

**The Center for Innovation**

**E-Coaching Program**

**Metropolitan State College of Denver**



**Coach Handbook**



METROPOLITAN STATE  
COLLEGE *of* DENVER

# E-Coaching Program

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# **E-Coaching**

The Center for Innovation E-Coaching Program  
Metropolitan State College of Denver

## **Welcome**

E-Coaching is collaboration between the Metropolitan State College of Denver’s Center for Innovation and members of the Denver Metropolitan Area entrepreneurial community. The Center for Innovation E-Coaching program offers advisement, support, expertise, resources, and start-up business ownership support for students. Historically, Coaching was done face-to-face. Today, technology provides a tool for Coaching —the Internet. Because of this, the Center for Innovation is able to meet the needs of these participants using today’s technology.

## **The E-Coach Cadre**

Center for Innovation E-Coaches are experienced, knowledgeable, and highly successful educators who are committed to assisting students to acquire the skills necessary to be a successful entrepreneur. The E-Coaches are reflective individuals who possess the necessary people skills to help beginning entrepreneurs grow. Center for Innovation E-Coaches understand the commitment, availability, professional competence, and sensitivity are the key ingredients in a successful E-Coaching program. The pool of potential Center for Innovation E-Coaches will come from the ranks of the following:

- **Current Entrepreneurs**
- **Angel Investors**
- **Venture Capitalists**
- **Entrepreneurial Coaches**

# The E-Coaching Process: E-Coaches

## 1. Application

An entrepreneurial professional who desires to become an E-Coach completes an application, profile, and E-Coaching Contract on the E-Coaching home page on the Center for Innovation website. The completed documents are then returned to the Center for Innovations office via e-mail, mail or in person. Center for Innovation staff use the responses to match the Entrepreneur with an E-Coach.

## 2. Pairings of Entrepreneur with an E-Coach

Pairings of the Entrepreneur with the E-Coach take place once the E-Coach has submitted all Coaching forms. Pairings of Entrepreneurs and E-Coaches will be determined by Center for Innovation staff. Considerations include:

- E-Coach availability and expertise;
- Grade level;
- Entrepreneurial interests and goals;
- Other interests.

Once all previous steps are completed, the Coaching Coordinator will advise the Entrepreneurs of the E-Coach pairing, and your E-Coaching begins.

## 3. Initial Contact/Getting Acquainted

The Entrepreneur will initiate the first contact by e-mailing or calling the E-Coach and scheduling a meeting at the office of the E-Coach. If Entrepreneur is a high school student, initial meeting can take place at the Denver Venture School.

The initial contact is an opportunity to share backgrounds/common interests. Both the Entrepreneur and E-Coach should post their bios that reflect personal background and professional/accomplishments in the private discussion group. The participants communicate initial expectations and agree upon common goals and expectations for the initial phase of the relationship.

## 4. Set Goals

During the first weeks of the E-Coaching, Entrepreneurs should discuss their professional goals and interests with their E-Coach.

## 5. Define Expectations of the E-Coaching Relationship

The Entrepreneur and E-Coach clarify roles and expectations to ensure a successful E-Coaching relationship. The participants should understand the E-Coaching process and limits of the E-Coaching relationship.

This is an appropriate point to emphasize that the E-Coach will not arbitrate conflicts that occur in the Entrepreneurs setting, including specific classroom problems, disagreements with administrative requirements, etc. The E-Coaching complements and supplements the supports that the Entrepreneur has in the school setting. Later, the Entrepreneur can dialogue with the E-Coach in their private discussion group on professional considerations inherent in the issue and how the issue was resolved.

## **6. Plan Communication**

While the vehicle for communication is the asynchronous online discussion group, both the E-Coach and Entrepreneur should agree on best times for weekly communication. The E-Coach and Entrepreneur discuss personal schedules and availabilities that accommodate both participants. It is important to build in flexibility, but also ensure accountability. All communication should take place within the appropriate discussion group.

