MENTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

Our team of TIA mentors is made up of entrepreneurial alumni and parents who volunteer their time and expertise to increase the odds of TIA student entrepreneurs achieving success. The success of our program hinges on the quality and dedication of TIA mentors; their invaluable coaching is what helps the TIA student entrepreneurs think strategically, take action, and grow their ventures.

We are looking for mentors who best exemplify the ideals of entrepreneurship. In particular, people who have created a venture from the ground up, demonstrate passion for moving ideas forward to meet a need; believe in the Socratic method of listening more and talking less; and who value the impact a liberal arts education has had on realizing their goals.

MENTOR MANIFESTO (THANK YOU TECHSTARS)

- Be socratic.
- Expect nothing in return (you’ll be delighted with what you do get back).
- Be authentic / practice what you preach.
- Be direct. Tell the truth, however hard.
- Listen too.
- The best mentor relationships eventually become two way.
- Be responsive.
- Clearly separate opinion from fact.
- Hold information in confidence.
- Clearly commit to mentor or do not. Either is fine.
- Know what you don’t know. Say I don’t know when you don’t know. “I don’t know” is preferable to bravado.
- Guide, don’t control. Teams must make their own decisions. Guide but never tell them what to do. Understand that it’s their company, not yours.
- Accept and communicate with other mentors.
- Be optimistic.
- Provide specific actionable advice, don’t be vague.
- Be challenging/robust but never destructive.
- Have empathy. Remember that startups are hard.
MENTORS EXPECTATIONS

Mentor Meeting
- Mentors will meet on Saturday mornings at 10:00 am to review the topic for the month and discuss any issues mentors may be having.

Lecture
- TIA sessions begin promptly at 11:00 am with an interactive one-hour lecture on a particular topic (see schedule). These sessions are an opportunity for students to raise questions, present (on occasion) and contribute to the overall discussion. Typically, mentors will use the questions/issues raised by the students as a springboard for discussion during the break out sessions (below). Mentors may be invited to present on a topic or contribute to the discussion, but are not responsible for creating a curriculum; there is a core curriculum that has already been prepared and is in use.

Breakout Sessions
- After lunch, students are broken into groups of 4-5 ventures with 2-3 mentors assigned to each group. These breakout sessions allow for greater in-depth conversations with each student team on what steps need to be addressed on moving each venture forward, and how to address problems, issues, and challenges.
- While mentors provide guidance and direction to these discussions, our experience has shown that students benefit as much from peer review as they do from the mentors. Mentors should insure that there is a balance of both in these sessions.
- Mentors should make sure that students leave the breakout sessions with a clear set of goals, objectives, and specific commitments to be met by the following class. The breakout session usually wraps up around 4:00 pm.

Accountability
- PLEASE NOTE: Students are expected to arrive at each class having delivered on their past-month commitments--specifically, having done the work that they have agreed to do in order to advance their venture in some way. A core element of our program is that we hold the TIA students to real-world standards. As such, failure to deliver on commitments results in a warning the first time, and being “voted off the island” the second time.
- This performance standard--“delivering on your commitments”-- is shared with the students from the day they apply for admittance to TIA, and throughout the year. It is also a core element of both the TIA program and of a successful entrepreneur’s ‘personal brand.’

After Class
- Mentors need to be available during the month for scheduled mentor/student conference calls and online interaction to review progress, give guidance and encouragement, and to answer questions.
- Mid-month progress conference calls are scheduled by the heads of every class section. These need not be long, a quick 15 minutes with each team to make sure that things are moving along with the project and to review their progress and tackle any challenges they encounter. Expect
to spend about 2-3 hours a month on activity outside of the TIA Weekends.

- Email updates and the website dashboard are a way for TIA entrepreneurs to keep mentors and the general public updated on what is currently happening with their venture. If you see comments that piqued your interest, even if not from your section, and you think you can add value or encouragement, please post a response...it'll go a long way.

- In a perfect world, TIA entrepreneurs would automatically list their goals on the website and keep us informed; we know this is not the case. A simple "type update" private-post on a project wall is a good push to make sure the team is still in gear. Sometimes it’s helpful to post any notes that you have from the class time discussion as well as a reminder.

MENTOR REQUIREMENTS

Mentor qualifications include:

1. Member of the Colgate community; alum, parent, faculty, administrator, or pretty much anyone who feels love for the school.
2. Clear and demonstrated success as an entrepreneur or as a business/enterprise/organization builder that supports entrepreneurship.
3. Passion for mentoring, entrepreneurship, and working with budding student entrepreneurs.
4. Open to sharing the good, and the bad, stories.
5. Bias towards listening before speaking and a practitioner of the Socratic method.
6. Efficiently and effectively relate with students.
7. Participate in the TIA program gratis.
8. Ability to come to campus at least once a semester (4 sessions per semester).

