

StartUp NCW Mentoring Program

For entrepreneurs, turning a passion into a business is the ultimate dream. But that dream doesn't come easily. It's hard work, and there are challenges around every corner. Fortunately, entrepreneurs don't have to go it alone. Their chance of success increases with access to the business knowledge and guidance of experienced professionals.

Through our partnership with MicroMentor, we have a free, easy-to-use social network that allows entrepreneurs and volunteer business mentors to connect so they can solve problems and build businesses together. Join a growing community that has already created thousands of mentor-mentee matches and continues to make an impact through the power of mentoring to help small businesses thrive.

Brought to you by:



Goals of Business Mentoring

The goal is to leverage the mentor's expertise to address a **business challenge** you are facing and work through it together.

Common Goals of Business Mentoring

- Getting to the heart of a specific business challenge
- Putting together a specific action plan to solve the challenge
- Working through ideas to structure a business strategy
- Overcoming hurdles together through troubleshooting and brainstorming
- Reviewing the results of projects and providing feedback



Help Where You Need it Most

TOP 10 AREAS OF EXPERTISE REQUESTED ON MICROMENTOR:

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Growth and Development | Business Development |
| Getting Started | Loans and Financing |
| Business Strategy | Advertising and Promotion |
| Business Planning | Financial Planning |
| Marketing | Accounting |



Visit www.startupncw.com

Click on 'Mentorship' in the top menu





StartUp NCW Mentoring Community

For entrepreneurs, turning a passion into a business is the ultimate dream. But that dream doesn't come easily. It's hard work, and there are challenges around every corner. Fortunately, entrepreneurs don't have to go it alone. Their chance of success increases with access to the business knowledge and guidance of experienced professionals.

Through our partnership with MicroMentor, we have a free, easy-to-use social network that allows entrepreneurs and volunteer business mentors to connect so they can solve problems and build businesses together. Join a growing community that has already created thousands of mentor-mentee matches and continues to make an impact through the power of mentoring to help small businesses thrive.



Read the Mentoring Program Overview

- This is easy to find in the program info columns
- Then you'll click



Join the Community

After clicking "join," you will be directed to **set up your profile** and accept the user agreement.

Join the MicroMentor Community

Sign up using your social account

Facebook LinkedIn Google

Or create an account below

First Name Last Name

Email Address*

Password*

Confirm Password*

Find a mentor
I am looking for a mentor to help build my business.

Be a mentor
I'd like to volunteer my time to help business owners succeed.

Submit

By clicking the button above, you are indicating that you have read, understood and agree to MicroMentor's Terms of Use, Privacy Policy, and Code of Conduct.

Community Expectations

Mentors are volunteering their time to help you. In return, we ask that you follow our community expectations.

A detailed profile

Please write a good description of your business and problems you seek to solve. Vague or short profiles may be hidden from search.

No soliciting

Mentors are here to provide support and guidance, not to connect you to financing, investors, or customers.

Follow through

You should be currently dedicating time and effort to your business, and able to follow through with commitments made in mentoring conversations.

Be communicative

Mentors expect you to respond to their messages, show up to meetings on time, and communicate about absences.

Our team and mentors are monitoring community activity, and reserve the right to moderate access to the MicroMentor community.

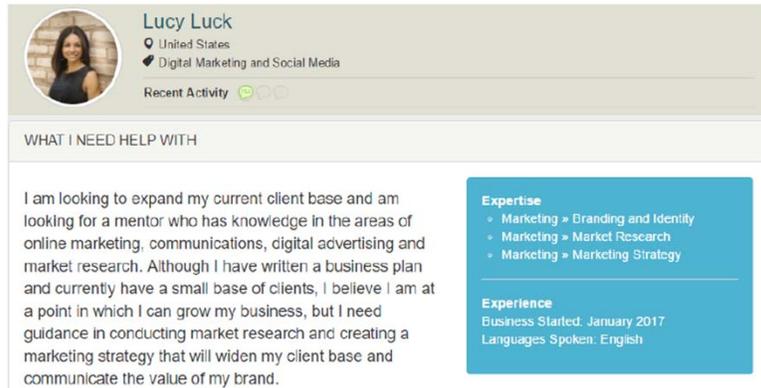
I agree to meet these expectations

Save and Continue



Create a Profile

- 1) **Create a profile** that shares information relevant to your business and outlines what you need help with.



Lucy Luck
United States
Digital Marketing and Social Media

Recent Activity

WHAT I NEED HELP WITH

I am looking to expand my current client base and am looking for a mentor who has knowledge in the areas of online marketing, communications, digital advertising and market research. Although I have written a business plan and currently have a small base of clients, I believe I am at a point in which I can grow my business, but I need guidance in conducting market research and creating a marketing strategy that will widen my client base and communicate the value of my brand.

