



CHICAGO STATE  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

# How to be a Great Mentee

## A Guide for CSAA Upnotch Mentees

Take charge of your mentorship journey on Upnotch as a mentee with our comprehensive guide. Unlock the secrets to building strong connections with mentors, leveraging their guidance, and accelerating your personal and professional growth. Embrace the transformative power of mentorship and propel yourself towards success with actionable strategies and insights.

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# Upnotch Mentorship

Welcome to the world of mentoring! This guide will provide you with essential tips on how to be a great mentee on Upnotch.

Mentorship is a powerful tool for personal and professional development, but it's crucial to establish a clear understanding of its purpose and what it entails.

## Introduction to Mentorship

Mentorship is a powerful tool for professional development. As a mentee, you have the opportunity to learn from experienced professionals who can provide guidance and support.

### What Mentorship Is

#### ✔ Development Tool

Mentorship serves as a program that fosters knowledge, networks, and careers. It allows experienced individuals to support and develop other employees.

#### ✔ Knowledge Sharing Opportunity

It facilitates cross-functional knowledge sharing, promoting the flow of information and ideas within the organization.

#### ✔ Organizational Culture Enhancer

Mentorship helps employees better understand the organization's operations, policies, and culture.

#### ✔ Candid & Specific

A good mentoring relationship provides honest and specific feedback, enabling growth and development.

### What Mentorship Isn't

#### ⊖ Guarantee of Promotion

Mentorship doesn't guarantee promotion or an increase in compensation. However, both mentor and mentee can develop competencies and skills that improve overall job performance.

### ⊖ **Replacement for Formal Development**

Mentorship cannot replace formal training programs but should complement them as a supplementary development activity.

### ⊖ **Management Replacement**

Mentors should not take on the responsibilities of the mentee's manager but instead provide guidance and support outside the formal reporting structure.

## **Mentorship vs. Coaching**

Mentoring and coaching differ in objectives, impacts, and durations. By grasping these distinctions, both mentors and mentees can navigate their roles effectively:

### **Mentorship:**

- Facilitates a culture of growth and development within the organization.
- Focuses on the individual's development needs and goals based on their career aspirations.
- Mutually benefits both the mentor and mentee, creating a reciprocal relationship.
- Builds long-term connections beyond the formal mentorship sessions.

### **Coaching:**

- Assesses and improves an individual's performance in a specific area.
- Disproportionately benefits the person being coached, with the coach being an expert in their domain.
- Operates within a defined timeline to achieve performance-related objectives.
- Involves evaluation and measurement of performance change.

## **Evaluation & Relationship Dynamics**

Mentoring relationships are non-evaluative, whereas coaching relationships involve performance assessment. Mentors should not serve as direct supervisors or managers of their mentees to maintain an unbiased and supportive environment.

## **Driving the Relationship**

In mentorship, the mentee takes the lead by setting goals and seeking solutions to their challenges. Conversely, coaching is driven by the coach or supervisor, focusing on specific performance goals and skill development.

## **Personalization & Repeatability**

Mentoring is highly personalized, addressing individual needs and challenges beyond company-wide initiatives. It also provides networking opportunities and helps onboard new employees. Coaching, on the other hand, targets specific skill gaps and utilizes generalized programs that can be replicated across individuals.

By understanding these fundamental aspects of mentorship and clarifying expectations, both mentors and mentees can establish a solid foundation for a fruitful mentoring relationship.

# Your Role as a Mentee

As a mentee, you play a crucial role in the mentoring relationship. While the mentor provides guidance and support, it is your responsibility to actively drive the relationship and make the most of the opportunity. The mentoring relationship is a partnership, and your active involvement and commitment are essential to its success.

## **Set the Foundation**

**Define your Goals & Objectives.**

Before embarking on your mentoring journey, it's important to have a clear understanding of what you want to achieve. Take the time to reflect on your short-term and long-term goals, both personally and professionally. Consider the areas where you want to grow, the skills you wish to develop, or the challenges you need assistance with. By defining your goals, you provide a roadmap for your mentorship experience and ensure that you focus on what matters most to you.



**#UpnotchHack:** Ask yourself two simple questions and tell your Mentor - What's on your mind today? What challenges have you faced this week?

*Important Note:* Goals can change over time. As you progress in your mentoring journey, new insights and experiences may lead to shifting priorities. It's okay to come to a mentorship session with a different topic on your mind than originally planned. Mentoring is a flexible process, and your mentor is there to support you through these changes.

### **Align Expectations with your Mentor.**

Open and honest communication is key to a successful mentoring relationship. Early on, have a conversation with your mentor to discuss and align your expectations. Share your goals and objectives, as well as any specific areas you would like to concentrate on. Discuss the level of support you anticipate, the frequency of meetings, and the desired duration of the mentorship. By aligning expectations from the start, you can establish a solid foundation and avoid any misunderstandings or disappointments down the line.

## **Build a Successful Mentoring Relationship**

### **Establish Rapport with your Mentor.**

Building rapport with your mentor is essential for a strong and productive mentoring relationship. Take the time to get to know your mentor on a personal level. Show genuine interest in their background, experiences, and perspectives. Engage in open and honest conversations that foster a sense of

connection. Establishing rapport creates a foundation of trust and mutual understanding, which enhances the effectiveness of the mentoring partnership.

