



**WOMEN  
COMMUNICATORS  
of AUSTIN**

# Request a Peer Mentor

If you are a communications professional or student, you can take advantage of this opportunity. No matter your age, stage of education, years of experience, or familiarity with other fields, you can accelerate your growth and learning with the support and knowledge of a peer mentor.

Peer mentors share advice, encouragement, and lessons learned through one-on-one conversations. Career goals, work-life balance, and professional development are frequent topics. As the mentee, you define the focus, frequency, and duration of the mentorship, in coordination with your volunteer peer mentor. The relationship can be short- or long-term and can be conducted in-person or virtually.

“Getting guidance from someone with decades of experience freelancing has been invaluable in helping me decide how I want to move forward in my career, what I value most, and what I no longer want to prioritize.”

– SARAH PARKER

## What is mentoring like?

**Each peer mentorship is different; here are some examples of benefits you may gain:**

- Get guidance on a specific topic – for instance, what subjects a student should take for a career in communications; where to intern; or how to interview effectively.
- Receive career guidance; discuss challenges at work; explore creative or professional development.
- Gain clarity on talents, strengths, and career interests.
- Obtain honest feedback about cover letters, a portfolio, or other professional materials.

## WCA Peer Mentors do not provide:

- Professional-grade career coaching. (WCA has many qualified members who provide this paid service.)
- Specific logistical assistance in starting or revamping a business venture.
- Any kind of psychological input or feedback beyond a friendly ear and helpful suggestions based on professional experiences.

## Who are the peer mentors?

More than 30 WCA volunteers pitch in to support their fellow communicators. They assist you by sharing lessons learned, challenges faced, and resources discovered. They ask the right questions for you to consider. They are all ages and come from all fields within communications, with various levels of experience. One of them is a match for you.

**Learn more about them here: <https://wcaustin.org/meet-the-mentors/>**

## When/where should I be mentored?

You and your peer mentor are free to decide. Coffee or lunch? Phone call? Zoom? Some pairs may meet once or twice to discuss a specific issue, while others may form longer relationships.

## What is the process?

### 1. Get started

Once you've signed up online, the mentor program chair will arrange a match for you. You will receive an

introductory email, and it is your responsibility to follow up with your peer mentor to arrange the first contact.

**When you first meet, be prepared to answer questions like these:**

- What are you looking to gain from this mentorship?
- What are some challenges you've encountered and want help with?
- What are your overarching career goals?
- What method of communication is best for you?

**Is this the right fit?** If so, when and where should we schedule our first mentoring session? *(If the match is not providing you with what you need, you are welcome to contact the peer mentor program chair to discuss working with someone else and she will arrange a new match.)*

**Don't leave your first conversation without scheduling your first meeting!**

### 2. Typical sessions

- Get to know each other (and it shouldn't be all about work!).
- Discuss your most pressing issues and establish ways your mentor can help you.
- Express your commitment to this process.
- Discuss meeting frequency if you will meet more than once.
- Prioritize some action items to accomplish before your next session. This could be something as simple as following up on some book recommendations or other resources suggested by your mentor.

### 3. Next steps

- It is your responsibility to stay in contact with your peer mentor and to coordinate future meetings.
- Routinely evaluate what you can continue to gain from your mentorship. Remember your peer mentor is a volunteer; make good use of their time and communicate.
- Pairs are asked to check in at the three-month mark to decide whether to continue for a further three months or to conclude the relationship.
- If you feel you've gained what you need, thank your mentor and send the program chair a brief testimonial to [mentors@wcaustin.org](mailto:mentors@wcaustin.org) to encourage others to take advantage of this valuable resource.

**Learn more and sign up  
to request a peer mentor!**

**[mentors@wcaustin.org](mailto:mentors@wcaustin.org)  
[wcaustin.org/request-a-mentor](https://wcaustin.org/request-a-mentor)**