Expertise

- Marketing > Branding and Identity
- Marketing > Market Research
- Marketing > Marketing Strategy

Experience
Business Started: January 2017
Languages Spoken: English



Create a Profile

1) Your profile should:

- Identify your industry, describe your business, and state your business needs
- Include a concise 'elevator pitch' that answers the question: How could a mentor help and why?
- Include a professional photo and links to your website and/or LinkedIn profile
- Demonstrate your passion for your business

2) Your profile should not:

- Disclose sensitive information
- Solicit financial support
- Contain spelling or grammatical errors

Complete Your Profile

Before we help you to find a mentor, we need to ask you a few questions thoughtfully. This process should take at least 15 minutes, but we ask that you have a well-thought-out profile to participate in the process.

[Check Out an Example Profile](#)

* Required Field

Tell us about your business

Are you currently in business?*

- Yes (Selling to paying customers)
- No

When did you start your business?*

-- Month --

-- Year --

What is the name of your business?

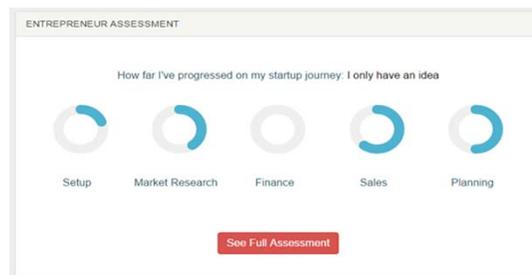
Leave blank if your business does not currently have a name

What industry do you best fit into?*



Identify Your Business Challenges

- › After completing a profile, we encourage you to take the Entrepreneur Assessment to help identify where support is needed and communicate how a mentor can help.
- › The **self-assessment** is located at the bottom of your profile and will help mentors to understand where you are at in your business journey.



Search for a Mentor

- › MicroMentor's matching algorithm allows you to **search** through a sorted selection of mentor profiles to find those that best fits your needs.

Find mentors and connect

We have sorted these search results based on information in your profile

The screenshot shows the search results page on MicroMentor. At the top, there are filters for 'Expertises', 'Industries', and 'Years in business'. Below these are 'Advanced options' including 'Special keywords', 'Language Spoken', and 'Countries'. A red 'Filter Results' button is located below the filters. The search results are displayed as three cards, each for a different mentor:

- corey roberts**: Located in Bountiful, UT, United States. Expertises include E-Commerce. Recent Activity is shown with a green progress bar.
- Lauren McParland**: Located in United States. Expertises include Nonprofit and Social Enterprise. Recent Activity is shown with a green progress bar.
- neil goldstein**: Located in Denton, TX, United States. Expertises include Manufacturing. Recent Activity is shown with a green progress bar.

Each card also lists 'How I Can Help' with specific skills and a red 'Connect' button.



Search for a Mentor

) Search Filters

- Experiment with the search filters to find the mentors who you think might be a good fit.
- Use the advanced search options to search based on expertise, industry, business stage, language, location and more.
- If no mentors appear, try removing some filters. Mentors can offer a lot to your business even if they don't match your initial search criteria or specific industry.

Find mentors and connect

We have sorted these search results based on information in your profile.

Expertises Industries Years in business

Advanced options

Special keywords Language Spoken Countries

Filter Results



Start a Conversation

Once you find one or more mentors who seem like the right fit, you can send them a message through a personal messaging interface and **start a conversation**.

-) We recommend reaching out to multiple mentors.
-) Both mentors and entrepreneurs may initiate a conversation.

Start a Conversation

Connect with Sam

Send Message



Refer a Mentor to a Colleague

- › You can refer mentors to your friends or colleagues, by clicking on the “Refer User” button and entering your contact’s email address.
- › Your contact does not need to be a registered MicroMentor user to receive the referral email.

The screenshot displays the MicroMentor user interface. On the left, a profile card for Sam Orwig is shown, including a profile picture, name, location (Portland, OR, United States), and expertise (Nonprofit and Social Enterprise). Below the profile are two buttons: 'Start a Conversation' and 'Refer Sam to a Colleague', with a red arrow pointing to the latter. Below the buttons is a section titled 'HOW I CAN HELP' with a text description and a list of expertise areas: 'Getting started > Getting Started', 'Management > Leadership', and 'Management > Planning and Goal Setting'. On the right, a modal window titled 'Refer Member to a Colleague' is open, containing a text box for sharing the profile, a 'Required Field' label, and input fields for 'Your Name', 'Your Email', and 'To Name*'. There is also a text area for a 'Personal message *' and a 'Cancel' button.