### **Demonstrate Commitment, Respect, & Trust.**

Successful mentorship relationships are built on a foundation of commitment, respect, and trust. Demonstrate your dedication to the mentorship by actively engaging in the process, honoring your commitments, and following through on agreed-upon actions. Show respect for your mentor's time, expertise, and feedback by being punctual, prepared, and attentive during mentoring sessions. Cultivate an environment of trust by maintaining confidentiality, being open to feedback, and demonstrating your willingness to learn and grow.

## **Communicate Effectively**

### **Maintain Open & Regular Communication.**

Communication is key to any successful relationship, including a mentoring relationship. Be transparent about your goals, expectations, and challenges. Share your progress, concerns, and successes openly. Clear and respectful communication builds a strong connection and enables effective collaboration.

### **Actively Listen & Seek Clarification.**

When engaging in conversations with your mentor, give your full attention and focus to what they are saying. Actively listen to understand their perspectives, insights, and advice. Avoid distractions and be present in the moment. Additionally, if there is something you don't fully understand or need further clarification on, don't hesitate to ask questions. Seeking clarification demonstrates your genuine interest and commitment to comprehending the information being shared.

## Receive & Apply Feedback

### **Be Receptive to Constructive Feedback.**

Feedback is an invaluable component of the mentoring process. Actively seek feedback from your mentor and be open to receiving it. Embrace constructive criticism as an opportunity for growth and improvement. Reflect on the feedback provided, ask clarifying questions, and take actionable steps to implement the suggestions offered. Demonstrating your willingness to learn and adapt based on feedback showcases your commitment to personal and professional development.

### **Take Action to Improve your Skills.**

It's not enough to passively receive guidance and advice; you must actively apply what you learn. Identify areas for growth and development based on the insights and feedback from your mentor. Set specific, measurable goals and create a plan of action. Take proactive steps, whether it's attending relevant workshops, seeking additional resources, or practicing new techniques. By consistently implementing what you learn, you can enhance your skills and make meaningful progress towards your goals. Remember, it's through deliberate action that real growth and improvement occur. **Take ownership of your development!**

## Show Appreciation

### **Express Gratitude for your Mentor's Support.**

It's important to acknowledge and express gratitude for the support and guidance provided by your mentor. Take the time to show appreciation for their time, expertise, and investment in your growth. Thank them for their insights, feedback, and the opportunities they have provided. A simple thank-you message or a sincere expression of gratitude during your mentoring sessions can go a long way in nurturing a positive and supportive relationship.



*Show appreciation for your mentor's guidance and support by utilizing our "Praise" feature.*

## Share your Progress & Successes.

Keep your mentor informed about your progress and successes along your development journey. Celebrate milestones and achievements with them. Share how their guidance and support have contributed to your growth and accomplishments. Sharing your progress not only allows your mentor to see the impact of their mentorship but also demonstrates your commitment and dedication to making the most of the mentoring relationship.

## Advice From Our Mentors

Answers provided by Upnotch Mentors. [Click here to watch the full event on How to be a Great Mentor.](#)



*"I learned early on in my career that title is not necessarily an indication of experience. Sometimes, the title is just in lieu of lack of compensation.*

*Remember, all of us who are mentors on Upnotch have decided to be here to pay it forward. Don't let titles intimidate you. We are here to share our experiences with anybody who wants to tap into it. We're here to help you!"*

