

Equal@work Mentoring Programme



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WHAT IS EQUAL@WORK?

Since 2009, ENAR has been working together with international companies, trade unions, public employers, European Union institutions and ENAR members in the Equal@work project to promote equality in employment for migrants and ethnic and religious minorities.

The partners involved in this initiative, committed to diversity and inclusion, are eager to develop original ventures at the national level in order to bridge the gap between employers and ethnic minority communities and migrants and foster inclusive labour markets.

Beyond this, another added value of the ENAR Equal@work initiative has been the creation of a multi-stakeholder dialogue, which broadens the respective horizons of those involved, generating trust and innovation, extending from the European to the local level.

Six major multinational companies have already joined and benefitted from this initiative: Adecco Group, IBM, L'Oréal, Sodexo, Ernst & Young, and La Poste.

EQUAL@WORK PROJECTS AT NATIONAL LEVEL

The Equal@work initiative at the national level aims to facilitate access to the labour market among migrants and ethnic and religious minorities, particularly those who are struggling to find long-term professional opportunities in the European Union.

With a national focus, Equal@work not only increases the commitment for developing best practices towards inclusion but directly intensifies ethnic minorities' potential to access the labour market. Additionally, the creation of a network of companies in the country that share the mission and goals of the project is another valuable outcome of this venture.

ONE ALTERNATIVE: EQUAL@WORK MENTORING PROGRAMME

ENAR and Equal@work partners in different Member states believe that learning is the primary purpose of mentoring. It's a two way active learning and growth experience for both mentors and mentees. It's a powerful tool to maximize educational knowledge and previous experiences. The concept of mentoring dates back to Greek mythology. During his absence Odysseus asked his friend Mentor to advise his son, Telemachus, and prepare him for the role as king. Between the 1970s and 1990s, the idea of mentoring as a tool for career advancement was initially developed in the United States. Since then it has been applied to different institutional settings, particularly in the promotion of women, migrants, and ethnic and religious minorities.

The Equal@work mentoring concept aims to encourage relationships between the mentor and the mentee to foster personal development and professional skills. In

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essence, this is an informal support relationship over a limited period to accelerate the career of the mentee. The mentor shares experiential knowledge and assists the mentee. The positive effects of mentoring result from, above with, high confidentiality in a safe space, voluntariness, a cooperative working relationship, despite differences in qualifications and life experiences, a win-win situation for both sides, as well as openness, respect and tolerance for other viewpoints. There is no hierarchy or a pyramidal relation in this mentoring programme. Mentors and mentees alike learn from each other in a culture of mutual benefits.

The programme is mentee-driven and mentor-guided. In the majority of mentoring relationship, mentors take an active role in driving the mentoring relationship. In this programme mentees are responsible for initiating the partnership activity related to their own learning and needs. Mentors support it by sharing their own knowledge and network, professional expertise and guidance depending on the mentee's professional project and objectives.

WHY IMPLEMENTING A MENTORING PROGRAMME?

Beyond the fact that mentoring programmes are considered a best practice contributing to the inclusion of marginalized groups in society, additional benefits clearly emerge for both parties through their collective exchanges. Mentoring partners are encouraged to bring their whole selves to the relationship, including all their similarities and differences, in order to build a foundation of trust which serves to enrich the total learning experience for both the mentors and mentees. Trust begins with knowing that the mentoring partnership is a safe place in which to share.

Benefits for Business partners

- Opportunity to consciously practice and improve leadership and listening skills
- Increase openness to different cultural and/or gender and/or background experiences
- Increase awareness of personal biases
- Stay abreast of recent developments in your field
- Widen and enhance professional and social networks
- Take pride in seeing mentees develop and advance professionally
- Contribute to the company's performance
- Contribute to internal diversity policies of the company
- Gain pleasure in sharing personal experiences and expertise
- Self-awareness on the topic of ethnic and religious minorities and migrants
- To be driven during working hours

Benefits for Young professionals (according to each national scenario)