My Dashboard

- › Make sure to review ‘My Resources’ for mentoring best practices and tools for getting started.
- › Select ‘Manage Profile & Settings’ to make edits to your account
 - Update your business information.
 - Update your profile as new challenges arise
- › New and on-going conversations will appear under ‘My Conversations’ on your dashboard and in email notifications

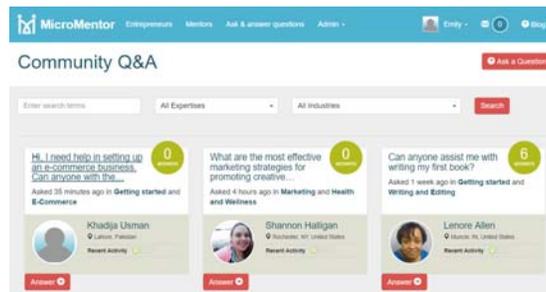
The screenshot shows the 'My Dashboard' interface. It is divided into four main sections: 'MY PROFILE & SETTINGS' for Karen Cohen (Atlanta, GA, United States), 'MY CONVERSATIONS' showing two active conversations with Michael Farina and Rebecca Dukus, 'MY RESOURCES' with a link to 'Starting A Conversation on MicroMentor', and 'MY Q & A'. Each conversation entry includes a profile picture, name, date, and a 'View' button. The dashboard also features a 'Manage Profile & Settings' button and a 'View all Conversations' button.



Ask or Answer a Question

If you want give business mentoring a try before committing to a one on one relationship, or you have a quick question to pose to the broader MicroMentor community and want to crowd source an idea, the **Community Q&A** provides a quick and easy way to do just that.

1. Click on the “Ask & Answer Questions” tab located at the top tab of the toolbar.
2. Post a question, browse through to see if the answer you seek is already there, or answer those questions you are able to contribute to.

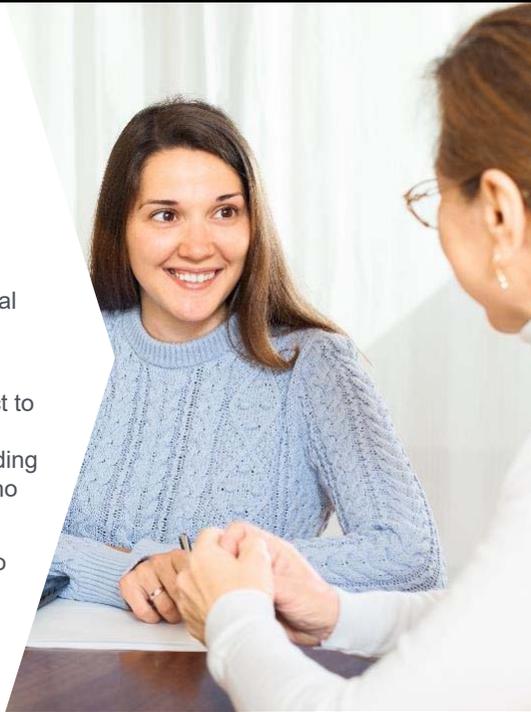


Tips for Successful Mentoring



Finding the Right Match

- › Create an effective profile. Articulate your business challenge(s) and share your business description and personal motivations for starting your business.
- › Take time to find a match: Expect to spend about 30 minutes reading through mentor profiles and sending messages to several mentors who seem interesting.
- › Ask questions in the beginning to assess fit.



Make a Great First Impression

- › Share with the mentor why you think their background is a great fit for the business challenges you are trying to solve.
- › Describe what you personally hope to gain from this experience.
- › Ask the mentor to let you know if they are available to start a new mentoring relationship at this time.
- › Be responsive and recognize that mentors are busy folks, so it may be a couple days before you receive a reply.



Build a Mentoring Roadmap

- › After you connect with a mentee, you may choose to start with a few “diagnostic” conversations by email, phone, Skype, or WhatsApp. It’s up to you!
- › We recommend creating a plan to help frame your mentoring relationship.
- › MicroMentor’s **Mentoring Roadmap**, available in the ‘My Resources’ section of your dashboard can help you to:
 - Define your needs statement
 - Choose an approach to your relationship
 - Define the scope of the relationship



PRINTABLE MENTORING ROADMAP

This document is intended as a guide for your first few mentor/mentee conversations. Filling out this worksheet together, it can help you narrow the focus, set engagement, map out a plan for addressing a business challenge, opportunities for future projects or other advising relationships.

1. Diagnose Need

Outcome:

A succinct “need statement” summarizing the specific challenge trying to address.

Mentors should focus on:

Asking questions and listening for the root cause.

- › What is the challenge the entrepreneur faces?
- › What is driving the entrepreneur to explore this challenge at this time?
- › What, if anything, has the entrepreneur already done to address the challenge?
- › Tip: Keep asking “why” to drive to the heart of the problem.

Entrepreneurs should focus on:

Being candid and avoiding the jump to potential solutions.

- › Tip: Focus on providing context and thoughtful analysis.
- › Tip: Stick to the problems and not the solution(s) at this time.

Write the entrepreneur’s need statement here:

Example: My marketing strategy is unclear and I’m not sure how to attack the business.



For additional Information

- Please contact WVC Center for Entrepreneurship with any questions you may have:
 - Office Phone (509) 682-6915
 - By email cfore@wvc.edu

