



**Invest Africa Business Mentoring Programme:
In partnership with the University of Oxford/Saïd Business
School**

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Introduction:

This pack has been produced to support Mentors and Mentees involved in the Invest Africa – University of Oxford/Saïd Business School Business Mentoring programme. It aims to be a simple, effective, and comprehensive set of resources to support those taking on the role of Mentor and Mentee in the Mentoring relationship.

This mentoring programme was developed out of the desire to make use of the extensive business expertise that lies within the Invest Africa membership, coupled with the aspiration to support business students who want to work in the African market.

Part of Invest Africa's vision is to be a central and influential driver in Africa's economic growth, and this mentoring programme will help support some of Africa's future business leaders.

How it works:

The mentoring programme takes place over a one-year period. It is a voluntary programme that matches one of Invest Africa's members (the mentor, who will be an experienced businessperson), with a Saïd Business School student.

Mentors and mentees will apply for the programme and go through a selection process, co-ordinated by Invest Africa and Saïd Business school. Mentors and mentees will be matched based on the mentee's needs, sectors that the mentor works in and that are of interest to the mentee and parts of Africa that are of interest to the mentee.

Once the selection process has taken place (within a 2-week period), the mentor and mentee will go through the online training manual supplied by the mentoring team.

The mentor and mentee will commit to a minimum of 2 hours per month, for each month of their mentoring relationship. We suggest

an hour every two weeks, but this can be revised, according to the mentor/mentee. If both parties cannot meet in person, we suggest video calls.

After the first month, the mentee is expected to fill in a tracking questionnaire, followed by a questionnaire every three months.

Appointed staff members from Invest Africa and Saïd Business School will be available throughout the mentoring programme for questions, guidance, or advice.

What is business mentoring?

Mentoring is a form of training, learning and development, that helps support the personal development of the mentee.

Mentoring is a distinct activity that can be used to help mentees develop their careers or business paths through personal and professional development.

Business mentors tend to be people who have knowledge and experience that they can use to help other people develop their careers.

There are many well-known mentoring relationships that have helped propel the success of businesspeople. Mark Zuckerberg, Co-Founder and CEO of Facebook, has often talked about his inspiring mentor, Steve Jobs. “He was amazing,” said Zuckerberg. “I had a lot of questions for him.”

Richard Branson, the founder of Virgin Group, has also been vocal about the importance of mentorship. Branson asked British airline entrepreneur, Sir Freddie Laker, for guidance during his struggle to get Virgin Atlantic off the ground. Branson said, “I wouldn’t have got anywhere in the airline industry without the mentorship of Sir Freddie Laker.”

Nigerian billionaire businessman Aliko Dangote cites one of his life lessons as follows: “There is no way you can make it as a person without the right team”.

The Benefits of Mentoring:

The mentoring programme will have a clear and positive effect on both the mentee and mentor. Not only will it help the mentee with his/her personal and professional development, but it is also intended to benefit the mentor and the organisation they work for.

Benefits of business mentoring for the mentee include:

- Identify areas for development and improve self-confidence
- Learn from your mentor
- Encourage self-reflection and develop specific skills
- Gain insight into the career path you intend to take
- Gain knowledge about a sector of interest to you
- Develop a career plan
- Focus your energy through the help of your mentor
- Make positive progress more quickly
- Lead the agenda and ask the questions you need answers to
- Explore career options in a safe and supportive environment

Benefits of business mentoring for the mentor include:

- Develop and practise coaching skills
- Share your career knowledge and experience
- Improve your job satisfaction, motivation and enhance peer recognition

- Demonstrate your commitment to the future of business in Africa
- Take part in an innovative project
- Encourage self-reflection and develop specific skills

Goals and ground rules:

The following principles underpin this business mentoring scheme:

- There must be shared understanding between mentor and mentee of the purposes of the Mentoring scheme
- There must be a commitment to openness and honesty on both sides
- There must be a commitment to giving and receiving feedback on the part of the mentee
- The Mentoring project is a constructive, developmental form of support – of mutual benefit to those taking part
- There will be adequate training, preparation, and support for those taking part in the Mentoring scheme
- A clear understanding of the level of confidentiality required within the Mentoring relationship. Nothing will be shared outside of the partnership, unless by agreement of both parties
- Any written record produced should be appropriate to the needs of the Mentor and Mentee, and should be accessible to both parties
- The Mentoring scheme will reflect and promote a commitment to equal opportunities
- The continuing development of the Mentoring scheme will require regular reviews of its operation

