

Bitesize Training

For Program Coordinators

Jan 2026: Mapping Your 2026 Mentoring Calendar



Walk away from today with:

1.

A framework for
mapping your
year

2.

Reflection
prompts for
clarity

3.

Calendar
template



The blank canvas opportunity



The four phases of every mentoring program

Recruit / Relaunch

Momentum

Match

Measure

Case Study: Cohort program

Organization: TechCorp - Mid-size technology company

Program Coordinator: Sarah

Program Structure: 6-month cohort, running March-August

Matching Style: Smart Match

Participant Numbers: ~100 participants

Sarah's Capacity: 8 hours/month dedicated to mentoring program



Pause to think



1. What's working well and what's not?

Reflect on these things...



4. What's working well and what's not?

Recruitment & Sign ups:

1. How easy or difficult was it to recruit participants?
2. What percentage of people who signed up actually got matched, and what happened to those who didn't?

Matching:

3. How many matches required troubleshooting or rematching, and what were the common themes?
4. Looking at our most successful matches vs. those that didn't work out - what was different about how they started?

4. What's working well and what's not?

Momentum:

1. At what point in the program did we see the biggest drop in engagement, and what was happening then?
2. Which of our communications or engagement activities got the best response, and which got ignored?

Support:

3. When participants reached out to me for help, what were they most commonly asking about or struggling with?
4. What took way more of my time than I expected, and what took less time than I planned for?

4. What's working well and what's not?

Measuring & Reporting:

1. When it came time to close loops and gather data, what information did I wish I had been tracking more closely all along?
2. If I could go back and give myself one piece of advice at the start of the last program cycle, what would it be?

ACTION:

 3 things that worked really well (keep doing these!)

 3 things that didn't work (need to change for 2026)

 Specific changes you'll make based on these lessons

Case Study: Cohort program

What worked well? 👍 March kick-off event created engagement 👍 Smart Match produced high-quality matches 👍 Mid-program pulse check survey gave valuable insights

What didn't work? 👎 Recruitment in Jan felt rushed (3 weeks) 👎 Engagement drop in June around holidays 👎 Waited until September to close loops and gather feedback; lost momentum

What are we changing? ➡ Start recruitment earlier (Nov/Dec) ➡ Build in flexibility for summer slow down ➡ Close loops sooner, in August



2. How much resource do we have available?

Time



Money



Team



Case Study: Cohort program

Time: 8 hours per week, on average

Lower capacity months: July (annual leave), December (holidays)

Budget: Approved for 2026, need budget approval by October 1 for 2027

Support: Can get marketing team's help with 4 weeks' notice

Ideal cohort size: 100 participants



3. What is my program recruitment style?



Cohorts

- ✓ You want clear start/end dates with defined milestones
- ✓ You can create excitement around launch moments
- ✓ You have capacity for concentrated bursts of activity
- ✓ Participants benefit from having a clear structure



Always-On

- ✓ Participants want to get matched quickly
- ✓ You have consistent, ongoing demand
- ✓ You need to capture opportunities year-round (new hires, new members)
- ✓ You prefer steady, less demanding workload over intensive periods
- ✓ You want to put the ownership with mentors/mentees via self match



On-Off

- ✓ You want some structure but more frequently than annual cohorts
- ✓ You get waves of interest at predictable times
- ✓ You want to batch some admin work
- ✓ You can handle multiple cycles per year
- ✓ You want registration windows to create urgency but rolling matches



3. What is my program recruitment style going to be?



Cohorts



Always-On



On-Off

- How much time are you spending on admin currently? How much time do you have to dedicate to the program in 2026?
- Does your structure align with how your participants actually want or need most?
- Does your recruitment style align with your mentoring and organizational objectives?
- Are there any internal milestones or events that you want to align your program rhythm with?



ACTION:

✍️ What is your current recruitment style?

✍️ Are you keeping it or changing it in 2026

✍️ Why are you making that choice?



Case Study: Cohort program

Current recruitment style: Cohort, March-August

Decision: Keeping it

Why:

Creates excitement and clear milestones for participants, and aligns with annual performance review cycles.

Helps me as the PC organise and manage my time more efficiently.



4. What are our non-negotiable organizational anchors?



4. What are our non-negotiable organizational anchors?

 Budget cycles & approval deadlines

 Annual conference or major events

 Leadership transitions

 Goal-setting or performance reviews

 Industry events or milestones

 Onboarding cycles

 Peak busy seasons

 Fiscal year planning

 Holiday blackout periods



ACTION:

- ✍️ Pull up your organisation's annual calendar
- ✍️ Plot all major events that will impact your program
- ✍️ Note down whether each event is a conflict or an opportunity

