



CAREERS & CONNECTIONS:

**A Program Planning and Implementation Guide
for Employment Mentoring**



**Lutheran Immigration
and Refugee Service**

LIRS.org

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For questions or more information on planning and implementing an employment mentoring program, contact Laura Griffin, LIRS Program Coordinator, at LGriffin@lirs.org.

To learn more about LIRS or to get involved, visit LIRS.org/act.

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Founded in 1939, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service is the second largest refugee resettlement agency in the United States. It is nationally recognized for its leadership advocating with refugees, asylum seekers, unaccompanied children, immigrants in detention, families fractured by migration and other vulnerable populations. Through more than 75 years of service and advocacy, LIRS has helped over 500,000 migrants and refugees rebuild their lives in America.

Foreword

The story of migration echoes across the histories of our families, communities, and country. Our national identity is marked by waves of migrants and refugees whose experiences of rebuilding their lives have shaped our American story. And Lutherans, through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), have a rich history of welcoming these waves of new Americans seeking to rebuild their lives. Drawing from the deep well of its Lutheran theological understanding, cherished Lutheran heritage, commitment to humanitarian relief, and identity as people with immigrant roots, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service puts faith into action in solidarity with migrants and refugees. Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and its network of service partners walk alongside migrants and refugees as they begin the challenging journey of rebuilding their lives.

Through advocacy and professional services, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service responds to specific, targeted needs and addresses the immediate challenges newcomers face. Too often, however, the complexity of emotional, social, civic, and economic factors that contribute to a comprehensive sense of well-being and self-sufficiency for newcomers is not fully recognized.

Employment-focused mentoring is one way that local communities and churches can stand with newcomers to overcome obstacles that inhibit economic success and block the routes out of poverty. Employment-focused mentoring leverages social networks to more effectively support newcomers' long-term integration, and it can also be a critical support for career advancement.

The Careers and Connections Guide is a tool for partners interested in starting a mentoring program and supporting new Americans along the journey of integration. It provides tested resources designed for local service providers, congregations, or community groups to create and grow a program.

The guide shares key practices for successful mentoring programs that Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service identified through pilot projects with refugee resettlement partners in Georgia, Nebraska, and Pennsylvania. It also provides social connections that address the isolation and marginalization, loneliness, and fear that mark the experience of migration.

The project helps new Americans achieve a better career and expand their social ties in the long term, and mentoring provides the moral support, planning, and preparation to take the next step in the process. Mentor relationships also have benefits beyond the job search: many refugees identify increased self-confidence, and mentors also report more global awareness and drive towards welcoming newcomers after participating in a mentoring partnership.

The Connections and Careers Guide is designed as a tool for others who are seeking similar solutions to the limitations of traditional service delivery systems. Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service encourages resettlement agencies, community-based organizations, churches, and other places of worship, as well as state and national program leaders, to use the material to create and sustain mentoring programs that are easily incorporated into your existing work and also open new doors for volunteers, funders, and friends. Together, we can improve career opportunities, combat isolation, and strengthen our collective response to new neighbors.

Acknowledgments

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service is deeply grateful to our local partners, our mentor teams, and our staff who contributed their creativity, vision, and energy to this project. We also thank the funders who believed in this project and whose support made it possible.

Our three pilot partners—Lutheran Children and Family Services of Pennsylvania in Lancaster, Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska in Omaha, and Lutheran Services of Georgia in Atlanta — made this guide possible. Each brings a long history of welcoming refugees, and all demonstrated their innovation and creativity in testing a new approach to supporting career advancement.

Ellen Willenbecher in Lancaster, Lacey Studnicka in Omaha, and Melanie Johnson in Atlanta provided the leadership and daily support to implement and evaluate this project. In each location, mentor teams explored this concept, offered valuable feedback, and shared their stories. They have helped to define the important steps in the career exploration and goal-setting process that led to the career-planning section of this guide.

At Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, Linda Hartke, LIRS President and CEO, had the vision to launch this mentoring project, and Mike Mitchell, Vice President of Programs and Protection, offered guidance to move it forward. Katherine Ollenburger, Clarissa Perkins, Laura Griffin, and Nicole Jurmo shaped the guide's content, style, and design.

Finally, the funders. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod contributed to the pilot program, and a grant from the Calvin K. Kazanjian Economics Foundation enabled us to formalize the concept into this resource guide. We will continue to learn from new sites, and we look forward to testing this guidebook in Fort Wayne, Indiana, with the financial support and partnership of Trinity English Lutheran Church.

Why Mentoring

We're often asked at Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service why employment mentoring helps, or how it differs from our other integration programs.

We think the answer is best stated simply by a refugee from Bhutan:

"In my country, I could not look someone in the eye. Now I understand that in this country, I am the same as everyone else."

