

# Why Mentoring Is More Important Than Ever in 2021

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Let's get real for a moment: 2020 was tough. Virtual offices. Social distancing. Isolation.

As we settle into 2021, COVID-19 continues to bring challenges. Coffee breaks and watercooler catchups are few and far between, virtual meetings now in place of face-to-face discussions. The switch to full time home-life brings both pros and cons. Less commute time, safety from the virus, more time with your family but also endless distractions and significantly fewer social interactions.

The realities of COVID-19 really settled in mid-last year while we all adjusted to this new virtual lifestyle. The novelty of it wore off pretty quickly and we began to feel the loneliness that social distancing and working from home involve.

## ***But there is hope!***

People are looking for guidance and human connection and this is where formal mentoring programs have become more important than ever.

SoCLA's professional mentoring program can help bridge the uncertainty gap between the 'old normal' and the 'new normal' helping those isolated by the pandemic to connect with others – to continue building your network and advance your careers.

## ***Mentoring can develop your career***

Staying connected to people is more critical now than ever, given the rise in mental health issues globally not helped in part by working from home. In addition to having a friendly face to speak to, your mentor can help you keep your career on track. They can give advice on your career and provide insightful anecdotes based on their experience. At the same time, and where appropriate, mentors can help mentees meet the people who can help advance their careers.

For early career mentees who feel lost as a result of the pandemic, developing new goals in life and in business endeavours can be difficult. Mentors can help mentees in aligning their expectations and discuss issues with work-life integration.

## ***Mentoring can help you grow***

During these difficult times, mentors can play a significant role in helping their mentees thrive despite the drastic changes in people's current way of life. A mentee with the right person guiding them can gain vital information that will help them grow. They can make valuable connections brought by the mentor, which might have been impossible to

achieve alone. With the added difficulty of meeting new people, mentoring proves an effective way to build your networks.

One of the greatest challenges of working from home right now is isolation. Mentoring can help with these problems by providing a friendly face (or voice) who is there only to speak with you and encourage you. Someone who is separate from your organisation who can help to refocus on your career and reinvigorate your goals. This can be said for both mentee and mentor in the partnership, everyone can benefit!

A mentor or mentee could be just the person you need to help you find reflect on your career, make new connections and a friendly face amid an uncertain future.

### **IMPORTANT NOTE**

**It should be noted that it is beyond the role of a mentor to provide mental health advice or counselling in any form.**

**For those who are struggling to cope there are some incredible resources available at Beyond Blue: 1800 512 348 or via online chat at <https://coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au/>**