- The agenda is normally set by the mentee, with the mentor providing support and guidance
- Participants will create a time frame both for the frequency of meetings and for the duration of the relationship.
- Invest Africa suggests an hour's catch up between the mentor and mentee every two weeks, but it is up to the mentor and mentee to decide how to manage their time

The Mentor's role:

The relationship between mentor and mentee is very mentee centred. The mentor will be focusing on the mentee's professional and personal development. This may include the giving of advice, information, signposting, self-appraisal, etc. Whatever techniques the mentor uses, the emphasis is on enabling and empowering the mentee to take charge of their own career development.

The role of the mentor is to:

- Challenge and offer guidance
- Act as a sounding board
- Support the mentee to become what he/she aspires to be
- Listen
- Question, to elicit facts
- Draw on own experience when appropriate
- Offer different perspectives

The Mentee's role:

The focus of the mentoring relationship is very much on the mentee. The mentee is expected to take ownership of the relationship and

drive it forward, drawing on the mentor's knowledge and expertise, as required.

The role of the mentee is to:

- Communicate their circumstances clearly, concisely, and honestly
- Question where they do not fully understand or comprehend
- Provide information, knowledge about their chosen career path to aid their Mentor with the provision of advice and support
- Act upon advice on career development
- Accept differing perspectives from their own
- Accept support and encouragement
- Provide own experience to aid discussions
- Arrange meeting dates throughout relationship
- Drive the relationship
- Set the agenda for each meeting
- Fill in the tracking questionnaire one month after the relationship has started and then every three months

Preparing for the role of Mentor:

The Mentoring relationship can be a very powerful and positive experience. It enables and develops a greater sense of confidence, enhancing the professional and personal skills of both parties. To make sure the relationship is a success, several factors need to be addressed.

Factors for success

- Clear guidelines for the roles and responsibilities of both parties

- Agreed and shared understanding of the nature and type of support
- Commitment towards the principles and values of the Mentoring scheme
- Clear communication in both directions

Clear communication is the cornerstone for a successful mentoring relationship. It is through constructive and empathic dialogue that the relationship can develop, allowing both parties to bring forward their ideas, enter discussions and maintain professional development. It is within this environment both parties can flourish.

There are different ways a Mentee can be supported, encouraged, and given constructive feedback. With each strategy, it is important to be aware of its purpose, appropriateness, the likely impact, and its value to the Mentee.

Strategies can include:

- Giving advice – offering the Mentee your opinion on the best course of action
- Giving information – giving information on a specific situation (e.g. contact for resource)
- Acting in support – doing something on the Mentee’s behalf
- Observing and giving feedback – Observation coupled with constructive feedback is a powerful learning tool
- Reviewing – reflection on experience can develop understanding allowing one to consider future needs, explore options and strategies

Training tools:

There are various mentoring tools that both parties can use to improve the mentoring process. Here are a few suggestions for achieving goals and improving communication.

A) Achieving goals:

A useful process for achieving goals is the **SMART** method, which many of us are already familiar with:

- S: specific – goals should be set in terms that are precise and clear. What exactly do you want?
- M: measurable – how will you know when progress has been made or you have reached your target?
- A: achievable – ensure that goals are within your reach, even if they are a little stretching.
- R: realistic – goals should be relevant to your work and life and should be realistic in terms of all your other commitments
- T: time bound – goals should have an end date and even milestones along the way.

Another useful approach to setting goals is the **POWER** technique.

- P: positive – set goals using positive terms and words. “I want to make progress with my qualification” rather than “I don’t want to keep procrastinating.”
- O: ownership – consider what part of the goal is within the individual’s control. There are some things we can do and some things we can only influence.
- W: where, what, who, etc – this covers the actions to gain the goal and may include some SMART criteria.
- E: ecology – this checks the individual’s buy in to the goal. Ask, “if you could have that tomorrow, would you take

it?” If there is any hesitation before the “yes”, then check what the barriers are.

- R: reality – this is about making achievement seem as real as possible and is done by getting the individual to visualise success. The more the end goal appears, the more likely it is to happen.

B) Active Listening:

One of the key skills of communication is the ability to listen and hear what someone is saying.

Listening effectively does not come naturally to everyone, but it is a skill that can be developed with practice.

Here are some things that will help the other person to know that you are listening properly.