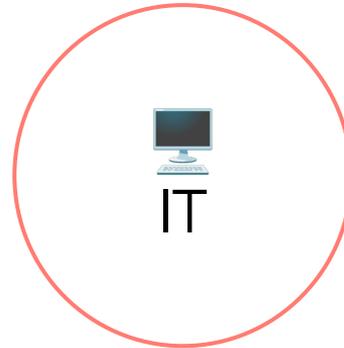
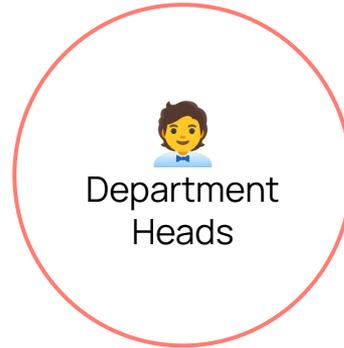


Case Study: Cohort program

- **December 15 - January 5:** Holiday blackout period (conflict)
- ★ **February:** Annual goal-setting month (opportunity - promote program)
- **April 10-12:** Annual company conference (conflict - don't schedule major activities)
- ★ **April 10-12:** Conference (opportunity - host mentor/mentee networking event)
- **June - July:** Peak summer holiday period (conflict - expect lower engagement)
- ★ **October 15:** Budget submission deadline (deadline - need data ready)



5. Who needs to be involved and when?



Case Study: Cohort program

 **Marketing team:** Need by mid-December for January recruitment campaign

 **Executive sponsor (CEO):** Need confirmation by end of January for March kickoff

 **Finance:** Need budget proposal by September 30 for October review

 **Department heads:** Need nominations by mid-January



The four phases of every mentoring program

Recruit / Relaunch

Momentum

Match

Measure

Choose your phase for the month



Recruit / Relaunch

- Export program data and PDF report
- Identify and message inactive loops
- Close inactive loops
- Identify and message inactive participants
- Remove inactive participants
- Remove inactive participants
- Review/update signup form
- Review/update Program settings
- Review/update Recommended reading
- Decide key dates: promotion, registration, matching, webinars/events
- Promote program
- Monitor Signups
- Monitor Participant growth
- Host a webinar/event

Momentum

- Monitor Match rate
- Encourage Goal setting
- Send Custom Pulse Survey
- Review Sentiment
- Bulk message
- Rematch people who have closed their loops
- Encourage Self match
- Re-engage inactive Participants
- Update Recommended reading
- Encourage survey responses
- Host a webinar/event
- Promote program and recruit participants
- Create Group Loops
- Remind people to book meetings
- Encourage shares to LinkedIn
- Remind participants to connect their calendar

Match

- Create draft Loops
- Turn on Self match
- Turn off Self match
- Run Smart Match
- Review Draft Loops
- Publish Loops
- Encourage Self match
- Troubleshoot matches
- Create Group Loops

Measure

- Visit Infographics
- Export program data and PDF report
- Send Custom Impact survey
- Identify Mentoring Champions
- Gather testimonials/feedback
- Analyse strengths and areas for improvement
- Review program goals
- Put together budget proposal
- Apply for Mentorloop Impact Award

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Program Name: TechCorp Connect



2026 Mentoring Calendar

January	February	March	April	May	June
Phase:	Phase:	Phase:	Phase:	Phase:	Phase:
Org events:					
Stakeholders (who/what):					
July	August	September	October	November	December
Phase:	Phase:	Phase:	Phase:	Phase:	Phase:
Org events:					
Stakeholders (who/what):					

Review signups weekly, Promote via all-hands, Monitor ppt growth

January

Phase:

Recruit/relaunch

Org events:

Mentoring Month

Stakeholders (who/what):

*Coordinate with Marketing
Confirm CEO speech for
kick-off event*

February

Phase:

Recruit

Org events:

Performance reviews

Stakeholders (who/what):

*Send final reminders to
dept heads for nominations*

Close signups, promote kick-off event, monitor mentor:mentee ratio

March

Phase:

Match

Org events:

Stakeholders (who/what):

*CEO speaks at kick-off
event
IT support for any tech
issues*

Run Smart Match, update Loop intro message, publish loops.

Monitor milestones, encourage goal setting

April

Phase:

Momentum

Org events:

Annual conference

Stakeholders (who/what):

Coordinate mentoring network event with Marketing team

May

Phase:

Momentum

Org events:

Stakeholders (who/what):

Send final reminders to dept heads for nominations

Send bulk message, review Sentiment, remind people to book meetings

June

Phase:

Momentum

Org events:

Peak holiday period

Stakeholders (who/what):

Update Recommended reading, encourage flexible meeting times

Monitor dashboard for urgent issues

July

Phase:

Momentum

Org events:

Sarah annual leave

Stakeholders (who/what):

August

Phase:

Measure & Report

Org events:

Mentorloop Impact Awards

Stakeholders (who/what):

Close loops, send Impact Survey, start gathering testimonials, Apply for ML Impact Award

September

Phase:

Measure & Report

Org events:

Stakeholders (who/what):
Present results to leadership
Submit budget proposal to Finance by Sept 30

Close all loops, export program data, download PDF report

October

Phase:

Measure & Report

Org events:

*Budget submission
deadline*

Stakeholders (who/what):

*Budget approval meeting
with Finance*

November

Phase:

Relaunch

Org events:

Stakeholders (who/what):

December

Phase:

Recruit/Relaunch

Org events:

Stakeholders (who/what):
*Coordinate with Marketing
for Jan campaign*

*Schedule CEO for March
2027 kick-off event*

Share success stories internally, promote Mentorloop Impact Award

Prep recruitment content

Update signup form & settings, map out key dates for 2027

Program Name: _____

Remember your reflections

What's working well?

