

Venture Coaching Program Rules and Etiquette

Coaches

Coaches are expected to commit to a sustained relationship with entrepreneurs and the program. Coaches can choose to mentor one entrepreneur, or more, depending on their own availability and level of commitment. Coaches must commit to meeting with their assigned entrepreneur a minimum of once per month throughout the academic year, and we strongly encourage meeting with greater frequency and through the summer if possible and justified.

Multiple Coaches will be assigned to each entrepreneur that is admitted to the program. We encourage Coaches not to agree with each other's advice simply to avoid potential disagreements. Multiple viewpoints can help the entrepreneur recognize that there isn't always one correct answer, but that running a business or developing a product entails making hard choices, of which there may be multiple "correct" answers.

Please do not share information offered to you by entrepreneurs without their permission, including written or oral communications, or materials created by the entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs are encouraged to share everything relevant with you in order to receive valuable advice. Violating that trust will only lead the entrepreneur to back away, or to seek help elsewhere. Please immediately inform the program of any potential conflicts of interest you encounter with any entrepreneur to whom you are assigned. We will reassign you another entrepreneur to protect your interests and to avoid having the entrepreneur feel that you were not offering advice in their best interest. We define a "conflict of interest" as any situation or activity that tempers the unbiased advice of the Coach.

Coaches may not initiate, introduce, or create any relationship with the entrepreneur that contemplates compensation to the Coach. Coaches may not use the program primarily as means to facilitate investment opportunities, client development, or employment opportunities.

If, in the course of normal Coaches, a Coach contemplates investing in an entrepreneur's venture, the Coach must declare that interest to both the program and the entrepreneur. Investors clearly can offer valuable advice to entrepreneurs, but the incentives and goals for investors and entrepreneurs are not always aligned, leading to the potential for conflict. Thus, any Coach must declare their interest in investing to the entrepreneur so that he/she can judge for themselves whether any advice received may be unbiased.

The Program reserves the right to dissociate from any Coach that is unwilling or unable to conform to the rules and spirit of the program, or who, in the course of their business, engages in illegal or deceptive business or financial practices.

- 1) Be Prepared.
 - a) Read all materials prepared and delivered to you by the entrepreneurs before you arrive at your meeting.

- b) Prepare talking points in response to the Agenda provided to you by the entrepreneurs.
 - c) Always try to help the entrepreneur move forward. Don't simply identify roadblocks or potential future legal issues that might someday become a problem. If you identify a problem, help the entrepreneur find a reasonable and timely solution!!!
- 2) Be Communicative.
- a) Provide honest feedback, in appropriate language, to help your entrepreneur move forward, and to make timely decisions.
 - b) Send your entrepreneurs interesting information that may be relevant to them.
 - c) Stay in regular contact to schedule meetings, share advice, and make introductions as appropriate.
 - d) Submit Post-Meeting surveys to the program office.
- 3) Be Polite.
- a) Provide ample notice to your entrepreneurs of any conflicts that prevent a scheduled meeting.
 - b) Respond to contact from your entrepreneurs without undue delay.
 - c) Disagreements are acceptable. Arguments are not. Rudeness will not be tolerated.
 - d) Physical altercations are grounds for immediate termination from program.
- 4) Be Professional.
- a) Confirm all meetings well in advance.
 - b) Please show up on time. Like Coaches, entrepreneurs lead busy lives with multiple demands on their time. If you think you might be late, send your entrepreneur notice via text, email, or phone as soon as safely possible asking if they can wait, or indicating your need to reschedule.
 - c) Avoid potential conflicts of interest.
 - d) Don't provide advice in areas where you are not qualified. Help the entrepreneur find an expert who can help them. Use fellow expert coaches when possible.