Our experience has shown that newcomers to our country who are mentored do better, not only in jobs, but socially and overall in their new lives. The resettlement network has often offered a model of service delivery to refugee clients that can unintentionally de-emphasize the importance of social ties. A study led by the Annie E. Casey Foundation¹ found that service delivery systems are severely limited in their ability to meet the needs of the most vulnerable individuals in their community because of their professional nature and hierarchical structure. While essential, these systems must be complemented by social networks to address "issues that the service delivery system itself creates—isolation, powerlessness, and the loss of self-image and self-worth."² These social networks provide the relationships, trust, and sense of mutuality that connect individuals to solve common problems, draw on a broader set of resources, and achieve economic security. Participants of the study experienced multiple benefits from social networks such as:

- An increased confidence to pursue their goals
- A greater sense of belonging and level of comfort
- Better relationships with people in the community
- An improved cultural understanding

Since we've been coordinating this program with our partners, we've seen mentees graduate from high school, enroll in college, get certified in fields where they worked back home, get new jobs, and advance in their careers.

I love the freedom and peaceful life in this country.

—Mentee, refugee from Afghanistan, resettled in Atlanta, GA

Even better, the benefits are not a one-way street. Many mentors have told us how much they enjoyed the program and what they learned from their mentee. It's in giving that we receive. These opportunities engage community members around a clear goal, demonstrating a simple way for established Americans to become involved in their greater communities.

¹ Bailey, Terri J. "Ties that Bind: The Practice of Social Networks." The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2006.

² Bailey, Terri J. "Ties that Bind: The Practice of Social Networks." The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2006.

Service partners and participants in our pilot project have seen increased engagement from the business community, an overwhelmingly positive response to the program, and other indicators of success, including job upgrades and participation in vocational training, educational programs, and recertification.

I enjoy meeting with my new friend, we do far more than discuss his career. We have genuinely become friends as well. Networking is critical for career success in the United States. Someone coming from another country needs as much support as possible. The mentoring program helps us connect as people because we have a common goal.

—Pastor Anthony Phillips, Mentor, St. Philip UMC, Candler student class of 2016

We hope this guide provides the necessary information to help you recruit the mentors you need, offer additional support for career advancement, and establish stronger community partnerships that strengthen integration.

Recommendations for Program Structure

Careers and Connections has been an amazing opportunity for Lutheran Services of Georgia to offer hope to refugees in the area of long-term career advancement: hope that it is possible to work again in the fields and careers for which they were trained. Hope that it is possible to aspire to new careers in their new country.

The mentoring relationship is what helps to transform hope to reality as mentors and mentees work together to develop a career plan and share social and professional connections that lay the groundwork for both career advancement and long-term community integration.

—Melanie Johnson, Program Manager, Lutheran Services of Georgia

With a mentoring program, local service providers and community groups can complement existing services by “strengthening social networks, educating local communities, and focusing on holistic approaches that would enhance integration and help create a truly welcoming community.”³

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service recommends a three-step process for organizations interested in beginning a mentoring program. The resources in this guide will support your efforts to learn about mentoring, assess your organization’s readiness, recruit mentors and mentees, and support matches.

1. Preparing for an Employment-Focused Mentoring Program

³ Dwyer, T. (Retrieved June 18, 2012) Refugee Integration in the United States: Challenges and Opportunities. http://www.churchworldservice.org/site/DocServer/Refugee_Integration_in_the_United_States.pdf?docID=3923

2. Recruitment and Matching of Mentor Teams
3. Supporting the Mentoring Life Cycle

1. PREPARING FOR AN EMPLOYMENT-FOCUSED MENTORING PROGRAM

Careers and Connections bases the mentoring program on the National Mentoring Partnership's guidelines for mentoring. The guidelines suggest a structured one-to-one relationship that:

- Focuses on the needs of mentored participants
- Fosters caring and supportive relationships
- Encourages individuals to develop to their fullest potential
- Helps an individual to develop his or her own vision for the future
- Strategizes to develop active community partnerships⁴

For this project, the mentor acts like a job coach, helping the refugee to develop skills to increase employability, to identify and articulate long-term career goals, and to create a plan to reach those goals. Such efforts contribute to outcomes that benefit refugees, the companies that employ them, and their communities. It is important for an organization to agree to this kind of mentoring program even if other mentoring activities are already in place. The clear connection to career goals and advancement require a specific type of volunteer mentor as well as a specific kind of client. More information on mentor matches is provided in the following section.

Through the relationship with their mentor, refugees will expand their social networks and gain an experienced and trusted friend and adviser. Refugees face significant challenges to draw on supportive community networks. Barriers such as language skills and difficulty in navigating local community and social systems can place refugees at risk for marginalization rather than integration. Relationships with mentors offer an exception to the relatively limited contact between refugees and the local community, offering a venue for newcomers and long-time community residents to work together to build a more cohesive and vibrant community.