## **E-Coaching “Coach” Timeline**

The following sequence illustrates the Coach selection and participation process in E-Coaching

- Step 1: The Coach applies to E-Coaching via the Center for Innovation’s online application form at [www.MetroStateInnovate.org](http://www.MetroStateInnovate.org), completing:
- Application and Profile
  - Contract
- Step 2: The recipient reviews the E-Coaching Handbook
- Step 3: The recipient is paired with an Entrepreneur
- Step: 4 The Coachship begins with one face-to-face meeting between E-Coach and Entrepreneur

### **E-Coaching Home**

The E-Coaching program will have an online home that contains the following elements:

- Private E-Coach –Entrepreneur Discussion Groups

## The E-Coaching Policies

By completing and signing the E-Coaching application, profile, and contract, the E-Coach agrees to the following E-Coaching policies:

- Complete the E-Coach application, contract, and profile.
- Use JourneyPage as the primary email and newsgroup communication modality.
- After initial contact with your Entrepreneur, describe expectations/set goals.
- Communicate with the Entrepreneur in the private newsgroup weekly.
- Take a leadership role by initiating contacts, supporting areas of Entrepreneurs interest, providing feedback, discussing current models/theories, and complementing Center for Innovation E-Coaching programs.
- Assist the Entrepreneur with resources, unit/lesson planning, classroom management, and other professional responsibilities.
- Provide substantive comments in response to posted messages regarding accomplishments and challenges.
- Demonstrate the attributes of an effective E-Coach as described in the handbook.
- Participate in Best-Practices and Round-Table newsgroups.
- Refrain from arbitrating Entrepreneur problems, issues, or concerns.
- Support Center for Innovation and E-Coaching goals.
- Complete and return all Center for Innovation surveys by their due dates.
- Use effective and appropriate communication.

### E-Coaching Agreement:

The E-Coaching program is a one year commitment between the Center for Innovation, and the coach. Upon mutual agreement by all parties, the contract can be extended in one or two year increments.

#### Professionalism:

I am agreeing to maintain professional standards in all of my contacts in the E-Coaching newsgroups.

#### E-Coaching Netiquette:

I am agreeing to refrain from the use of inappropriate language that is obscene or offensive. The Center for Innovation reserves the right to remove any posting that is off-subject, obscene, offensive or deemed inappropriate by the Center for Innovation Lead E-Coach including inappropriate or sensitive materials. Illegal activity such as harassment, stalking, or assault is prohibited and will be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

#### Confidentiality:

I am agreeing that I will not ask the Entrepreneur to share confidential information in E-Forums including posting any identifiable information such as names, addresses, phone numbers, and personal identification numbers. Matters of a personal or sensitive nature should be discussed outside the E-Forum with the Coachship Coordinator/Lead E-Coach via private email or telephone.

#### Privacy:

I am agreeing that Center for Innovation E-Coaching Program participation is password-protected and that only the E-Coach approved by Metropolitan State College of Denver has access to its contents. I understand that my participation in public E-Forums is accessible to all participants and that while password protected, that no online medium can be completely secure.

#### Participant Opinions:

I understand that the E-Coaching and the contents of E-Forums result in the expression of many points of view on the same issue. Participants must understand that the opinions expressed by individuals through email and on the E-Forums do not necessarily represent those of Metropolitan State College of Denver or the Center for Innovation E-Coaching Program.

#### Personal Responsibility:

I understand that Center for Innovation E-Coaching participants must take responsibility for what is posted to the E-Forums and that they maintain confidentiality and protect the privacy of other Center for Innovation E-Coaching participants. E-Forum messages may not be shared or used as documentation for any purpose/reason.

#### Center for Innovation Research:

I understand that E-Forum messages may be used by the Center for Innovation for research purposes. Identity will be changed to protect the privacy of participants. Usernames and passwords are unique and may not be shared. Sharing usernames and passwords directly violates the privacy of Center for Innovation E-Coaching participants. Non-compliance may result in restricted access to E-Forums.

## During the E-Coaching, the E-Coach:

### 1. Provides Entrepreneur Support, Guidance, and Feedback

Students and entrepreneurs experience many daily successes and setbacks. We expect that the Entrepreneur will communicate these privately with the E-Coach. This is an opportunity for the E-Coach to identify what works and make suggestions for refinements that enhance the Entrepreneurs academic/entrepreneurial practice.

While the role of the E-Coach is to support the Entrepreneur, the E-Coach should avoid the perception of arbitrating issues regarding academic performance. The E-Coaching should focus on professional goals and opportunities for entrepreneurial development.

Generally, the Entrepreneurs should feel that communication with the E-Coach is private and protected. However, the E-Coach might suggest that an issue or concern be shared with the Center for Innovation staff (or the Denver Venture School if the Entrepreneur is a high school student). This should be discussed with the Entrepreneur first with the suggestion that the Entrepreneur share the concern directly. With Entrepreneur approval, the E-Coach can communicate E-Coaching discussions and experiences with the Center for Innovation for the purpose of support.

### 2. Validate Personal Reflections and Professional Competencies

Effective learners reflect consistently on their professional practices. This can be facilitated in the E-Coach and Entrepreneur relationship.