### **Chuck Marcouiller, VP of Revenue Enablement at FreightWaves**



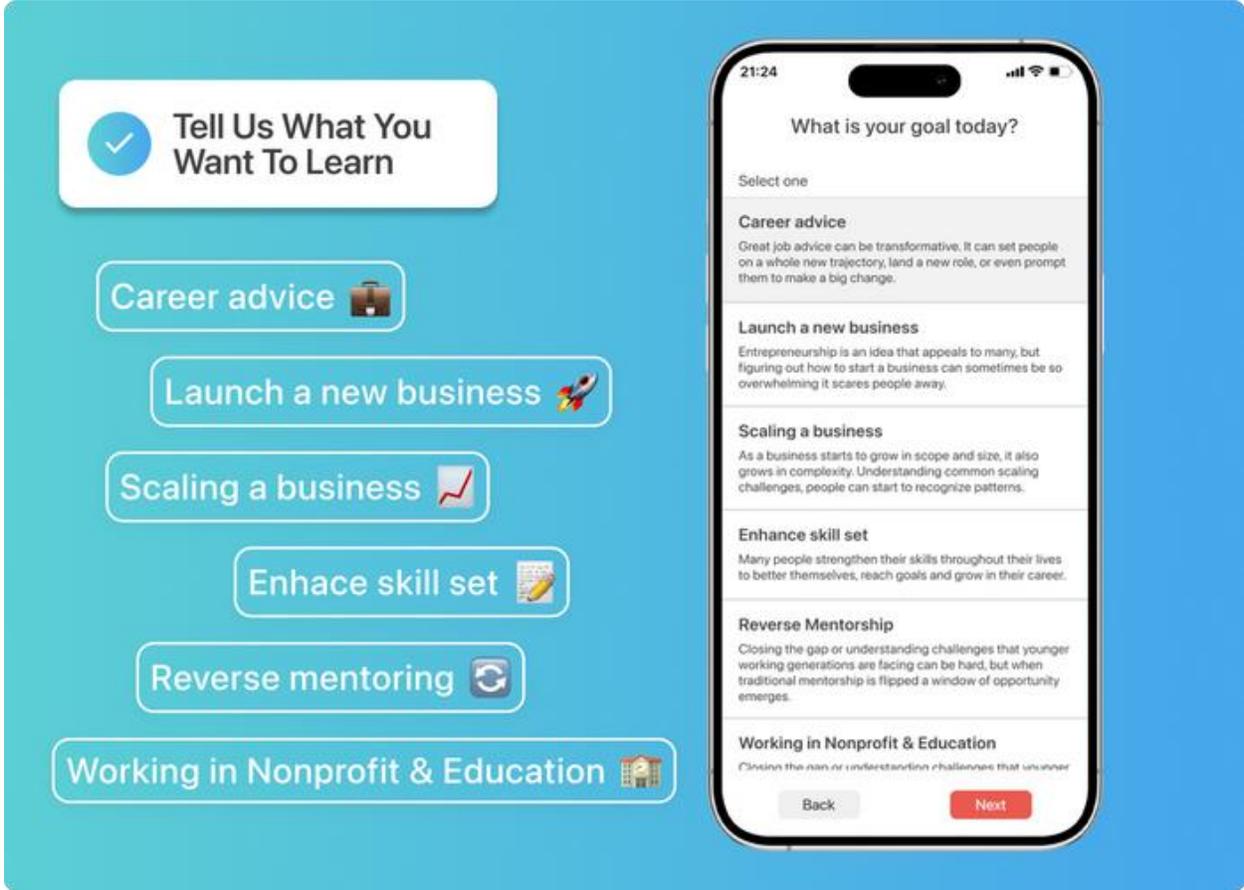
*"Anybody who has more experience than you now, were all mentees at one point themselves. We've all been mentees. We're on the platform to help and to pay it forward and I think that's the beauty of this platform.*

*It creates the opportunity for people to connect. Don't be scared, don't be afraid. Reach out."*