The first step in any employment-focused mentoring program is to determine if the project aligns with your mission and goals and whether your organization is ready to get involved. Through our experience, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service has found that mentoring programs work best when our partners have the following in place:

- An existing volunteer coordinator position or other staff capacity to manage volunteers (at least a part-time position).
- Employment programs with built-in mechanisms for clients to return for additional services OR clearly define new mechanisms to achieve this.
- A demonstrated need for additional support for career laddering for new Americans.
- Supportive leadership and resource development strategies that can be aligned with mentor recruitment and retention.

⁴ "Mentor," accessed April, 2015, <http://www.mentoring.org>.

Employment Mentoring Project Assistant

Sample Job Description



Lutheran Immigration
and Refugee Service

Adapted, with permission, from Lutheran Services of Georgia

Summary

The Project Assistant for the Employment Mentoring Project assists with relationship management, administrative and support tasks for the Employment Mentoring Project, also known as “Careers and Connections.” He/She will recruit participants (both mentors and mentees), help with group orientations, facilitate communication of program participants and support ongoing mentoring relationships. “Careers and Connections” aims to support long term career advancement for refugees and to deepen social connections between refugees and their communities.

Responsibilities

- Identify outreach strategies for mentor recruitment and follow through to meet mentor recruitment goals.
- Collaborate with employment services staff to identify and recruit refugees who meet program criteria.
- Facilitate communication between mentors and mentees, including the collection of data needed for reporting.
- May assist with drafting reports and analyzing data pertaining to the Employment Mentoring Project and the Employment Program as a whole.
- Report issues or concerns expressed by program participants to the Program Manager and Program Coordinator.
- Prepare paperwork for Orientations and assist with administering orientations as needed.
- May assist the employment program with other administrative tasks.
- May serve as interpreter when language skills are applicable for case services.
- Conform with and abide by all regulations, policies, work procedures and instructions.
- Maintain confidentiality and appropriately handle sensitive information in compliance with HIPAA standards.
- Participate in organization functions and public relations activities.

Non-Essential Responsibilities:

- Perform other duties as assigned to meet program needs.

Supervisory Responsibilities:

- None

Financial Responsibilities:

- None



Minimum Qualifications

- High School Diploma or equivalent and two years general office experience including typing and/or keypunching data into a computer and monitoring data in paper and electronic format or any equivalent combination of training and experience which provides the required knowledge skills and abilities.
- Excellent computer skills including knowledge of Excel, Word, PowerPoint, and online forms and databases.
- Ability to sort and file documents alphabetically and numerically.
- Ability to communicate with all persons in a culturally competent manner.
- Must be accurate, detail oriented and organized.
- Must be able to prioritize tasks.
- Must have good time management skills.
- Must be able to influence others over whom he/she has no authority.
- Must read, write and speak English fluently.
- Must have the ability to communicate with all persons in a culturally competent manner.
- Must be sensitive to the service population's cultural and socioeconomic characteristics.
- Must hold a valid driver's license and have personal auto insurance and a good driving record.

Desired Qualifications:

- Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science in a relevant area of specialty.
- The ability to read, write and speak a relevant foreign language (relevant languages include Burmese, Chin, Karen, Nepali, Arabic, Farsi, Somali, and Spanish).

Success Factors:

- Ability to work in a team environment with a diverse group of people.
- Ability to communicate clearly with people from other cultures.
- Ability to respond positively to clients.
- Attentive to detail.
- Mature and reliable.
- Diplomatic and patient.

Physical Demands:

Regularly required to talk and hear. Required to stand, walk, sit, use hand to finger, handle or feel objects, tools or controls, and reach with hands and arms. Employee frequently lifts and/or moves up to 10 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by the job include close vision and the ability to adjust focus.

Work Conditions:

While performing the responsibilities of this job, the employee travels by personal vehicle and is exposed to changing weather conditions. May work weekends.

2. RECRUITING AND MATCHING MENTORS AND MENTEES

I do think that part of the success is finding correct matches. Really understanding what direction the mentee wants to go and their history. When I approach a busy professional, I present in a way that appeals to their ego (positively). If the mentee has a need, the mentor can recognize and feel they can help right away; it is hard for them to say no. I also let them know that the time commitment can work around their busy schedules. For most of the high level professionals, I present the opportunity in a way that allows them to come to the idea. For example, I tell them, 'I have been so blessed and helped along the way, it only makes sense to give back.'

I draw from the professionals I had a personal relationship with. A few of them recruited professionals they knew that were a great matches for the mentees we had.

—Rochelle Heiman, Sponsorship Development Specialist, Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska

Finding the right mentors and mentees is the core of what makes this project work. Through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service's pilot partner projects, we have found that business professionals are very interested in this kind of mentoring. For our three pilot partners, each organization found that they needed to conduct outreach differently than for other volunteer opportunities. Professionals understand career mentoring, and many have had mentors in their own career development. It is important to consider ways to expand an organization's own volunteer base and to be clear with prospective mentors about the goals and desired outcomes for this project.