Encourage the Entrepreneur to archive activities, materials, reflections, etc. that demonstrate professional competencies and growth that can become the basis for weekly communication during the Coachship year. The Entrepreneur can keep a journal, portfolio, etc. Artifacts/topics for reflection might include entrepreneurial practices, academic performance, interactions with fellow students/professionals, and school activities.

### 3. Supports Best Practices

During the E-Coaching, the Entrepreneur will participate in a variety of public discussion groups through the E-Coaching program. This is the Entrepreneur's opportunity to share best practices, accomplishments, obstacles and receive feedback from other Entrepreneurs and E-Coaches. While most of the E-Coach/Entrepreneur discussion will take place in the private Entrepreneur discussion group, the E-Coach should also participate in the public discussion groups several times each month.

## Reflection and Evaluation:

### **1. Personal Reflection**

One of the best methods of learning is to reflect on day-to-day experiences. The E-Coach should encourage the Entrepreneur to reflect on effective or ineffective outcomes in both academic and entrepreneurial settings.

### **2. Evaluate the Effectiveness of the Entrepreneur and E-Coach Relationship**

The E-Coaching evolves over time. Initial needs give way to insights and issues. Participants continue to address the changing status of the Entrepreneur/E-Coach relationship by evaluating the relationship and determine new goals, priorities, etc. throughout the E-Coaching year.

## **E-Coaching Goals and Objectives: E-Coach**

### **Goal 1: To establish effective E-Coach communication**

- Objective 1: The E-Coach will demonstrate effective E-technology competencies.
- Objective 2: The E-Coach will share professional background/personal interests with the Entrepreneur.
- Objective 3: The E-Coach will communicate with the Entrepreneur weekly.
- Objective 4: The E-Coach will respond to Entrepreneur comments or questions within 48 hours.
- Objective 5: The E-Coach and Entrepreneur will network with other E-Coaching professionals.
- Objective 6: The Entrepreneurs will request guidance and support from the E-Coach.

### **Goal 2: To increase opportunities for entrepreneurial support and growth**

- Objective 1: The E-Coach will complete a profile indicating an area of interest in entrepreneurship.
- Objective 2: The E-Coach will communicate areas of strength.
- Objective 3: The E-Coach will communicate areas for refinement.
- Objective 4: The E-Coach will communicate interest in entrepreneurial growth opportunities.
- Objective 5: The E-Coach will suggest opportunities for the Entrepreneur to share best practices and receive assistance in public discussion groups.
- Objective 6: The E-Coach will provide opportunities for the Entrepreneur to identify strengths and areas for refinement.
- Objective 7: The E-Coach will share resources that support the Entrepreneur's professional practice.

**Goal 3: The E-Coach will support the Entrepreneur's interest in the profession of entrepreneurship**

Objective 1: The E-Coach will identify Entrepreneur academic/entrepreneurial accomplishments during the Coachship.

Objective 2: The E-Coach will describe effective professional competencies in the Entrepreneur's professional portfolio artifacts.

Objective 3: The E-Coach will assist the Entrepreneur in formulating both long- and short-range goals at the end of each year of the Coachship.

## **E-Coach Roles and Responsibilities**

Take a leadership role by initiating conversations, raising issues

Help the Entrepreneur set life and professional goals

Provide substantive feedback, including alternate perspectives

Discuss class experiences

Discuss business experiences

Assist the Entrepreneur with time management

Ask probing questions

Create discussions based on topics of interest

Reflect about professional practice changes and improvements

Offer to collaborate on entrepreneurial planning

Share information resources

Assist the Entrepreneur with academic assignments

Question and learn from other online participants

Share examples of best practices

Dialogue with other E-Coaches and Entrepreneurs

Evaluate accomplishment of E-Coach goals

## Characteristics of Effective E-Coaches

Willingness to be a role model for students

Is an advisor, teacher, confidant, and friend

Committed to the profession of entrepreneurship

Committed to lifelong learning

Takes a personal interest in others

Is willing to “give away” knowledge and skills obtained from years of experience

Reflective

Ability to share information and ideas

Flexible

Open-minded

Enjoys new challenges

Can facilitate problem-solving

Asks questions that prompt reflection

Offers suggestions in a productive manner

Is enthusiastic about entrepreneurship

Respects privacy and confidentiality

Has confidence in his/her professional skills

Can maintain a trusting professional relationship

Sees the Entrepreneur’s potential

Sensitive and empathetic

Patient

Easily establishes rapport with others

Sees themselves as an equal among colleagues and those they Coach

Has a high expectation for self and others