. Articulate your mission statement

### Example Mission Statement:

*MicroMentor's mission is to help beginning entrepreneurs and nonprofit founders thrive through mentoring. These newly empowered changemakers then improve their communities and economies by creating jobs and solving important problems for society. MicroMentor is a social enterprise program of Mercy Corps, a leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible. In more than 40 countries around the world, Mercy Corps partners to put bold solutions into action—helping people build stronger communities from within .*

<p><b>Why do you care about the work that you do?</b></p>	
<p><b>How do you think you can change your industry?</b></p>	
<p><b>How do you think you can improve your</b></p>	

<b>customer's client's lives?</b>	
<b>What makes the work you do meaningful?</b>	

**4. Identify your target audience**

<b>Whom does your business cater to?</b>	
<b>Who is your ideal client or customer?</b>	
<b>What factors do they consider when making a decision about potentially purchasing your products or services?</b>	

**5. Determine your key differentiators**

<b>Who are your competitors and what are their product or service offerings?</b>	
<b>What makes your business different from your competition?</b>	
<b>How do you do business differently?</b>	

## 6. Define your expectations for the mentoring relationship

<p><b>What are you looking for in a mentor?</b>  <i>Example: personality traits, time commitment, skills, etc.</i></p>	
<p><b>What are the ideal outcomes of the relationship?</b></p>	

# Connecting with a Mentor

Now that you have completed your preliminary preparation, it is time to connect and match with a mentor. There are a few steps you can take to ensure that this process is efficient and easy.

## 1. Create a profile that grabs attention

## What I need help with

### My background as an entrepreneur

#### My current challenges

We launched at the end of October 2017 and had a year and half of steady growth, mostly from evening shows and events. Then we got shut down by the city (improper permits) for 6 months, and lost all momentum. Now we're looking to relaunch and rebrand. Most of our previous growth came from word of mouth, but now we need to expand into other business areas. We also have lots of ideas but lack a real plan and solid knowledge of projections.

#### Actions I've taken so far

New website, improving the look of the space, improving FB page and organizing photos for ads. (We just reopened 3 weeks ago)

### Expertise requests

- Management: Business Strategy
- Management: Planning and Goal Setting
- Marketing: Advertising and Promotion
- Marketing: Branding and Identity
- Marketing: Business Development
- Marketing: Marketing Strategy
- Marketing: Social Media
- Sales: Lead Generation

**Profiles that clearly explain the specifics of your business as well as who you are as an individual and entrepreneur attract more and better quality responses.** Your profile should include a detailed yet concise ‘elevator pitch’ that focuses on the problem(s) you are trying to solve and the specific competencies a mentor could employ in order to help you get there. Use the ‘Mentor-Readiness Worksheet’ above as a guide to edit your profile and make it even more complete.

Next, make sure to dedicate some space to familiarize potential mentors with your personality and motivations. A good personality fit is just as important as a good skills fit.

Finally, we recommend that you upload a high-quality and professional profile photo. Mentors want to work with real people and including a photo will help to establish a human connection. In general, the more you’re able to share with a prospective mentor, the easier it is to find a match that works.

## 2. Search smart

### Find mentors and connect

We have sorted these search results based on relevance to your profile. When you see someone who looks like they might be a good fit, reach out and send a message!

**Filter member profiles by:**

<b>Expertise:</b> Find mentors who offer any of the selected expertise	<b>Industry:</b> Find mentors who have experience in any of the selected industries
<b>Language:</b> Find mentors who speak any of the selected languages	<b>Mentors who live in these any of countries:</b> Find mentors who live in any of the selected countries
<b>Mentors with experience in these countries:</b> Find mentors who have experience in the selected countries	

**FILTER RESULTS**

**When searching for a mentor, it is important to think about the filtering criteria that are most important to you**—that they match your industry, have a particular expertise, or can meet you locally. Search “special keywords” to find mentors with specific competencies.

### 3. Take time to craft a professional first message

Once you've found several mentors who seem like they may be a good fit, send each of them a brief, personalized message. When writing potential mentors, respect their time and help them to understand how their experience relates to your issue. Just like a good cover letter, this is your opportunity to describe your relevance and significance.

#### Example First Message:

*Hello Mr./Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_,*

*My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am the owner and operator of First Impression Messaging Service, a company that aims to help business men and women put their best foot forward in all direct messaging correspondence. After reviewing your profile, I believe that our endeavor could benefit greatly from your professional skills, especially in the areas of online marketing and communications. Kindly take your time to review my MicroMentor profile and reach out should you share in my optimism regarding a potentially productive mentoring relationship.*

*Thank you very much for volunteering your time to empower aspiring entrepreneurs like myself.*

*All the best,*

### 4. Nurture the connection

After you connect with a mentor, it is important to be open and honest about how you plan to implement their advice. In some cases you will need to trust their credibility and take calculated risks based on their advice, while in other cases their advice may be off the mark, requiring that you push back. Make sure to be open to considering your mentor's perspective, but use it in a way that works for you and your business. Always be respectful and responsive.

# The Business Model Canvas










**Have you written a business plan?** The Business Model Canvas can help you outline the basic elements of a business plan—making your business idea much more clear to you and your mentor.

Even if you do have a business plan in place, The Business Model Canvas is a useful exercise that can help to summarize all of your business activities on one sheet of paper, allowing you and your mentor to analyze what you are currently doing and brainstorm possible solutions to the challenges you are facing.

### Instructions

On your own, fill out the Business Model Canvas by following the prompts below. You will find a blank canvas on the following page. Present your completed version to your mentor; you can even send this to your mentor ahead of your first conversation.

**Tip:** Look for the correlating icons in the ‘Mentor Readiness Worksheet’ for quick and easy completion.

<p><b>Key Partners</b> </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Who are your key partners and suppliers?</li> <li>&gt; Which key resources do you acquire from them?</li> <li>&gt; Which key activities do partners perform?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Key Activities</b> </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; What activities does your value proposition require?</li> <li>&gt; Distribution, customer relationships &amp; revenue streams.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Value Propositions</b> </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; What value do you deliver to your customer?</li> <li>&gt; What problem/need are you helping to solve?</li> <li>&gt; What bundles of products/services are you offering to each customer segment?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Customer Relationships</b> </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; What types of relationships are expected and/or established?</li> <li>&gt; How costly are they?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Customer Segments</b> </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; For whom are you creating value?</li> <li>&gt; Who are your most important customers?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Key Resources</b> </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; What resources do your value propositions require?</li> <li>&gt; Are additional resources needed?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Channels</b> </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Through which channels do customers want to be reached?</li> <li>&gt; How do you reach them now, is it best?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Cost Structure</b> </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; What are the most important costs inherent to your business model?</li> <li>&gt; Which key resources are most expensive?</li> <li>&gt; Which key activities are most expensive?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Revenue Streams</b> </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; For what value are your customers really willing to pay?</li> <li>&gt; For what do they currently pay?</li> <li>&gt; How are they paying and how would they prefer to pay?</li> <li>&gt; How much does each revenue stream contribute overall?</li> </ul>			

# THE BUSINESS MODEL CANVAS