Selecting the right mentee is equally important. The pilot sites have developed a referral system where employment staff match mentees to mentors. For example, not every client is ready for a career mentor. Employment staff have likely interviewed prospective mentees and can ensure their readiness to commit to a one-on-one mentoring relationship.

In addition, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service has found that matches do not have to be career specific. If a mentee's career goals are for a highly skilled or professional job, like a doctor or an accountant, then it may be best to match with a mentor in that field. However, many successful mentor teams have not shared a common career interest and are able to make significant progress.

Attributes of Mentors and Mentees

Here are important attributes to consider for both mentors and mentees:

Mentors:

- Sincere desire to be personally involved with another person to help him or her achieve personal and career goals
- Ability to communicate with new Americans openly and non-judgmentally

- Strong listening skills
- Ability to establish a relationship based on equal responsibility and respect
- Interest in needs and concerns of persons adjusting to new job, community, and culture
- Practical problem-solving skills and ability to suggest options and alternatives
- Sensitivity to persons of different educational, economic, cultural, or racial backgrounds
- Strong networking skills and desire to help others expand their social ties

Mentees:

- Demonstrated interest in career advancement within current field where employed, re-entering a prior professional background, or pursuing new vocation.
- Sincere desire to be involved with another person to help achieve personal and career goals
- Ability to communicate openly and clearly
- Ability to establish a relationship based on equal responsibility and respect
- Entered United States as a refugee or asylee in the last five years
- Have at least one year of U.S. work experience
- Have basic English communication skills

3. SUPPORTING THE MENTORING LIFE CYCLE

Most mentor teams meet for three to four months, getting together about once a week in a community-based setting. This is the average time it takes to get to know one another, work on career goals, and make social connections. Some mentor pairs will not be ready to end the formal part of their relationship until closer to six months from the start date. In most cases, mentors and mentees will develop an ongoing friendship.

As a team, a mentor and his or her mentee will define a career goal and develop a plan to reach that goal. They will assess training or other education necessary to reach that goal and explore opportunities within the community. Mentor teams will work through six core competencies that Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service’s pilot mentor/mentee teams have defined as foundational for any new American who wants to have a career. The team will work through common challenges and create a plan tailored to the strengths and aspirations of the refugee.

We’ve been so thrilled with the results of the Careers and Connections mentoring program at Lutheran Services of Georgia. It’s been a great way to provide opportunities for professionals to get engaged with our clients, and has offered unique friendship and networking opportunities to participating clients.

—Emily Laney, Atlanta Program Manager, Lutheran Services of Georgia

Careers and Connections: Mentoring Life Cycle

Start Date	Month 1–2	Month 3	Ongoing
Orientation & Training	Foundation	Education & Training	Networking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete initial training and background checks • Mentor and mentee match 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Meeting • Career Exploration • Goal-Setting • Update Resume • Financial Planning • Define next steps 	Enroll in at least one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Training • English and/or Accent Reduction • GED • Small Business Development • Recertification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice Interview skills • Meet others from same industry/profession • Job upgrade
<p>Social activities will happen throughout the mentoring relationship. Plan for at least three activities that help to build connections between a mentor pair, with each other's families and the larger community. Ideas include: Share a meal, attend children's activities, participate in sporting event, visit museum or park together.</p>			

Additional Tools for Mentors and Mentees

Recruitment and matching are the most important steps in creating a mentoring program. The overall goal of this project is to support long-term integration through career advancement and deepened social connections. By focusing on the career goals during mentor recruitment, you will give prospective mentors and mentees a clear sense of what they will be doing as a mentor team. The social connections naturally occur as mentor teams work together on the mentees' career plans.

Our pilot sites commonly report on family dinners, networking events, and meet-and-greet coffees that emerge as the mentor teams meet each week. Through these events, mentees gain confidence in meeting new people, and both mentors and mentees expand their networks as they get to know one another's circles of family, friends, and colleagues.

Take time to consider each of the steps outlined below so you can select the best mentors and mentees:

- Set goals and expectations for the program participants.
- Identify key places for outreach.
- Gather information about participants.
- Formalize participants' commitment to this program.
- Structure the team's first visit.

HELPFUL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Here are some resources that can be helpful to learn more about incoming refugee populations to the U.S. and explore available resources on cultural orientation:

- **Cultural Orientation Center**
<http://culturalorientation.net/>
Resources on a variety of people groups, nature of conflict/flight that led to refugee status, and activities and suggestions for delivering cultural orientation to newcomers. The backgrounders on different refugee groups are particularly helpful for volunteers.