### **Dan Sears, Chief Product & Growth Officer at VolunteerMatch**

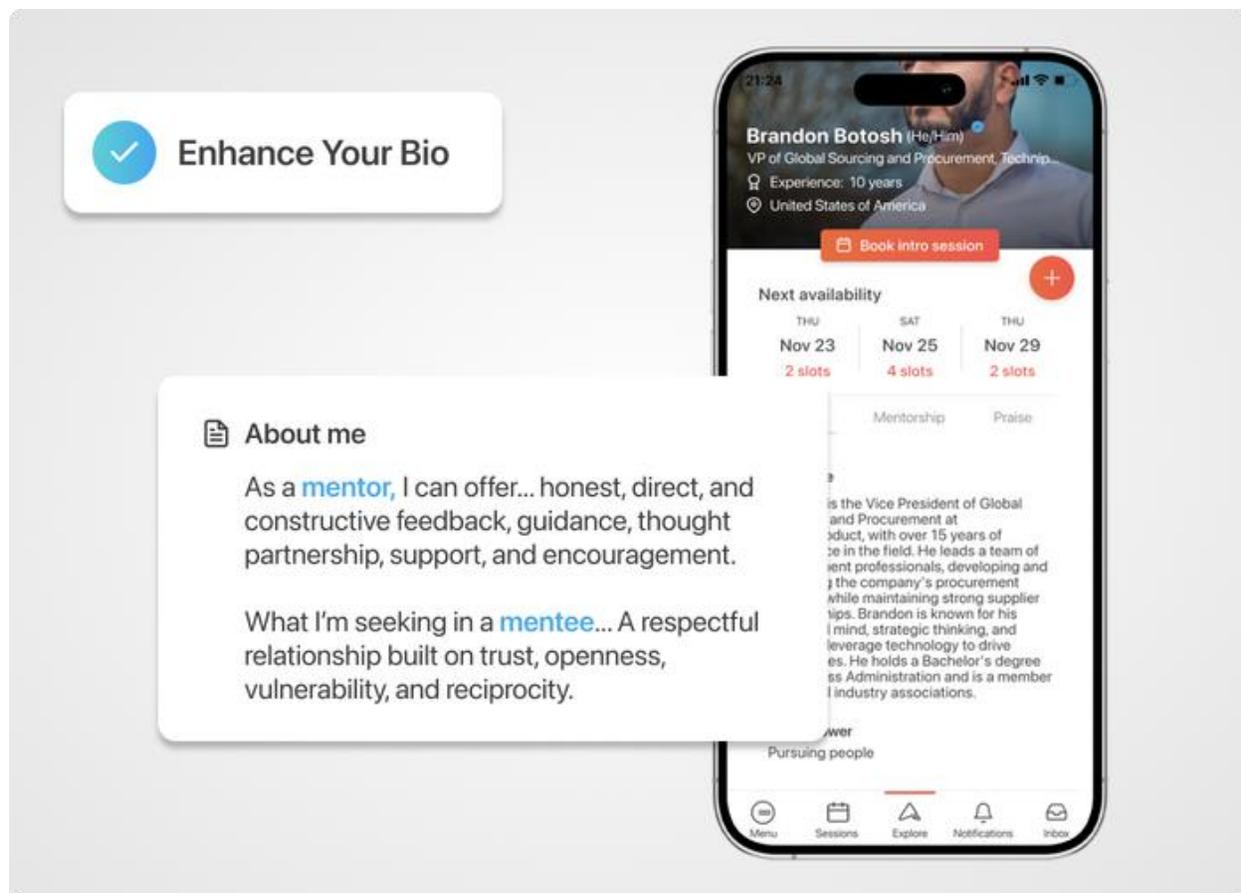
# Maximizing Mentorship on Upnotch

## Tell Us What You Want to Learn



Take a few moments to select the primary goal you're looking to achieve right now and any topics of interest that you'd like to learn more about. This helps mentors understand your needs and interests.

## Enhance Your Bio

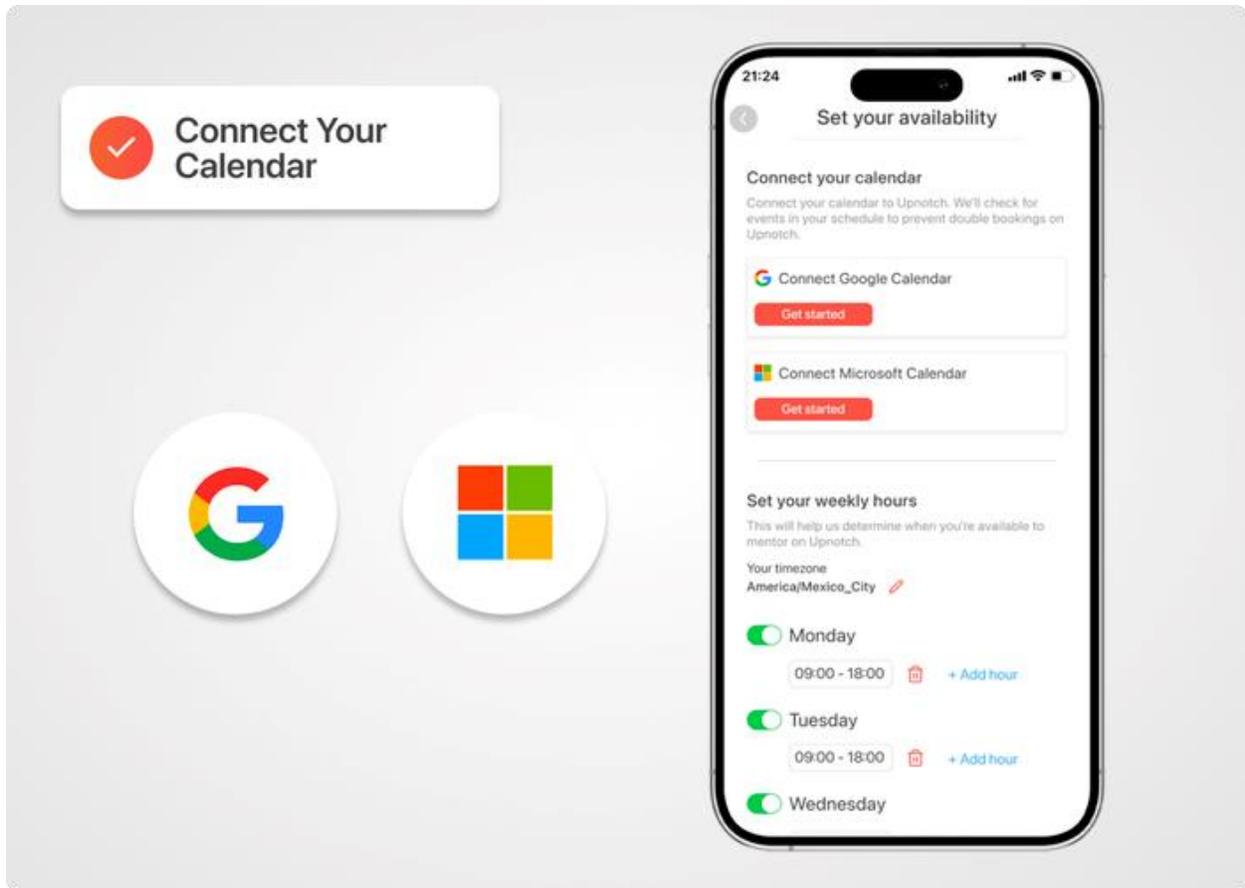


In addition to adding all the basics to your Bio, add a few sentences on what you're looking for in a mentor, what you want to learn & what you need help with.

