

Tips for Ending Your Mentor Match Relationship

At your first meeting, it's important to establish shared expectations and a schedule for your mentorship, including a potential end date. While this end date is simply a guide, sometimes the mentoring relationship may need to end earlier — and that's okay. If you find that you need to end the relationship at any point, please communicate openly with your mentor or mentee. If you need support navigating this, feel free to contact our member services team cai-info@CAIonline.org

For Mentees

If you choose to end the relationship, express your gratitude. Thank your mentor for their time, guidance, and support, and share how their insights helped you work toward your goals. Remember — mentors are volunteers who are generously offering their time and expertise in addition to their personal and professional responsibilities. A thank-you note is always appreciated!

For Mentors

If you need to step away from the mentoring relationship, take a moment to reflect with your mentee on the progress made, goals achieved, and suggestions for their next steps. Clear, respectful communication is key. Ending a mentoring relationship doesn't mean ending the connection. If appropriate, you may offer to stay in touch — perhaps through LinkedIn or by connecting at CAI events, like our CAI Annual Conference & Exposition: CommunityNOW. Avoid "ghosting" your mentoring partner. If something isn't working — whether it's timing, expectations, or fit — it's better to have an honest conversation.

Examples of When You Might End the Mentoring Relationship

■ Misaligned Expectations

A mentee is hoping to build a broader network, while the mentor signed up to provide career guidance. During their first meeting, they realize the mentee's primary goal doesn't align with the mentor's availability or focus. The mentor kindly encourages the mentee to seek a better fit and offers to stay connected via LinkedIn or meet at local CAI events.

■ Different Areas of Expertise

A mentee is preparing for a specific certification. Although the mentor holds the certification, they are not able to assist with exam preparation. Instead, the mentor shares helpful resources — such as our Professionnel credentialing page and encourages the mentee to connect with another mentor who may be a better fit for that goal. A mentee is preparing for a specific certification. While the mentor is certified, they aren't able to assist with exam preparation. The mentor shares helpful resources — such as caionline.org/professional-credentials — and encourages the mentee to connect with another mentor who is a better fit.

■ Goals Have Been Met

A mentor and mentee agree to meet for six months. After three months, they've completed their goal-setting worksheet and achieved all initial objectives. They mutually agree to wrap up the formal mentoring relationship but remain connected for future support or networking.

■ Shifting Needs

After a few sessions, the mentee realizes they're looking for support in a technical area outside the mentor's experience. They have a respectful conversation and agree to end the current mentoring match. The mentee is encouraged to search for a new mentor using the Mentor Directory Link.

Ending a mentorship is a natural part of the process — and sometimes it opens the door to new opportunities and connections. Clear communication and mutual respect help ensure a positive experience for everyone involved.