Goals for Mentors and Mentees

- Mentees will identify and articulate career goals and create a plan to reach those goals to support long-term career advancement with the assistance of the mentor.
- Mentees will expand their social network and deepen their integration into the community through the relationship with their mentors.
- Mentors will draw on their professional experiences to encourage mentees to develop to their fullest potential and develop a vision for the future.
- Mentors will connect mentees to their professional network to break down barriers of isolation and mitigate the limited contact refugees have with established community residents.
- Mentors will gain an increased understanding of how refugee resettlement brings newcomers to our community, the contributions they can offer, as well as the cultural background and employment challenges of refugee job-seekers.
- Mentors will have support through discussions with other mentors and ongoing assistance from the program manager in order to strengthen the traditional one-on-one mentoring relationship.
- Program staff will identify the conditions under which career mentoring is most effective and the types of volunteers, refugees, and activities that are associated with positive outcomes.

- **U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)**

<http://www.refugees.org/resources/for-refugees--immigrants/>

USCRI is one of the nine national voluntary agencies that resettle refugees in the U.S. They have several resources that can be helpful for cultural orientation, including financial literacy resources in a variety of languages.

- **Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service**

www.lirs.org

The Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service website has current news and relevant information on migration trends around the globe as well as resources for volunteer training and educational materials for churches or other faith-based groups. Volunteer management resources can be found at volunteer.lirs.org. Educational materials for churches can be accessed at lirs.org/learn.

- **Higher Advantage**

www.higheradvantage.org

Resources and tools for refugee employment. Includes online learning institute with self-paced courses on key concepts refugees need to be successful in the U.S. workforce. Higher is a program of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and is funded by the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement to provide training and technical assistance to all nine national voluntary agencies, state offices, and other stakeholders in refugee employment.

Expectations for Mentors and Mentees

- Be open, thoughtful, clear, and realistic about what is a refugee mentoring relationship and what it can achieve.
- Nurture trust. Trust is crucial; the refugee must rely on the mentor for support and help, but just as important, the mentor must rely on the refugee to make decisions and take actions.
- Be willing and enthusiastic contributors to the partnership.
- Commit to working together about once a week for a minimum of three months, at a time and place convenient to both.
- Develop a long-term career plan with outcomes for mentees.
- Engage in networking in professional and non-professional settings.
- Participate in mentor seminars, educational workshops and social events.
- Participate in evaluation activities for the pilot project.
- Conduct regular check-ins with local program manager.

How to Begin

Mentor/mentee teams need ongoing support to be successful. Resources and clear guidance help to structure the time spent together and maximize the benefits of the goal-oriented approach that differentiates our employment-focused mentoring. Mentors and mentees have a clear purpose and mutual understanding of their work together. Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service recommends two areas of focus:

1. Create a career plan.
2. Address six core competencies.

The following section includes a five-step, career-planning guide that teams can use to explore interests and reach career goals. Through this process, each team completes a plan that outlines goals and a timeline for career advancement. You can find a printable form at the end of this guide.

During the initial pilot phase of this project, mentors discovered similar areas where their mentees needed more information or skills. These areas can be grouped into six core competencies:

1. Financial planning
2. Computer skills
3. English language training
4. Preparation for General Equivalency Development (GED) diploma
5. Recertification
6. Small business development

Beginning on page 14, the guide provides tools and free online resources to help teams work through each core competency.

Career Plan

EXPLORING INTERESTS

Some refugees arrive in the United States with credentials and experience in a profession, while others may not have attended school or even considered a career pathway. Taking time to explore available careers will benefit refugees with no work experience as well as veteran workers. Job titles and possibilities in the United States differ from other countries, so a career exploration process can open up new possibilities.

Here are some online resources:

- **My Next Move**
<http://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip>
Website created by the U.S. Dept. of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.
Resource to explore career options whether you have a clear goal or if you are still unsure.
- **O*net Interest Profiler**
<http://www.onetcenter.org/IP.html>
Free inventory to assess interests and potential jobs that fit those interests.
- **iSeek Interest Inventory**
<http://www.iseek.org/careers/assessyourself.html>
iSeek is a comprehensive career, education, and job resource.

IDENTIFY A CAREER GOAL

A mentee must identify a career goal in order to participate in the program. He or she must articulate a career interest and be able to say, for example, “I want to be in the medical field” or “I want to study auto mechanics.” Often, the career goal may need to be refined or made more specific. Sometimes this involves spending more time together to define goals and revisiting them throughout the mentoring process.

Questions To Ask A Mentee:

Career Goals

- What is your career goal?
- What job would you find rewarding and enjoyable? Why?
- What does it mean to “catch your dream?”

Assess Your Skills and Interests

- What do you like to do? Think about experiences you have enjoyed.
- What is the relationship between your skills and interests and possible future careers?
- How do your past or current jobs help you move towards your goal?

Career Plan

- What steps must you take to reach your goal?
- Are there research job opportunities?
- Do you need to update your resume and interview skills?
- Would you like to develop a small business plan and borrow money?
- What are the special requirements of your chosen career?
- Does it require specialized education or training?
- What do you see as challenges to reaching your goal?