- Increase self-awareness and self-confidence
- Receive constructive feedback in professional development areas

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- Discover new skills
- Build and expand relationships/networks
- Facilitate integration into the business
- Understand key issues for pursuing a successful career
- Gain a sounding board for testing new ideas and plans

Benefits for Civil Society Organisations

- Improve cooperation with Business partners
- Bring an European perspective to national projects
- Explore new fields of work
- Strengthen its expertise on social inclusive measures
- Develop leadership in this area
- Contribute practically to the empowerment of ethnic & religious minorities and migrants in your country

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

A local organisation (ideally minority or migrant led, affiliate to ENAR or not) will be in charge of pre-selecting and selecting the potential candidates for the mentoring programme. The project coordinator is to interview the candidates and appoint the best mentee on the basis of suitability to the developmental profile and relative to his/her areas of expertise and experience. The recruitment criteria and the mentee profile will be elaborated in close relation with the partners.

Ideally, each individual programme will last from 4 to 6 months. The mentor and the mentee should meet at least once a month (depending on each mentee needs and professional goals) and be encouraged to rely on numerous communication channels, such as telephone calls, e-mails and Skype conferences. It is important in the beginning of the project that mentor and mentee clarify the goals of their interaction, particularly in regard to the mentees' professional needs and objectives. They should agree on the activities to undertake, which may include:

- A mapping of the labour market relative to the mentee's field
- Guidance in searching for job postings (databases, business magazines, newspapers)
- Support in drafting CVs and cover letters for specific job postings
- Explanation of common recruitment processes
- Practical tips for conducting interviews (simulating various interview questions and scenarios)
- Input on the behavioral codes, expectations, and language commonly used in multinational business settings
- Introduce mentee to the internal profession network
- Introduce mentee to external professional and social network as a way of widening mentee's network

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- Provide information on training sessions/workshops when needed

This mentoring scheme does not guarantee any job recruitment at the Mentor's company after the end of the project.

The local organisation provides support to the mentee. The Mentoring Programme Coordinator in your country reports regularly to ENAR Europe and oversees the activities, communication, and interaction styles between the mentor and mentee. Monthly meetings between the mentor and mentees and a bi-monthly consultation help each grow from the mentoring program.

Benchmarking

After implementation, the partners agree to the processes and tools to be used to measure the success and outcomes of the mentoring program. The program will be evaluated throughout to ensure quality and that the foreseen objectives remain in scope. Equal@work benchmarks rely on the individual benefits acknowledged by the mentor and mentee as well as the value of the mentoring project to the corporation. The quality of the relationships, the satisfaction and the commitment to the project objectives are also factors to be considered in evaluating the success of the project.

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THE SWEDISH MODEL

The Equal@work initiative in Sweden aimed at facilitating access to the labour market among migrants and ethnic and religious minorities, particularly those who struggle to find long-term professional opportunities in Sweden. A special focus was given to the city of Stockholm.

With a national focus, Equal@work not only intended to increase the commitment for developing social inclusion best practices but directly to intensify ethnic minorities' potential to access the labour market. Additionally, the enlargement of the network of companies in the country that share the mission and goals of the project was another valuable outcome of this venture.

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ENAR and its national focal point, **Center against Racism (CMR)** together with its business partner **Sodexo** and its Swedish branch **Circles**, believed that learning from a pilot project was the primary purpose of the programme.

Profile

With the Equal@work project, partners defined as the target group are young graduated professionals (from 22 to 35 years old) from ethnic minority backgrounds with an academic degree or equivalent diploma. The candidates should be eager to learn, committed to a career development, and open to hearing about the mentor's professional experience and knowledge. The mentor should be someone having a valuable professional experience, who enjoyed helping individuals to progress in their careers. Both actors should be willing to carefully listen to each other and be ready to share the lessons learned throughout the project.

LESSONS LEARNED

With the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, ENAR tried to timely address the challenges and to match the expectations of each partner throughout the implementation of this project. Under this pilot period, our purpose was to avoid an early dissolution of the mentoring relationship and to evaluate the boundaries of each role.