Want your Bio written by our in-house experts? Email us at:

[support@upnotch.io](mailto:support@upnotch.io)

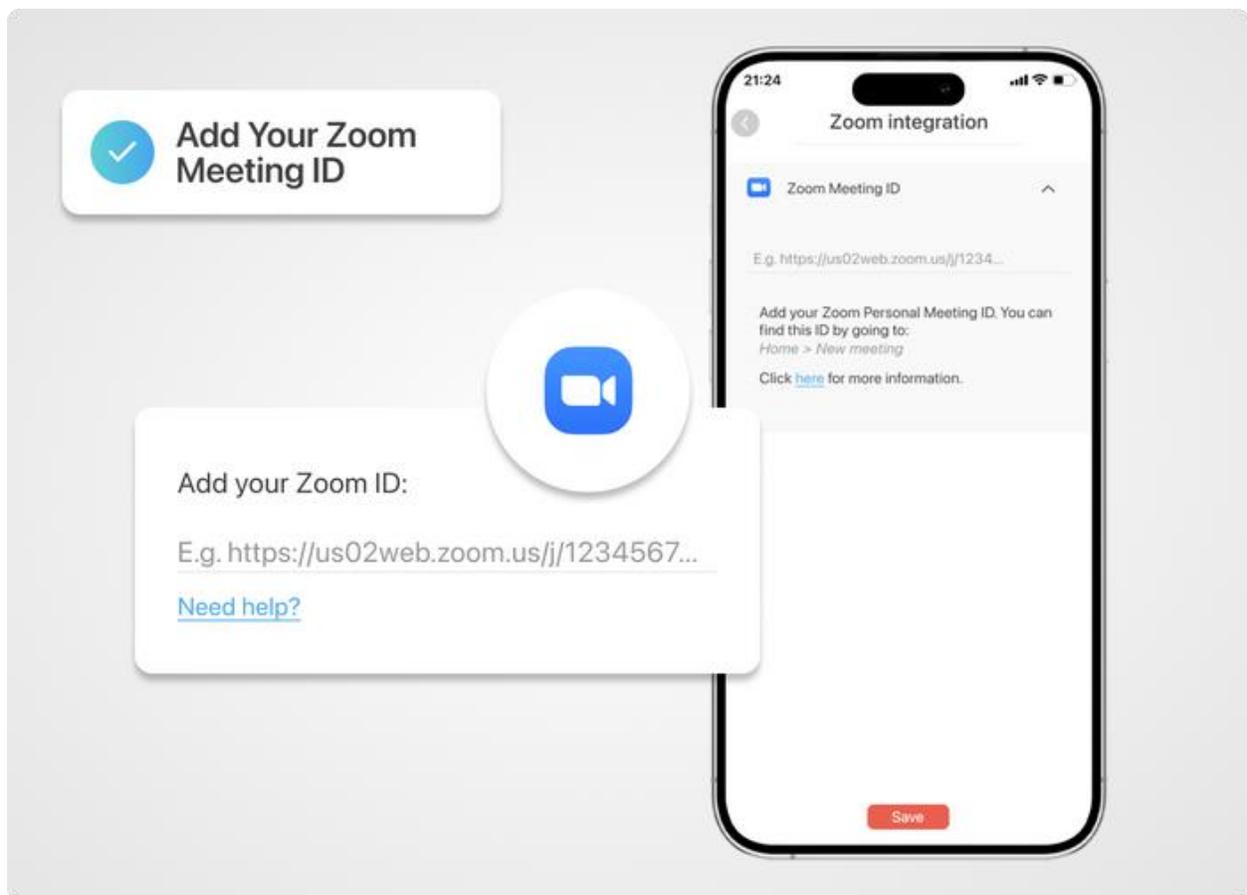
## Connect Your Calendar



You can now connect your Google and Microsoft calendars on Upnotch.

Make scheduling sessions hassle-free by allowing Upnotch to read your availability and help you avoid conflicts and double-bookings.

