



GROWTH
ACCELERATOR
MALAWI

MENTORSHIP GUIDELINE

Introduction

The Growth Accelerator Malawi Entrepreneurship Challenge seeks to unlock the growth potential of entrepreneurs with innovative business propositions that are addressing development challenges through the delivery of sustainable solutions. The support provided under the programme is separated into two parts: 6 months of in-workshop technical capacity building, followed by 6 months of mentorship and one-on-one business development support.

For Round 2 of the Growth Accelerator, starting July 2020, the post-workshop support portion of the programme will see the ventures working to implement their strategies with one-on-one business catalytic support. In addition, the programme will connect the entrepreneurs with experienced business professionals that wish to contribute their resources and expertise to catalyse the growth of the entrepreneurial journeys of these exciting ventures.

Objective

Entrepreneurs face a wide range of challenges in their endeavour to grow and scale their businesses and it is easy to get bogged down in the details. Experienced business professionals can provide support and advise to overcoming these challenges and helping entrepreneurs focus on the big picture and long-term goals. A mentor-mentee relationship requires the building of an open, trusting relationship where individuals can be honest and forthcoming.

The Growth Accelerator Malawi Entrepreneurship Challenge strongly believes successful mentorship is a tool that can be a rewarding experience for both parties; where mentors can share their experiences and provide guidance and leadership to their mentees, while mentees have the opportunity to learn directly from experienced professionals and gain insights to their business challenges. The objective of this document is to outline the roles and responsibilities of mentors and mentees, the rules of engagement, and the steps to addressing challenges that may arise. It also includes mentorship documents that are meant to guide discussions.

Roles and Responsibilities

The mentoring relationship is a two-way street, where mentors-mentees are both required to be present and engaged in order to maximise the interaction. The table below outlines the roles and responsibilities for mentees and mentors, respectively.

Entrepreneur/Mentee	Mentor
Drives the relationship, setting up meetings and the agenda	Open to listen and reflect on what is discussed;
Works to monitor the progress of goals and timelines set	Keeps perspective and offers tactical, relevant business advice
Owns the outcomes of activities performed in the business	Keeps discussions confidential and offers encouraging and supportive leadership

Rules of engagement

Each venture will be matched with a single mentor who will be tasked with guiding, motivating and providing emotional support to the entrepreneur. The programme shall endeavour to match mentees with mentors that are in close geographical proximity to their main business operations. For the mentoring relationship to be a success, both parties shall be expected to:

- Be respectful and mindful of each other's time, commitment and boundaries;
- Be in communication and keep in touch;

- Be upfront about challenges or issues that may arise and raise these issues with the Growth Accelerator team;
- Be transparent, honest and upfront about any perceived conflicts of interest;
- Be open in sharing information;
- Keep the integrity of the relationship and not sharing information that stems from a private and confidential relationship; only discussing matters with the Growth Accelerator team or business investors and no other external parties.

Mentee

It is paramount that the mentee takes this opportunity seriously and maximises the time spent with their mentor. Therefore, a mentee is required to:

- a) Be clear on the objectives and items that are to be discussed, using the mentoring agenda document in these guidelines prior to each meeting;
- b) Honor the time set aside and the commitments agreed, or adequately provide notice to their mentor if there is a challenge;
- c) Be open to share, listen and learn;
- d) Must assume full responsibility of all actions taken and outcomes thereof.

A mentee shall not:

- a) Rely on the mentor to lead the interactions;
- b) Expect their mentor to prescribe solutions and tell them what to do;
- c) Expect their mentor to put in any capital investments or provide any monetary resources;
- d) Blame their mentors for the outcomes of any business decisions undertaken.

Mentor

Mentors can play an integral role to the success of a venture by providing support based on their professional experience and must maximise the time spent with their mentee. Therefore, a mentor shall:

- a) Be encouraging and supportive, whilst offering constructive feedback;
- b) Be open to listening and share their learnings and experience;
- c) Honor the time set aside and commitments agreed, or adequately provide notice to their mentee if there is a challenge.

A mentor shall not:

- a) Play the role of a functional expert/sage such as accountant, lawyer, etc.
- b) Be prescriptive and make assumptions;
- c) Assume responsibility for the success or failures of the venture;
- d) Offer professional services either paid-for or pro-bono that he/she may supply through their company.

Meetings

Once the match has happened, the programme requires one monthly 30 min – 1 hour call or physical meeting where the mentor and mentee discuss the previous month's activities, progress, challenges and any other relevant items as well as the goals for the upcoming month. The meetings – if possible – can be bi-monthly if agreed with both parties.

Addressing Challenges

The final match, and key success factor, is down to compatibility of the two parties regarding not just interpersonal chemistry but alignment on strategic growth milestones to be attained. Whilst the programme shall endeavour to match based on our experiences elsewhere, the business challenges, skills gap and business experience, relationships can have challenges. The programme encourages mentors and mentees to review the rules of engagement that we have designed to protect both parties. The programme's Growth Catalyst will be checking-in with the ventures and the mentors on a regular (bi-monthly) basis on the progress, what's working, and what's not.

However, the lines for the defined roles and responsibilities might get a bit blurry. If a mentor or mentee is veering away and boundaries are crossed, the first step is to reach out to the Growth Catalyst and immediately raise this concern. The Catalyst will provide guidance and advise and intervene where necessary. All of the discussions and agreed actions will

be documented. If the issue is not able to be resolved despite the Catalysts' intervention, the Catalyst will raise this matter with UNDP and a resolution will be taken. It may likely be a new match will be undertaken.

Mentorship documents and resources

Agendas are necessary to set the tone and stage of the meeting. Growth Sprints developed during the (second) Actioning Bootcamp will form the basis of the support to be provided by the mentor. Prior to meetings, the mentee is required to take time to reflect on at least two topics to discuss and fill the agenda template provided – with additional input from the Growth Catalyst to ensure alignment or value to broader Growth Sprints as part of the catalytic support.

Topic #1:	
Current Status	Where have you progressed with the above item?
Next Steps/Actions	What tactics could you start to employ to help you move this topic forward? What will you continue doing? What will you stop doing?
Evaluation Date	Does this topic require further discussion at a future meeting? If so, when do you agree to evaluate it again?

Topic #2:	
Current Status	Where have you progressed with the above item?
Next Steps/Actions	What tactics could you start to employ to help you move this topic forward? What will you continue doing? What will you stop doing?
Evaluation Date	Does this topic require further discussion at a future meeting? If so, when do you agree to evaluate it again?

Additional Things to Consider: Financial Review

Cash flow	
Current Status	How has your cash flow changed month to month? Is it positive? Have you noticed any trends? Are you profitable? How are you determining this?
Next Steps/Actions	What tactics could you start to employ to help you move this topic forward? What will you continue doing? What will you stop doing?
Evaluation Date	Does this topic require further discussion at a future meeting? If so, when do you agree to evaluate it again?

Follow Up Items

- Next meeting date/time:
- Who is responsible for sending out a meeting invite for the next meeting?

- Is there anything that either of you need to bring to the next meeting? List it here. Are there any next steps/action items not linked to an above topic that require follow up?