



Mentoring für
MigrantInnen



WIRTSCHAFTSKAMMERN ÖSTERREICHS



Mentoring for Migrants
The Program. The Results. The Prospects.



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1. The Program, the Goals

Many people living in Austria that have a migration background are equipped with the necessary skills to take up employment; however, what they are lacking are contacts and an informal knowledge of the job market. More than 78% of job-seekers in Austria are currently using personal networks.

The “Mentoring for Migrants” program by the Austrian Economic Chambers (Wirtschaftskammern Österreichs, WKO), the Austrian Integration Fund (Österreichischer Integrationsfonds, ÖIF) and the Austrian Public Employment Service (Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS) supports skilled individuals from a migration background in entering the Austrian job market, thus providing an important contribution to successful integration.

Thanks to “Mentoring for Migrants”, Austrian companies have the opportunity to use cultural diversity to their competitive advantage. The internationalization of Austria’s industry is promoted by benefiting from the potential of skilled labor. Furthermore, start-ups are supported by skilled individuals with a migration background.

It is the only program of its kind in the German-speaking area. However, mentors are no substitute for the AMS, which is responsible for job placement and course selection. Moreover (professional) training or (psycho-) therapy are not part of the mentoring program either.



Mentoring constitutes a mutually beneficial relationship between two people with respect to a certain task or a certain objective: Mentors are often successful executives with the skills and experience that the mentees need to accomplish concrete tasks or the next developmental phase.

2. Program Participants

Mentees:

The “Mentoring for Migrants” program is designed for individuals from a migration background who meet the minimum requirement of a completed apprenticeship or higher education. Other requirements are sufficient knowledge of the German language and access to the Austrian job market. Applicants from all continents participate in the program. Mentees bring valuable skills to the table and have received training, especially in business or engineering.

Mentors:

Well-connected business players with relevant professional experience and social competence volunteer to be mentors to skilled individuals from a migration background (mentees) and commit to supporting them individually. Company representatives from various industries are among the participants. In addition to several large companies, a considerable number of individuals from small- and medium-sized companies participate. Many mentors commit to mentoring several mentees in the program.



Mentees

- Clearly communicate their expectations
- Practice proactive behavior and self-reliance
- Exhibit a willingness to learn
- Are open to talking about their cultural background with their mentors

Mentors

- Clearly communicate their expectations
- Convey know-how of the professional world, the challenges they have to face and provide concrete tips and assistance
- Recognize competences and support the development of their mentees' potentials
- Utilize their networks and their professional knowledge to support their mentees in successfully gaining a foothold in the job market

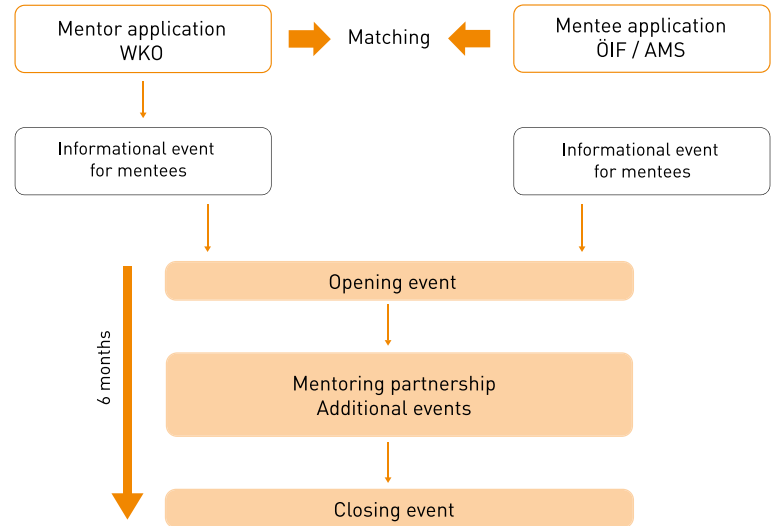
3. The “Mentoring for Migrants” Process

The “Mentoring for Migrants” program offers a distinct, structured framework for a flexible and individualized mentoring partnership. The organisations responsible for carrying out the program conduct the professional supervision with the involvement of diversity and mentoring experts.

Application Phase

As a direct liaison with companies, the Economic Chamber establishes contacts with potential mentors. Companies receive information about the “Mentoring for Migrants” program in personal conversations, from the media, in mailings or on the Internet.

Mentees are encouraged to participate by targeted information through the AMS and the ÖIF, target group-specific associations and NGOs. They are carefully selected in an application process, which consists of a written application and a personal interview.



Steps for Participating in the Program

Mentors

E-mail with contact information is sent to mentoring@wko.at



Phone consultation



Completion of a questionnaire for ideal matching

Mentees

Submission of a letter of motivation and updated résumé to mentoring@integrationsfonds.at



Application process (written and oral)

The Matching Process

The core of the mentoring program is the matching process, i.e. the bringing together of mentors and mentees. The matching is conducted collectively by all of the organisations responsible for the program. Finding mentoring matches is crucial for a good mentoring partnership and thus requires a particular mindfulness and sensitivity.

In particular, professional (e.g. industry, training) and regional (e.g. companies' target markets, mentees' region of origin) aspects as well as language skills are taken into consideration in the matching process. The objective is a mutual, success-promoting exchange.

Two matching examples:

- A mentee trained in IT finds a mentor who works in the IT field. The executive of a company, who has a significant number of business relationships in Serbia, finds a mentee with Serbian roots.
- Experiences from previous matches show that the vast majority of mentors and mentees are satisfied with the matching result. If, however, in individual cases, challenges to the mentoring partnership become apparent early on, new mentoring matches will be found in accordance with appropriate criteria.

Informational Event

Both mentors and mentees are prepared for the mentoring partnership in an initial training session.

Opening Event

Mentors and mentees meet each other at an opening event. This event also offers the opportunity to connect with other mentors and mentees.



The Mentoring Partnership

At the beginning of the mentoring partnership, expectations and goals, as well as the organizational framework are discussed, such as: How often will the partners meet, who initiates the meetings, etc.

In order to be aware of the mentoring partner's expectations, it is recommended to conduct an expectation check and to record the result in writing.

The time commitment for the mentoring partnership is about 5 hours per month. In addition, training sessions, company visits and other events are offered, which are also intended to promote networking among participants.

Within the framework of the mentoring partnership, designated contact persons from the program are available to the mentors and mentees. They provide support and assistance if necessary. The mentoring partnership lasts 6 months and ends with a final interview, during which the mentors and mentees take stock and provide each other with feedback on the mentoring process. Of course, mentors and mentees have the option to stay in contact after the partnership ends.

4. Benefit and Results

Many mentees from the program are able to successfully integrate themselves in the job market. However, job placement is not the top objective of the program, but rather helping mentees to help themselves: The mentors' know-how and expertise offers the mentees valuable tools for long-term success in the job market.

Surveys among mentors showed that about 85% draw personal advantages from participating in the program. Many mentors were interested in taking part in the next matching process of the program.



THE RESULTS OF A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP INCLUDE:

- ↗ Development of a career plan for the mentee
- ↗ Identification and organization of further training
- ↗ Establishing contacts
- ↗ Optimizing the application process
- ↗ Getting job interviews
- ↗ Building mentee's self-confidence in his/her strengths
- ↗ Development of a business plan to pave the way to self-employment

For further information, please refer to
wko.at/mentoring

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