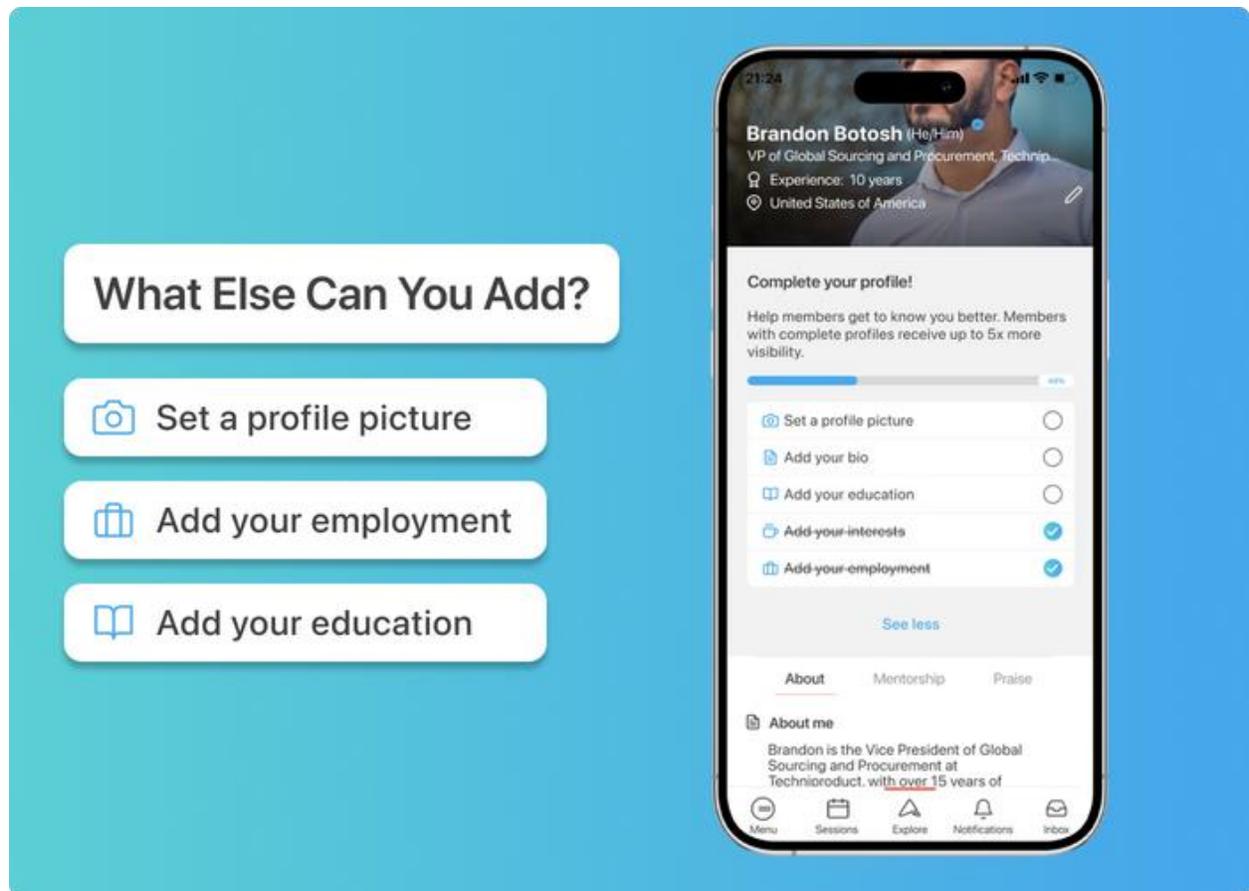
## Add Your Zoom Meeting ID



You can also save your personal Zoom Meeting ID under settings.

If you do this, then every time you book a session with a mentor, we'll automatically add your meeting ID to the invitation so you don't have to.

## What Else Can I Add?



The more info the better. But you'll get a higher response rate from mentors if you have the following:

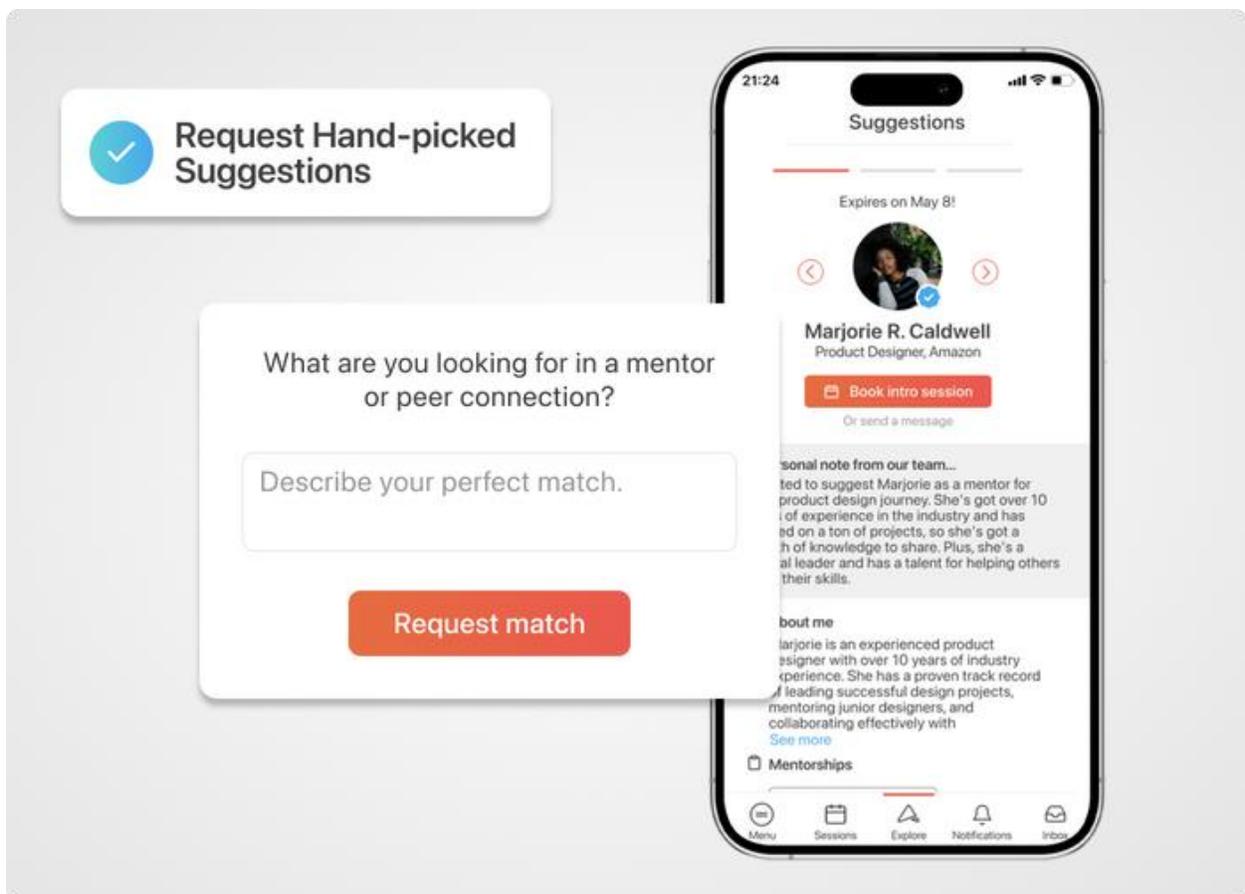
- (1) A Profile Picture
- (2) Current & Past Employment
- (3) Education & Certificates

