

Guidelines for Using the Maine Mentor Program

The Maine Mentor Program has been designed to aid UMaine students and alumni with career information gathering, the development of effective job search strategies, and in some cases, career exploration such as through job shadowing. Participants in the Mentor Program are UMaine alumni from Maine, throughout New England, and in other regions of the country who have agreed to provide UMaine students and fellow alumni with information about their respective fields of work. The Maine Mentor Program is a volunteer network and should be used with discretion and courtesy.

Students can locate mentors and find more information about them by searching the Maine Mentor online database at umaine.edu/career/studentsalumni/maine-mentor-program/. Jotting down the Record Number(s) of the selected mentor(s) before your appointment is helpful. After discussing your career interests with a counselor from the Career Center, you will be given the names and contact information of the selected alumni mentors. We ask that you follow the steps listed below when contacting a mentor referral.

1. The primary purpose of the Mentor Program is to provide you with career information. In a few instances, your interviews for career information may lead to employment referrals; however, do not send a resume unless specifically requested to do so by the alumni mentor.
2. You may begin by sending a brief typed letter of introduction (usually to the business address unless otherwise specified) or, if you prefer, make your initial contact by phone or e-mail. In either case tell the mentor that you were referred to him/her through the Maine Mentor Program. Explain your purpose and be clear about the type of information you are seeking. If you are sending a letter of introduction, say you will be following up with a phone call in the next week or two to arrange a mutually convenient meeting time. If the initial contact is by phone, inquire about a convenient meeting time and request no more than an hour of the mentor's time. If *they* suggest a longer meeting, then it's up to the two of you.
3. For the actual meeting, be prompt and dress professionally. Prepare in advance a list of questions you want to ask or categories of information you hope to cover. You may get off the track but by preparing in advance, you will provide some organization to the meeting in order to maximize your contact's time and your own. A Skype "meeting" may be possible in lieu of a face-to-face meeting.
4. After your meeting with the alumni contact, follow-up with a brief thank you note. Since Mentoring is a volunteer program, your courtesy and professionalism will help keep the alumni mentors actively interested and involved and will enable the program to continue for future students.
5. One last step - we need to hear about your experience using the Maine Mentor Program. Please be sure to give us some feedback about your experience, observations, or even suggestions for improving the program. If you wish, you may e-mail your feedback and suggestions to umainecareercenter@umit.maine.edu.
6. Finally - *the referrals given to you were specifically matched to your career interests. We ask that you do not give out your alumni mentor names to other students, friends or alumni.*

For the success of the program, we keep detailed records of who we refer to various alumni mentors. If you know of other UMaine students or alumni who are interested in using the program, please refer them directly to the Career Center. We would be happy to match their career interests to appropriate mentors.