BOTTOM LINE:

TIA mentors need to show up to campus and be willing to coach and share their entrepreneurial experiences, successes, failures, and lessons learned. If you’ve been selected as a TIA Mentor, we’re confident that everything else will fall perfectly into place.

If you’re interested in becoming a mentor, please fill out an application and we will be in touch shortly.
**Reminder:** When student show up on the first day of class, it is very likely they have never done ANYTHING like TIA before. We do our best in the spring to identify the best and most passionate students, and prepare them for what is to come, but you really don’t know what they are made of until they start moving down the road. The initial application consists of three questions: what is your idea? why do you want to make it happen? and why do you have the stuff to make it happen? We then interview them to get a better sense of their character and commitment. Over the summer they are assigned homework, designed to help them better flesh out the idea. Nonetheless, when they arrive for the first class in September, they are very green. Many of the Mentors are used to working with more polished entrepreneurs, and on businesses with more traction. In TIA, however, we start with entrepreneurs a step earlier, so please have patience while the students grow; we sure you’ll learn a lot through the process as well!

1. **Practice the Socratic Method throughout the session:** rather than giving the students the answers, ask them questions which require them to think through the issues and reason their way to the answer themselves. (“Teach a man to fish” vs. “Give a man a fish”…)

2. **Encourage the other student entrepreneurs in the room to offer solutions/POVs before you speak:** we are trying to build/foster a problem-solving mindset among all of the participants---the breakout session is a fertile arena for allowing student entrepreneurs to attack problems---let’s use it.

3. **Work around the table, dealing with one student team at a time.** Each student team should get approximately 30 minutes of mentoring focused directly on their venture (but flexibility reigns). Plan on being done by 4 p.m.

4. **Each team (represented by one member) will start by doing a ‘Stand + Deliver’: a 60 second pitch that describes their venture, in terms of what it is, why it is, who is being targeted, who the competition is, and what the overall objective of the venture is.** We do this every session, to help build their pitching skills. After they ‘Stand + Deliver’, it is crucial that the room (and you) provide clear and candid feedback re the clarity, power, and completeness of their pitch. Being honest is way more important than being gentle.

5. **Next, each team will detail their 2-3 deliverables for the prior month, their progress on each one, any problems confronted…and how they solved/didn’t solve them.** Followed by an open discussion re problems/issues/tactics/strategies for moving forward.
6. Close by having the team commit to 2-3 clear deliverables for the following month. And the team also must post their ‘to-dos’ on the TIA website. NOTE: These deliverables must have real substance/meat to them...and will make a substantial contribution towards moving their venture forward.

7. And then move onto the next team.
LOGISTICS

Hotel Accommodations
If you can get yourself to Hamilton, TIA will arrange and pay for lodging for your stay on campus. We have a limited budget for the year, which allows for one night of lodging. We typically rent out 2-3 bed and breakfasts depending on numbers for the weekend. Lodging assignments are made and sent out a few days prior to the monthly session. You are always free to arrange your own accommodations; however, TIA will not be responsible for payment.

Mileage Reimbursements
As a mentor for TIA, we recognize and appreciate the effort and costs associated with being present on campus each month. TIA has been in existence since the fall of 2009, and the university has financially supported us. As we move forward and grow, we will continue to seek support from alumni and parents with volunteer hours as well as financial gifts that will be applied directly to the program’s operating budget.

We are in a position to help defray some of the costs associated with driving to campus. TIA reimburses the federal mileage rate of $.56 per mile (as of 1/1/14) for miles driven in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service. Car rental may be reimbursed provided a receipt is submitted showing charges. Reimbursements are made either for mileage or car rental, not both. We are not able at this point to reimburse for airline travel.

We are unable to reimburse meals or any expenses other than those stated (including gas and tolls).

Gift Credit for Mileage: A Guide for Donors
Thank you for traveling to campus on behalf of the Thought Into Action Institute and Colgate University. Please use this guide if you would like to receive gift credit for your mileage.

1. Please submit a TIA Travel Expense Summary (available on the TIA website) to the Program Coordinator.
2. Upon receiving reimbursement from Colgate, you will need to cash the reimbursement check and make a subsequent gift to Colgate in the same amount (either online or through the mail) and note the designation of the gift to Thought Into Action. Please do not sign over the reimbursement check to Colgate; unfortunately we cannot accept a check in that way.
3. You will be issued a standard tax receipt, which you may use for tax purposes.