# Find a Mentor

On Upnotch, you can discover new opportunities by browsing AI-matched suggestions on our Explore page or request a personalized recommendation from one of our expert team members.

**Note:** This may vary depending on your community requirements. If the Admin of your community selects mentors for you, these steps don't apply.

## Request Hand-picked Suggestions from our Experts

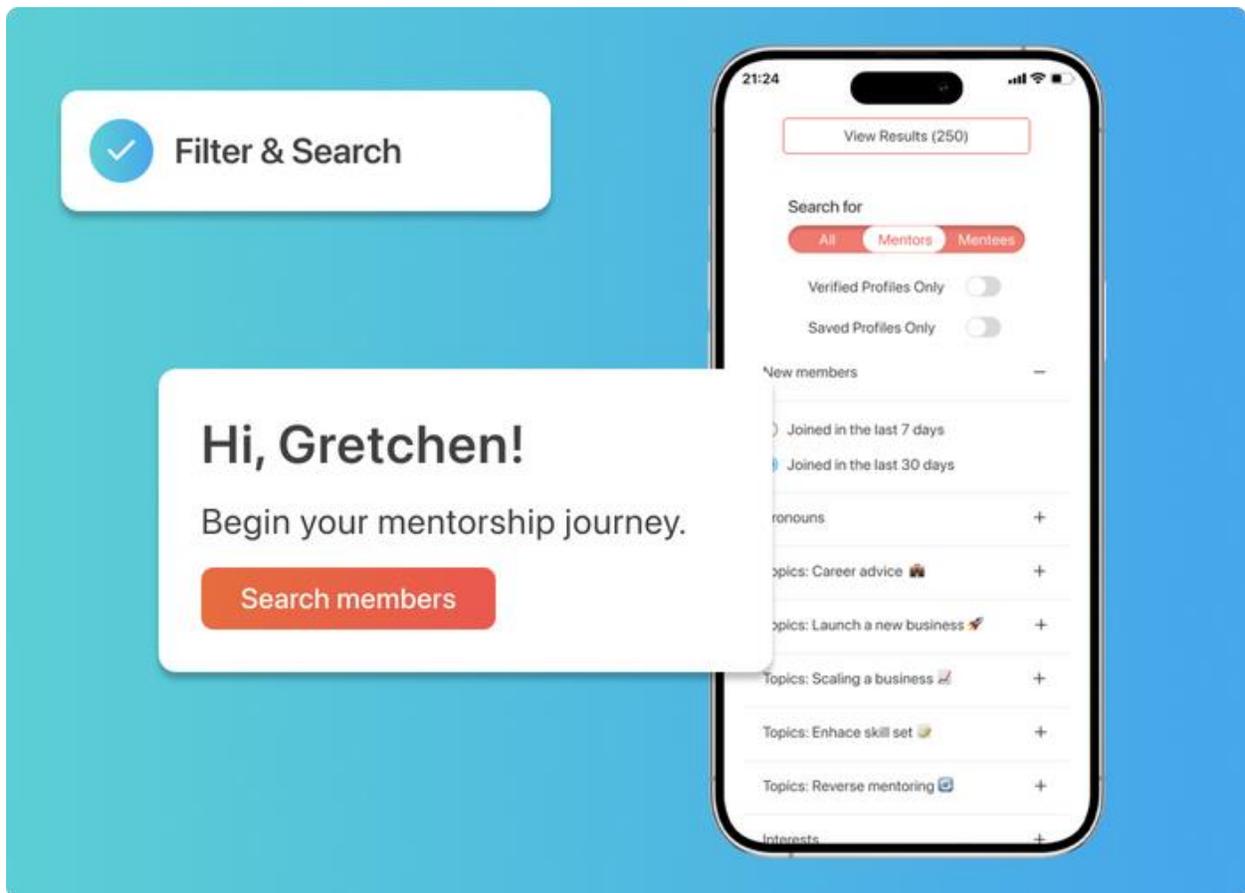


Our team of experts will suggest the perfect mentor match for you. We've successfully matched hundreds of members every month

To request a suggested match, simply go to **Main Menu > Suggestions > Tell us what you're looking for.**

After you receive your suggestions, you can book an introduction session or send a message to any member you are interested in.