To improve our experience, our Mentoring Programme identified three lessons learned which will need to be addressed to sustain involvement, not only from mentor and mentee, but also from all partners of a national project:

1) Mentors need to be coached!

Mentors need guidance and also need to be coached throughout the process. ENAR can provide assistance to its National Focal Point and help them find positive solutions for the mentors. However, it is important that under the business partner structure, this mentor can also rely on colleagues who already understand this relationship.

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2) Good departure: clarify each other's role!

In our monitoring phase, mentors and mentees underlined that both sides were expecting too much of the relationship. When you provide clear information from the start, it is easier to mitigate negative outcomes and to overcome any challenge. Our National Focal Points are trained to support partners to gain better clarity and to effectively manage positive results.

3) Matching is caring!

Successful mentoring begins with good matching! It is crucial that mentee and mentor share the same professional interests, understand the same path and are sensitive to each other's experiences. This identification will lead to a more dynamic relationship and trust will be strengthened significantly.

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MENTEE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To be involved in a mentoring relationship is a privilege for both participants, and as a result it is important to be polite and thoughtful towards each other. When unclear about what to do or how to act, please seek guidance from the mentoring resources, or better yet, ask your mentor.

The gesture of asking conveys respect for what the two of you are working to accomplish. Some basic premises of what makes the ideal mentee are:

1. Eagerness to learn
2. Ability and willingness to work as a team player
3. Patience
4. Be a risk taker
5. Have a positive attitude

Mentoring is a partnership between two individuals, the mentor and the mentee. In considering the roles of the mentor, he or she must wear many hats throughout the process. A mentee must also perform several roles. In this project, the mentee is the young professional who needs to absorb the mentor's knowledge and have the ambition and desire to know what to do with this knowledge. As a young professional, the mentee needs to practice and demonstrate what has been learned. The mentee decides upon the amount of help and guidance he/she needs. As well, the mentee should take the initiative to ask for help or advice and to tackle more challenging assignments.

RECOMMENDATIONS/ GUIDELINES FOR MENTEES

1. Allow your mentor to take the lead in the relationship, at least initially. Listen and respect the opportunities, limitations and format of the relationship he or she is able to provide for you. Always act with courtesy and respect towards your mentor.
2. Use active listening skills during discussions with your mentor. Be careful not to interrupt, unless you need to clarify a point and you see no other opportunity or pause. Take notes when appropriate, ask good questions and have a purpose for your questions.
3. Prepare the goals and objectives you have for your career. Be prepared to ask for specific guidance and advice on your goals, plans and strategic ideas. The more specific you can be, the easier it will be for your mentor to help you.
4. Take the initiative to ask for feedback. Feedback, although difficult to hear at times, is critical to your personal and professional growth and development. Demonstrate that you are open to hear new ideas and suggestions to bring out your best and overcome any blind spots. Get feedback on specific issues, for example how you come across to others. Ask for specific details to ensure you understand specific behaviors.

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Tell your mentor how you prefer to get feedback (for example, direct, with humor, softened). Don't get defensive. Thank your mentor for taking the risk to be honest with you. Remember, if your mentor was not invested in you, he/she would probably not take this risk. Honest feedback gives you an opportunity to improve yourself and helps you to move towards fulfilling your potential.

5. Always be kind and respect your mentor's time as you do your own. Be thorough, but succinct in your explanations, experiences and comments. Watch for clues that you may be going on too long. It is polite to ask directly if you are talking too long.

6. Return phone calls promptly and be on time with commitments or meetings. If your mentor offers a specific time frame of availability, respect his/her wishes by following through. Only extend the time of your contact if your mentor initiates or insists to extend or complete a task or discussion.

7. Seriously consider all advice or suggestions you receive. Arguing why the mentor's advice would not work can be construed as rude and narrow-minded.

8. Demonstrate that you have followed advice or commitments for action at every opportunity, even if you have modified your plan. Pointing out that you used your mentor's help and sharing outcomes are important.