- What is the timeline for each of the steps in your plan? Remember, this is a life-long effort.

Networking

- Think about job shadow and internship possibilities.
- Talk to people in the profession that interests you.
- List the names and contact information of people in your network.

RESUME WRITING

When mentors help mentees write their resumes, they get to know their mentees' goals, background experiences, and work history. If time together is limited, mentors can refer their mentees to these online resources for resume writing or explore offerings through the local workforce center.

- **Resume Genius**

www.resumegenius.com

This digital website offers a template to create a resume in 15-20 minutes.

NETWORKING

Contact 1	
Name:	
Connection:	
Phone Number:	
Email:	

Contact 2	
Name:	
Connection:	
Phone Number:	
Email:	

Contact 3	
Name:	
Connection:	
Phone Number:	
Email:	

Contact 4	
Name:	
Connection:	
Phone Number:	
Email:	

Core Competencies

FINANCIAL PLANNING

A review of the mentee's financial plan will inform decisions about how to budget for training or college courses, make a down payment on a house, purchase a car, or possibly find a new job to allow for attending training or college. If the mentor or the mentee are not comfortable discussing financial planning together, the mentee still should complete the worksheet below.

FINANCIAL PLAN

- Worksheet of current household finances
- Costs and impact to reach your career goals
- What can you expect to earn when you reach your employment goal? Starting salary? Salary potential?

MONTHLY BUDGET

INCOME	
Employment	\$
Employment	\$
Other (<i>Food Stamps, SSI, etc.</i>)	\$
TOTAL INCOME	\$

EXPENSES	
Rent	\$
Food	\$
Utilities	\$
Electric	(\$)
Gas	(\$)
Water	(\$)
Trash	(\$)
Phone	(\$)
Cable	(\$)
Internet	(\$)
Total Utilities	\$
Laundry	\$

Repay Travel Grant	\$
Clothing	\$
Medicines	\$
Transportation/Gas	\$
Car Payment	\$
Car Insurance	\$
Health Insurance	\$
Medical Co-Pays	\$
Personal Care Items	\$
Children's School	\$
Gifts	\$
Mosque/Temple/Church	\$
Other (<i>drivers' license and registration, car repairs, stamps, and checks</i>)	\$
Savings (<i>emergencies, buy a house, etc.</i>)	\$
Help Family	\$
Other	\$
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$
BALANCE	\$

FINANCIAL PLANNING

Here are some additional resources that can be helpful for reinforcing U.S. norms on banking and financial planning overall.

- **Financial Workshop Kits**
<http://www.financialworkshopkits.org/getting-started.aspx>
National Endowment for Financial Education has free financial literacy kits available on their website that include presentations, handouts, and helpful FAQs.
- **Money Smart**
<https://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/moneysmart/adult.html>
Federal Deposit Insurance Commission (FDIC) has an 11-module curriculum online with pre-and post-tests and take-home materials for participants. Each module can be used sequentially or as a stand-alone for specific topics.
- **Practical Money Skills**
<https://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/>
Designed for educators by Visa with a variety of free materials, videos and games. Can be useful for conveying financial literacy topics for people with limited English proficiency.

COMPUTER SKILLS

Computer skills are an essential part of competing in today's job market. Mentors should discuss areas that need improvement in keyboarding, using basic computers, and more specific computer skill requirements for technical jobs.

Here are some free online resources to explore, and also check your local public library for free computer classes. Many local libraries offer free computer classes.

- **GCF Learn Free**
<http://www.gcflearnfree.org/>
Online learning on computer skills and other topics. Mobile apps also available.
A program of the Goodwill Community Foundation® and Goodwill Industries of Eastern NC, Inc.® (GIENC®)
- **St. Paul Community Literacy Consortium**
<http://spclc.org/curricula-resources/computer-curriculum>
Downloadable, printable lessons and activities.
Created by St. Paul Community Literacy Consortium

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING

A mentee must have conversational English skills in order to enter the program. However, most mentees would benefit from more English-language learning to be better prepared for professional jobs. Accent reduction is also an appropriate step for some mentees and is considered a separate training from English language learning.

Community English classes are often hosted by adult education centers, local literacy councils, churches, and other community groups. Your organization may also want to explore English classes at a community college because this is a good way to get to know the community college system.

Here are some online resources to explore as well:

- **USA Learns**
usalearns.org
Beginner and Intermediate English lessons for individual and classroom use. Students can set up a username to track progress and take an initial placement test.
- **Free English Video Lessons**
<http://www.engvid.com/>
Large collection of videos specifically for adults that cover a variety of English topics. Searchable by subject and also by instructor name.
- **ESL-Lab**
<http://www.esl-lab.com/index.htm>
Good website to practice listening skills. Most have vocabulary and extended activities as well as the script and multiple choice questions.