- make appropriate eye contact
- make encouraging noises
- help by making responses
- ask relevant questions
- check your understanding
- curb your interruptions
- avoid assumptions
- show a genuine interest
- put yourself in their shoes
- keep an open mind
- be patient

C) Questioning:

An important skill in communicating well is the ability to ask the right questions. Questions break down into two broad categories. Open

questions allow you to gain more information, whereas closed questions will generally just get you a 'yes' or 'no' answer.

Closed questions can be useful when you need to check facts or confirm information and details.

Open questions allow the responder to either give you lots of information or they cut quickly through to the fact that you need to know.

They usually begin with the following words: -

- how - who - when - where - what - why

Be careful when using 'why' as this can be perceived as quite challenging.

There are some other tools that you can use to get people to speak freely. Try using **TED** and **PIE**:

- T – tell me ... E – explain ... D – describe ...
- P – precisely I – in detail E – exactly

Also, silence is very powerful at encouraging others to speak. It is particularly useful with people who are slower thinkers. However, keep an eye on the nonverbal communicators, as they will show when people are starting to get uncomfortable and it is time for you to speak again.

D) Building Rapport:

To communicate effectively with others, it really helps if you have rapport with them.

When we communicate, any message is made up of three parts: -

the words we use (verbal) how we say it, our tone of voice (vocal)
what our body is doing, our body language (visual or non-verbal)

Research has shown that the greatest part of the message is passed on by our body language, then our tone and then the actual words themselves.

It is for this reason that a lot of rapport building is done around the non-verbal side of communication. If we watch other's body language and listen to their tone of voice and aim to mirror this, we can start to build rapport.

Having said that, you can also build rapport by looking for common ground with someone. Finding common links with someone will help you to build a good relationship with them will allow for more effective communication

The initial meeting:

The initial meeting is very important. It will:

- Set the stage for the relationship
- Allow a forum in which to establish the parameters essential for the success of the Mentoring experience.

For the first mentoring meeting, we suggest you have four clear aims on your agenda:

Number 1 – Establish trust. Get to know each other and build your relationship.

Number 2 – Agree goals – think carefully about what you would both like to learn. You must think about aims for both the Mentee and the Mentor.

Number 3 – Set ground rules – you need to discuss your expectations and processes. Ask yourselves: How you will communicate? How often? By what methods? What is your availability for unplanned meetings on the spot? How do you want to communicate in between mentoring sessions? At this point you can talk about how you will give feedback. And you will need to set Boundaries – What are the limits to the relationship? Is there anything you don't want to discuss, such as personal financial contributions or any private

matters?

And finally, number 4 – the final aim on the agenda for the first meeting is to end on a high note! Review the meeting. Have you made a good start? Do you have any questions? Confirm the next meeting. Agree on what you want to talk about next time – and the mentee will send the agenda nearer to the time.

Phase 1

Phase 2

Phase 3

Phase 4

Phase 5

Phase 6

Application/Expression of Interest

Mentor and mentee go through selection process

Initial matching process and online training manual

Initial meeting between mentor and mentee and monthly meetings for rest of year

Monthly and quarterly review of relationship and mentor support

Relationship Concludes

Mentoring programme announced to Invest Africa members and Said Business School students

Mentoring panel assess applications and decide on mentoring pairs, based on skills and expertise of the mentor and the business needs of the mentee

Mentor and Mentee introduced to each other via email and provided with background info about each other

Official start of the one-year mentoring programme

Mentor and mentee commit to meeting twice a month, if possible, for a full year- either in person or via video call

Mentor and mentee complete separate evaluations which are reviewed by panel. Process updated as appropriate

Prospective mentors and mentees apply for business mentoring programme

Mentor and Mentees ideally given decision within 2 weeks of making application

Mentor and Mentee provided with online mentoring training manual

Initial meeting between mentor and mentee – in person or via video call

Review of mentoring process after first month. Mentee fills out a questionnaire and the mentor is contacted by the mentoring team

Mentoring panel from Invest Africa and Said Business school assess all applications

Both parties set agenda for their mentoring relationship. Commitment to goals and ground rules of programme, as outlined in mentoring manual

Thereafter, review of the mentoring relationship every three months. Mentee fills out a questionnaire every three months and the mentor is contacted by the mentoring team

Invest Africa/Said Business School Mentoring Programme – Flow chart for Mentors and Mentees