9. Express your appreciation for every form of assistance you get. Provide positive feedback, thanks as well as positive comments to him/her in front of others.

10. Make only positive or neutral comments about your mentor to others. If you disagree with your mentor's values, behaviors, or attitudes, discuss it with him/her directly. Respect your mentor's confidence and trust.

11. Assume the mentoring connection will be strictly professional. This does not mean you cannot be yourself, or you cannot be friendly. Let your mentor take the lead in establishing a more friendship based connection. Do not intrude into your mentor's personal life or expect to be close friends. Respect the terms of confidentiality that you have discussed. Do not share on social media the information shared during your mentoring sessions.

12. Prepare yourself to move beyond your mentoring connection, once it has served its purpose. Be sure to end on a positive note.

13. Keep the door open to return to your mentor for assistance or advice at a future time.

14. Follow up with your mentor after termination to keep in touch, to share your progress and to continue to express your gratitude.

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MENTOR'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

There is no single formula for good mentoring. Mentoring styles and activities are as varied as human relationships. Different mentees will require different amounts and kinds of attention, advice, information, and encouragement. Some will feel comfortable approaching you; others will be shy, intimidated, or reluctant to seek help. A good mentor is approachable and available. At the same time, effective mentoring need not always require large amounts of time. You can provide great help in just a few minutes by making the right suggestion or asking the right question.

RECOMMENDATIONS/ GUIDELINES FOR MENTORS

To facilitate getting to know one another, it is important for you to build rapport with your mentees. This process takes time; if done in a comfortable and consistent manner, it will keep the relationship interesting and meaningful. Some suggestions for building rapport with the mentees:

1. Maintain regular contact
 - Reply to the mentee as soon as he/she contacts you
 - Set a regular schedule to meet in person, by phone, or by e-mail
 - Keep appointments faithfully. If you are busy or unavailable, contact the mentee in advance
 - Make a list of items to be covered with your mentees during meetings
 - Inform that all the meetings will take place at the mentor's office
2. Get to know each other
 - Ask about the mentee's expectations, interests, values, and life situation
 - Be open about your own interests, values, and life situation
3. Focus on the mentee's needs
 - Avoid being judgmental of a mentee's perspective and life situation
 - Do not try to transform the mentee or impose your own values
 - Help your mentees chart progress in areas that need improvement
4. Set up ground rules and communicate them
 - Define how long the mentoring relationship will last. Under this programme, it is recommended to have a 4 to 6 months mentorship
 - Be clear about your expectations and your boundaries
 - Be honest about time constraints
 - Work together to establish a set of goals and timelines
 - Encourage mentees to take initiatives
5. Encourage initiative and independence

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- Don't expect to have all the answers
 - Don't do for a mentee what he/she can do for him/herself
 - Don't allow yourself to be overwhelmed by a mentee's problems
 - Introduce your mentees to sources of information and contacts
6. Be honest
- Foster trust and respect as a foundation for effective mentoring
 - Be prepared to offer honest and tactful feedback
7. Be positive
- Recognize achievements and progress
 - Encourage exploration of new experiences and learning opportunities
 - Share success factors from your own personal experiences
8. Respect confidentiality
- Set-up the limits of confidentiality
 - Expressly inform that in the confidentiality agreement, the information shared during the mentorship meetings cannot be disseminated in social media
9. Model good professional behavior

Once you've established rapport with your mentees, you should facilitate a conversation in which you set mutual expectations as well as responsibilities for the relationship. The goal is to come to consensus on:

- Goals and responsibilities
- Ground rules for the mentoring relationship
- Meeting schedule
- Protocol for engaging each other

Initially, as with any relationship, there may be a test period and some initial tensions. Common problems that may arise are:

- Feelings of threat exist regarding the new relationship
- Your mentee doesn't keep to the terms of the relationship
- You and your mentees don't see eye to eye on certain issues
- Either you or your mentees feels time pressures
- There is poor communication

The key to moving beyond these obstacles is open, frank, non-judgmental discussion-- and the sooner the better.