GED DIPLOMA

For some mentees, acquiring a General Educational Development diploma is necessary to achieve their career goal. If a mentee completed high school in his or her country of origin or asylum, and has transcripts, an employer or training program may possibly waive a GED requirement. But in most instances, a GED is necessary.

Mentees' first step is to attend an orientation where they will be given an assessment test and guidance on class enrollment.

To acquire a GED diploma, a mentee must pass a test in language arts, writing; language arts, reading; social studies; science; and math. Classes are offered to prepare for the test.

Community college and adult education centers are a good place to start looking for classes and test dates. The assessment, orientation, and classes are often free. There are fees for study books and tests.

Here are some free online resources:

- **Free GED Test Course**
<http://www.gedforfree.com/free-ged-course/index.html>
- **Official GED Test**
<http://www.gedtestingservice.com/uploads/files/949aa6a0418791c4f3b962a4cd0c92f4.pdf>

RECERTIFICATION

Some mentees arrive here having achieved a college diploma or professional license, such as doctor or dentist. Ask the mentee for a copy of his or her transcripts and professional license from the home country. These materials need to be submitted to an education review company to determine what steps must be completed for a U.S. equivalent.

Here are some resources for recertification assistance:

- **World Education Services**
www.wes.com
World Education Services has a well-established transcript review service. There is a fee associated with transcript review.
- **Upwardly Global**
www.upglo.com
Upwardly Global offers job-seeker services to foreign-trained professionals in person at their offices in San Francisco, Chicago or New York or through their online learning courses. Fee required for some services.
- **Higher Advantage**
<http://www.higheradvantage.org/downloadable-tools/>
Series of downloadable recertification guides that give an overview of the required steps for re-entry into some professions. Guides are provided for these professions: teacher, accountant, dentist, doctor, nurse, pharmacist, and engineer.

STARTING A SMALL BUSINESS

Starting a business is an interest of many newcomers. Sometimes mentees have business experience from their home country or even an entrepreneurial spirit. Businesses owned by refugees and other types of migrants are often celebrated because of their contributions to communities and their economies.

Resources to explore:

- **U.S. Small Business Administration**
<https://www.sba.gov/>
The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has a directory of local offices as well as

trainings and other resources to assist in business planning. They also have grants and loan programs for small businesses.

- **Score**

www.score.org

Non-profit that offers free mentors and business start-up advice through a network of working and retired business professionals.

- **Entrepreneurs Source**

<http://www.entrepreneursource.com/index.php?itemid=2>

The Entrepreneur's Source reviews the shifting demographics of America and franchising.

PRINTABLE FORMS

Mentor/Mentee Information Form



Lutheran Immigration
and Refugee Service

Mentor Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Mobile Phone _____ Email _____

For Mentors

Length of residence in the United States:

Please list the professional and/or technical fields for which you could provide mentorship:

Describe your professional background:

Mentee Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Mobile Phone _____ Email _____

For Mentees

I came to the U.S. as a (check one) Refugee Asylee Other: _____

Year of Arrival in United States: _____

Please list the professional and/or technical fields that you would like to pursue in the U.S.:

Describe your professional background:

Goals and Expectations COMMITMENT AGREEMENT



Mentor: I, _____, agree to participate in CAREERS & CONNECTIONS as a Mentor in a committed partnership with _____.

I understand that my role as a mentor is to offer encouragement, support, and guidance. I understand that my mentee has been accepted into this program for his/her willingness to be mentored for long-term career advancement. I understand that I neither receive monetary compensation nor offer financial assistance.

I agree to:

- Be open, thoughtful, clear, and realistic about what is a refugee mentoring relationship and what it can achieve.
- Nurture trust. Trust is crucial; the refugee must rely on the mentor for support and help, but just as important, the mentor must rely on the refugee to make decisions and take action.
- Be a willing and enthusiastic contributor to the partnership.
- Commit to working together about once a week for a minimum of three months, at a time and place convenient to both.
- Guide the development of a long-term career plan with outcomes.
- Engage my mentee in networking in professional and non-professional settings.
- Participate in cohort seminars.
- Conduct regular check-ins and communicate problems with the program manager at _____ (name of local office or congregation).

Mentee: I, _____, agree to participate in CAREERS & CONNECTIONS as a Mentee in a committed partnership with _____.

I understand that my role as a mentee is to accept the encouragement, support and guidance of my mentor and to be responsible for developing long-term career goals and plan. I understand that my mentor has been accepted into this program for his/her willingness guide and support my long-term career advancement. I understand that I do not receive monetary compensation or financial assistance.

I agree to:

- Be open, thoughtful, clear and realistic, about what is a refugee mentoring relationship and what it can achieve.
- Nurture trust. Trust is crucial; the refugee must rely on the mentor for support and help, but just as important, the mentor must rely on the refugee to make his or her own

decisions and take action.

