

Mentor/Mentee Guide

Program Mission Statement: The SEANM Mentorship Program aims to create meaningful connections and shared perspective through flexible, low-pressure conversations that strengthen our structural engineering community.

First meeting

- Get to know each other!** Discuss backgrounds, career path, hobbies, etc.
- We prefer to communicate via:** text call email
- We will aim to meet:** monthly bi-weekly weekly _____
- Our next meeting is:** M T W T F S S ___/___/___ @ ___:___ AM PM
- (optional)* **From this program, I hope to gain** _____

Some conversation starters

The Rose-Bud-Thorn Exercise 🌹

What's a good thing (rose), an exciting thing (bud), and bad thing (thorn) that's happened in the past week/month?

Pull up a Ethics case study and discuss 👤

ASCE bank of ethics case studies ----->



Energy Check-In ⚡

What's taking most of your energy at work? What's giving you energy? Is there something you could change to make your week more manageable?

Discuss the 70-20-10 theory 🧠

The idea is that most people work best when their work involves ~70% familiar work, 20% new or challenging work, and 10% passion or purpose-driven work.

Career Snapshot

Share a brief overview of where you started, where you are now, and what you're curious about next to spark conversation and perspective.

Additional question ideas

Here is a dump of question ideas organized by category. Maybe use one category to focus on per meeting? Maybe pick a few questions to chew on before your next meeting?

Personal/Career Story

- What's been a small win for you lately? Any big wins?
- How has your definition of "success" changed over time?
- What led you to structural engineering?
- Did you personally know any structural engineers before joining the profession?
- What's something you never thought you would do but have now done as an engineer?
- What's a mistake you made early on that helped you grow?
- What advice would you give your past self?
- What has been your favorite part of the structural engineering profession so far?
- How do you usually like to recharge outside of work?

Work + Life

- What does a "good" work-life balance look like for you today?
- Are there any boundaries you've set (or wish you could set) that have had a positive impact on you? (*i.e. no work on weekends, etc.*)
- Do you "turn off" after work, or does work continue in your mind at home?
- Practice a tough question (client/boss related)
- How do you recover from a stressful project?
- Can you tell me about a time you had a difficult co-worker or work environment? How did you handle it?
- Do you experience imposter syndrome? Have you found anything to help cope with it?
- What's a skill you're quietly proud of?
- How has your definition of a "good engineer" changed over time?
- What's one small improvement that's made your work life noticeably better?
- What's one challenge you're currently navigating at work?
- What do you envision your life looking like in 1 year? 5 years? 10 years?

Technical/Work

- How do you approach unfamiliar systems or materials?
- How do you balance efficiency with being thorough?
- What's a detailing lesson you learned the hard way?
- How do you think about constructability during design?
- Are there any emerging technologies you're interested in?
- Discuss how you approach a project timeline (*i.e. what tasks are you tackling when*)
- Favorite project you've worked on? Why?
- What projects around the world do you think are really cool? Why?
- What kinds of roles or responsibilities energize you most?

Professional Development

- Share an exam test-prep tip
- How do you seek and/or integrate feedback?
- What kinds of feedback are most helpful for you?
- Share your favorite time management theory
- What skills mattered most for your growth early in your career?
- Have you ever served on a committee? Do any interest you?
- What feels like your biggest growth area right now?

Business

- What's something you wish more people understood about fees and scope?
- What non-technical skills have been most important in your career?
- How do you build trust with clients?
- What's the most important leadership lesson you've learned and how is it valuable?
- Do you do anything to help build/maintain a professional network?