What's not working well?

What are the non-negotiable organizational anchors?

Program Name: _____

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Phase:	Phase:	Phase:	Phase:	Phase:	Phase:
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Your next steps:



Download the calendar from the Help Hub (see chat!)

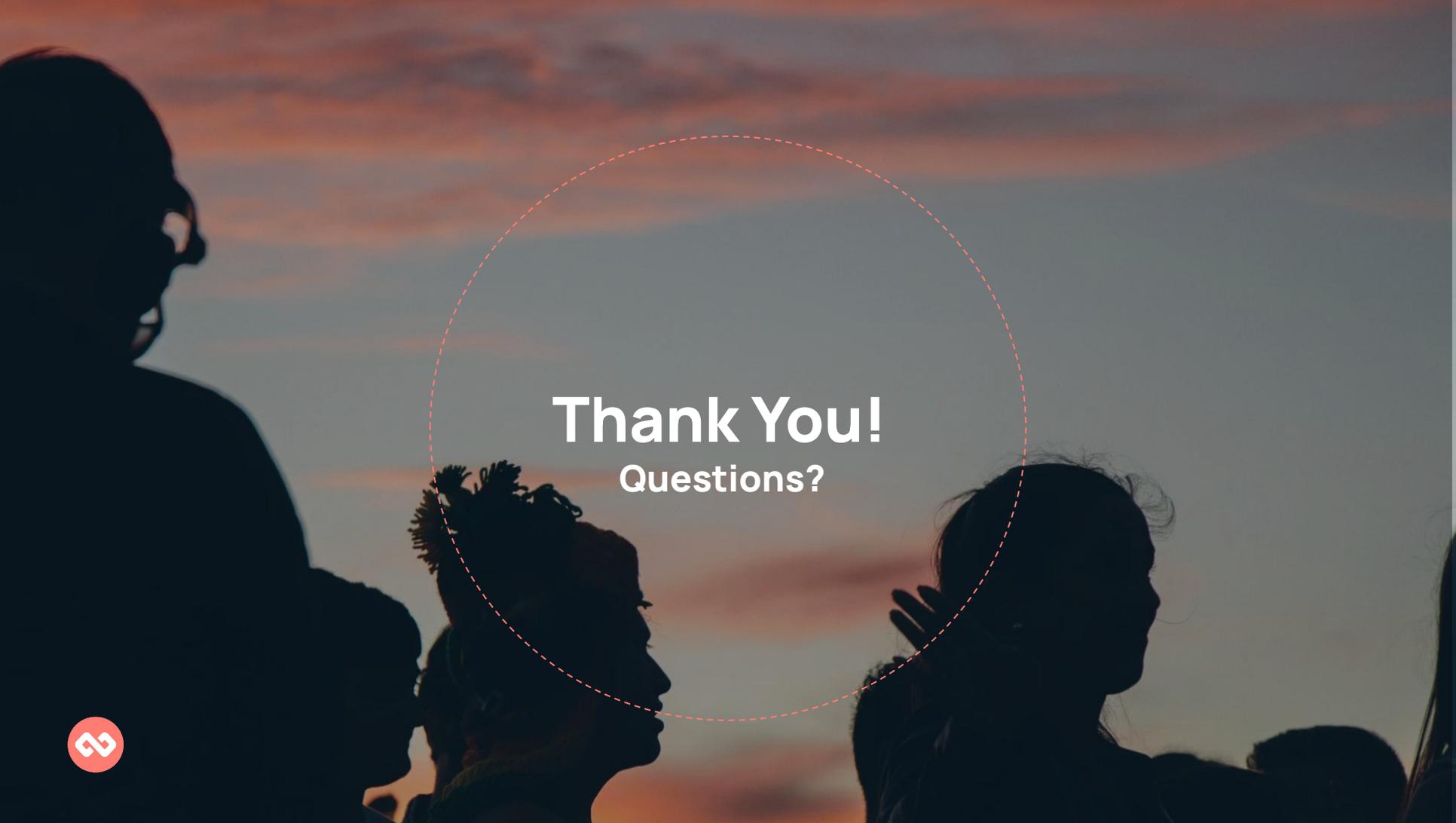


Block out 30 minutes this week for reflection



Start mapping out your calendar with your org events, monthly focus phases and stakeholders involved.



The background of the slide features silhouettes of several people's heads and shoulders against a soft, orange and blue sunset sky. A large, dashed orange circle is centered on the text. In the bottom left corner, there is a small red circular logo with a white stylized symbol inside.

Thank You!
Questions?

