

Tips for Protégés Interested in Small Business

Here are some of ACP's best suggestions for Protégés interested in learning about starting a small business.

General Guidelines:

- ACP mentorships are not a business partnership between a Protégé's company and ACP or a Protégé's company and a Mentor's institution
- Protégés may not ask Mentors or ACP for funding or company support
- ACP mentorships are between an individual Protégé and a Mentor and not between a Protégé's company and a Mentor

Before You Get Paired:

- Narrow down what areas of your small business you are most interested in working on (networking, hiring employees, marketing)

Talk About It: Discuss these topics with your Mentor

- Creating a business plan
- Developing 2, 5, and 10 year business timelines
- Grant writing opportunities
- Establishing a board of directors
- Managing finances and creating a payroll
- Targeting clientele
- Hiring and firing employees
- Improving name recognition (creating a website, search engine optimizations, social media following, marketing, advertising)
- Research similar organizations and define what made them successful or unsuccessful. What mistakes did they make and how can you avoid making similar mistakes with your company? What created their success?

Read About It: Select a book about small business or entrepreneurship to read together

- [The Wall Street Journal: Complete Small Business Guidebook](#) by Colleen Debaise
- [Small Business Management: An Entrepreneurial Emphasis](#) by J. William Petty
- [The Advantage](#) by Patrick Lencioni
- [The \\$100 Startup](#) by Chris Guillebau
- [The Unbreakable Rules of Marketing](#) by Cathey Armillas and Jeff Berry

IBM Tool Kits: Learn about building a small business with IBM's Tool Kits

- [Deciding on a Business](#), [Business Plans](#), [Financing](#), [Forecasting Calculator](#)

Resources: Utilize these additional resources throughout your mentorship

- [ACP AdvisorNet](#): ACP's online question and answer forum
- [EBV](#): Entrepreneurship program for veterans with disabilities
- [B-Plans](#): Samples of more than 100 Business Plans
- [Small Business Administration](#): Veteran specific programs, grants and loans
- [Start-Up Nation](#): Video segments, forums and groups for entrepreneurs