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Profiling

One of the critical roles that you will play as a mentor in the initial stages of your relationship with your mentees is profiling - getting to know him or her. During this process, your job will be to ask your mentees a series of questions designed to ascertain their current level of functioning and relevant background history. It is essential that you ask these pertinent questions in a sensitive manner, so as not to offend your mentees and to ensure that you gain as much information as possible. When profiling is conducted correctly, the knowledge received from the activity can serve as the foundation for building a solid mentoring relationship. While the following list is not comprehensive, it does detail some important topics to cover during the profiling process and should therefore serve as an effective springboard for a profiling session:

Academic Background

- What types of academic subject matter have the mentees been exposed to?
- Where were the mentees educated?
- What content areas do the mentees desire to learn more about?
- What are the mentees's academic strengths? Areas of weakness?

Life Experiences

- Have the mentees had other work experiences?
- What life experience do the mentees have that makes him/her unique?
- What mechanisms do the mentees use to cope with stressful situations?

Workplace Knowledge

- Do the mentees understand the organizational climate of the organization?
- What is the mentees' work/leadership style?
- What other types of work experiences have the mentees had?
-

Value System

- What is the mentees' work ethic?
- How effective are the mentees' time management skills?
- What place does corporate integrity hold in the mentees' value system?

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Suggested Activities

1. Advise the mentee about opportunities for career exploration and development.
2. Work with the mentee to develop goals and objectives to explore their career interests.
3. Invite the mentee to visit you in the workplace and shadow you for a day.
4. Invite the mentee to attend a local conference or meeting.
5. Discuss volunteer and employment opportunities that will help the mentee explore their field of expertise and knowledge and achieve their goals. (Please note that the mentoring program is not a job searching service. Mentors are not obligated to help mentees find a job).

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STEP-BY-STEP: HOW TO PLAN YOUR MENTORING ACTIVITIES?

Step 1: Introduction meeting

Mentors and mentees meet to get to know each other, share experiences, brainstorm on a mentoring plan that meets needs and expectations. This meeting will be helpful to identify which specific information or skills need to be developed.

Step 2:

Drafting your plan

It is important to determine the format of the mentoring which works best for both parts. With Equal@work, our methodology can achieve its full success with the traditional mentoring (one-on-one, face-to-face programme) combined with E-mentoring (one-on-one place via email and the Internet).

Also in this meeting, both Mentors and Mentees design clear objectives and decide which activities they like to develop. Explore different things you may learn throughout it.

Step 3: Defining your relationship

Mentor and Mentee can list the specific tasks they would like to learn. Together, they can write a tentative agenda for mentoring sessions and should determine when and how often they will meet.

Mentor and mentee shall also decide where they will meet. Some mentors prefer to have their mentee in their professional setting. Others may prefer to meet in a less formal venue such as a coffee shop, a restaurant, or the park.

Guidelines for your relationship can also be helpful: they will frame the limits of your cooperation. Together, decide when it is appropriate to call each other, what information will be kept confidential, if it is okay to visit one another at work.

Mentoring often takes place for six months to one year. At the end of that time, revisit your purpose for meeting and decide if you want to renew your commitment for another set period of time.

Step 4: Commitment

Mentor and Mentee need to commit to the mentoring relationship. They need to trust and rely on each other. Each person needs to agree to show up regularly and on time. They also need to fulfill any personal obligations they agreed to throughout the mentoring. For example, if you are reading through a book together, each person needs to finish the reading for each session.

Step 5: Meaningful Closure

At the end of the programme, both mentor and mentee must agree how they will end the mentoring relationship. A successful closure would reflect on the growth and learning that has occurred during and as a result of the mentoring relationship.