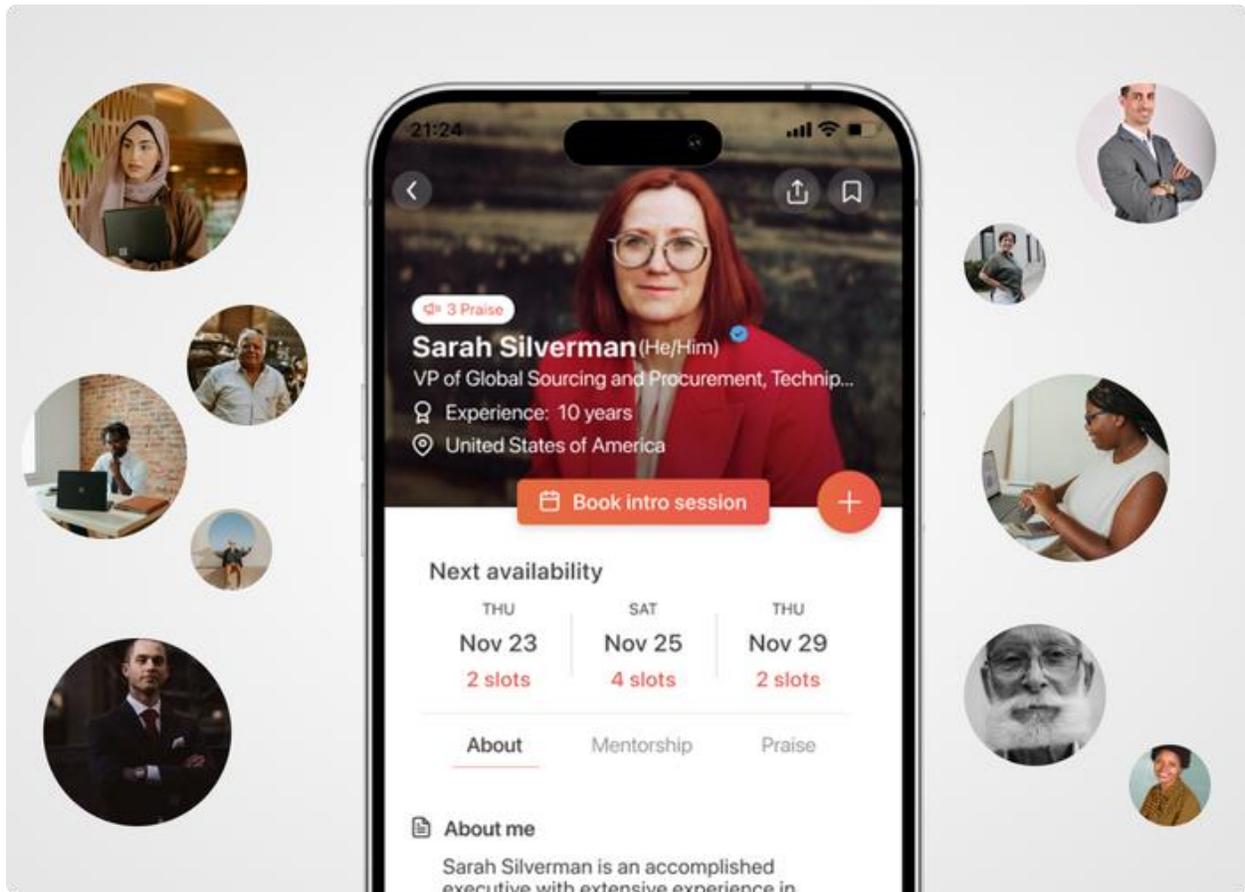
## Filter & Search



You can also browse through our members yourself to see if you can find the right fit.

Head over to *Explore > Search Members* and apply your filters of interest. Or simply use our Keyword Search.

## Book a Session



When you come across a Mentor's profile, ask yourself this question: Do they have experience in what I would like to do & can they speed up my learning process?

If the answer is Yes, book a session! Our biggest pro tip is to connect with multiple mentors so you can find your best match

Keep track of your requests, upcoming sessions, and more by visiting the Sessions from the main Menu.

Remember, it's important to connect your Google Calendar to Upnotch to avoid double bookings.



**#UpnotchHack:** Ask yourself two simple questions and tell your Mentor - What's on your mind today? What challenges have you faced this week?

Before your first call, take a moment to review our First Session Guide, found in the Resources section of your Upnotch profile inside the CSAA community.

## Give Praise

After your call, give praise!

Give your fellow Upnotch members the unique and thoughtful compliments they deserve with Praise. Make someone feel great by thanking them, sharing encouraging words, and telling them how much they are appreciated.

Praise helps others learn more about community member's strengths and personalities too.

## Build Your Board

Take your mentorship to the next level by building a personal advisory board. Work with multiple mentors to address specific challenges and goals, or find a mentor in a new area to help you achieve your aspirations.

Head over to your own personal board and watch it grow as you make connections and progress towards your objectives.

## Log Your Session

If you've had a mentorship that did not occur on Upnotch, log it to make it count and grow your Board!

**Note:** Your mentor/mentee will need to confirm the session happened before it appears on your Board. *Go to Main Menu > Sessions > Log a session.*