- Be a willing and enthusiastic contributor to the partnership.
- Commit to working together about once a week for a minimum of three months, at a time and place convenient to both.
- Be responsible for the development of a long-term career plan with outcomes.
- Accompany my mentor to networking activities in professional and non-professional settings.
- Participate in cohort seminars.
- Conduct regular check-ins and communicate problems to Lutheran Refugee Services.
- I understand that if I miss two planned one-on-one or cohort sessions, or do not promptly return two or more phone calls or emails, I will lose the privilege of participating in CAREERS & CONNECTIONS.

Signatures:

Mentor Signature

Date

Mentee Signature

Date

Program Representative Signature

Date

Your First Visit: Suggestions for Get-Acquainted Questions



The first mentor and mentee visit should focus on getting to know one another. It's a great time to hear more about each other's work experiences and personal life and to find areas of connections.

It can also be helpful for mentors to share examples of work-related goals and steps to achieve them. For refugees without much work experience in the United States or any opportunity for career-planning, setting goals and thinking about career mobility can be confusing.

Here are some questions that can help to guide your conversation:

- Tell me about yourself.
- How did you come to your current job?
- Tell me about a friend/relative you consider successful.
- What does the term "goal" mean to you?
- What motivates you?
- What is your main goal in life?
- Tell me about a recent goal.
- Tell me about your long-term employment or education goals.
- Are there any goals to be reached in your current job that position you for reaching long-term goals?
- Why are those goals important?
- What kind of guidance or resources would help you reach your goal?
- What kind of support could I provide to help you reach your goal?

Mentee _____ Mentor _____

Orientation Date _____

The Plan will be individual to each mentee and will include many, but not all, of the following components.

Foundation

Timeframe: all mentees complete within six weeks from orientation date.

Activity	Date Completed
First visit share stories, build trust	
Interest inventory and career exploration	
Identify and clarify career goal	
Update resume	
Financial planning	

Training and Education

Six months after foundational steps, mentee to enroll in at least one component from his or her plan.

- Computer classes
- ESL and accent-reduction classes
- GED/General Education Diploma
- Small business training
- Re-credentialing

Networking and Next Steps

Timeframe varies and is subject to mentee's plan.

- Practice interview skills.
- Introduce mentee to people with similar careers/experiences.
- Volunteer internship
- Job upgrade – either a promotion at current job or a new job

Community Engagement

Identify at least three components from this list to include in the plan and accomplish during the mentor program.

Integration is a gradual process that continues across a lifetime for first-generation refugees. The mentee's increased participation and engagement in social and community activities shows a commitment to the fluid journey of integration.

Socio-Cultural

- Visit each other's homes.
- Share cultural traditions like festivals, holidays, food.
- Get a library card.
- Attend children's school events.
- Attend community activities and events or places (i.e., mall, museum, athletic event).

Economic

- Ongoing financial planning and increased financial literacy
- New apartment/home ownership

Legal

- Green Card application
- Citizenship classes
- Register to vote

Career and Connections Record



Mentee _____ Mentor _____

Orientation Date _____

The Plan will be individual to each mentee so will include many, but not all, of the following components.

Foundation

All mentees to complete within six weeks from orientation date.

Activity	Date Completed
First visit share stories, build trust	
Interest inventory and career exploration	
Identify and clarify career goal	
Update resume	
Financial planning	

Training and Education

Two months after foundation enroll in at least one from mentee's plan.

- Computer classes
- ESL and accent-reduction classes
- GED/General Education Diploma
- Small business training
- Re-credentialing

Mentee enrolled in the following training and education experience(s):

List Training/Education Experience(s):	Location, Dates, Description:

Short-term Employment



Lutheran Immigration
and Refugee Service

Timeframe – as it applies to mentee’s plan.

Describe short-term employment goal:

List steps to reach short-term employment goal:

Identify at least three from this list to include in the plan, and accomplish them during the mentorship.

Integration is a gradual process that continues across a lifetime for first-generation refugees. The mentee's increased participation and engagement in social and community activities show a commitment to the necessary step-by-step progression of integration.

Socio-Cultural

- Visit each other's homes.
- Share cultural traditions like festivals, holidays, food.
- Get a library card.
- Attend children's school events.
- Attend community activities and events or places (i.e., mall, museum, athletic event).

Economic

- On-going financial planning and increased financial literacy
- New apartment/home ownership
- Driver's license

Legal

- Green Card/citizenship
- Register to vote

Describe Community Connections Activity	Date Accomplished
1.	
2.	
3.	

Social Connections and Networking Contacts



Record the names, contact information, and notes on people you met during your Careers and Connections mentorship.

Name	Contact Information	Notes
	Email: Cell: Address:	
	Email: Cell: Address:	
	Email: Cell: Address:	
	Email: Cell: Address:	
	Email: Cell: Address:	

Name	Contact Information	Notes
	Email: Cell: Address:	
	Email: Cell: Address:	
	Email: Cell: Address:	
	Email: Cell: Address:	
	Email: Cell: Address:	