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EXAMPLE OF A MENTORING PLAN

Mentor: Operations Manager

Mentee: young professional holding an MBA on Business and Administration

Challenge: high skilled second generation of migrant unemployed

Long-term goal: Improve the chances of the mentee to have a job offer

Objective of the programme: Job placement/career advancement

Format: traditional mentoring – every 3 weeks + E-mentoring support

Type of meeting	When	Result of the exercise
Induction	Week 1	Get familiar with each other and exchange on needs and expectations
Planning	Week 3	Plan of activities with description of clear objectives (venue/date/action)
Review of CV	Week 6	Update of CV according to exchanges
Shadowing	Week 9	Report of the shadow day at mentor's office
Simulation of an interview	Week 12	Script of a job interview

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PLANNING YOUR PROJECT

The key to successful implementation of mentoring is long-term preparation including planning and design, an effective internal communication strategy and regular feedback with a promptness to adapt as necessary. These guidelines, distilled from experienced sources, provide a checklist of key issues and tasks that contribute to successful outcomes.

Task ¹	Description	Time Period
PLANNING		Months One to Three
Structure the Mentoring Program	Determine the purpose, type of mentees needs, goals, mentoring model, and structure of the program with the business partner	
	Assign Project coordinator	
	Develop internal forms and define your budget	
MENTOR/MENTEE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION		Month Four
Mentor Recruitment	Identify potential sources for recruitment with your business partner	
	Follow up on all partners involved	
Mentee Recruitment	Develop criteria for mentee selection	
	Determine if prospective mentees meet criteria	
Mentor/Mentee Selection	Select only those who fit the pre-established criteria	
Document Data about Mentees	Choose data to document on the basis of the outcomes you wish to accomplish. Also, disseminate a pre-mentoring survey to mentees	
ORIENTATION AND TRAINING		Months Five and Six
Pre-Orientation and Training	Identify trainers with business partners	
	Conduct staff meeting to introduce the project and the model according to partner's need	
Mentor Orientation	Relay with trainers to coach potential mentors to the program. Potential mentors complete application form and consent to a background check.	
Mentee Orientation	Orient interested mentee to the program Expectations should be clearly communicated. Potential mentees complete an application form.	
Mentor Training	Mentors can attend a mentor training	
Mentor Application Review, Screening and Selection	Applications are reviewed and screening/background checks are completed	

¹ Adapted from The Maryland Mentoring Partnership, *Vision to Reality: Mentoring Program Development Guide*, and Mentoring Partnership of Long Island, *The ABC's of Mentoring*

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Task ¹	Description	Time Period
MATCHING		
Pre-Matching	Develop criteria for matching	Prior to orientation
	Match students and mentors on the basis of information from application (gender, interests, career interest, skills)	
Kick-Off	Formal opening of the program that allows for the first mentor/mentee meeting and “getting to know you” activities	Varies according to program
Mentor/Mentee Activities	Arrange for group activities on a regular basis	Could be held monthly, but should be held at least quarterly
	Assist mentors/mentees with activity ideas	Regularly
ONGOING MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT		
Feedback from Mentors and Mentees	Determine a mechanism for getting regular feedback from the mentors and mentees	Prior to mentor training
Additional Mentor Training and Support Sessions	Conduct regular mentor support meetings	Varies according to the program
	Monitor mentor/mentee relationships	Monthly
RECOGNITION	Celebrate and recognize the accomplishments of the program and mentors’/mentees’ contributions. Invite stakeholders.	Annually at a minimum
EVALUATION	Determine what outcomes to measure and evaluate	During planning phase
	Collect data on participants and mentors related to your outcomes	Monthly
	Measure outcomes and conduct evaluation	Annually
	Review program progress and refine as needed	Annually
	Reflect on and disseminate findings	Annually

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SOURCES

- Parrainer les Jeunes Diplômés - AFIP (Association pour favoriser l'intégration professionnelle)
- De Noirs Diplômés – AFIP (Association pour favoriser l'intégration professionnelle)
- How to build a successful Mentoring Program using the elements of Effective Practice - MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership
- The ABC's of Mentoring - Mentoring Partnership of Long Island
- Spirit of Mentoring – World of possibilities - SODEXO