

# MENTORING PANEL EVENT TOOLKIT



CHRONUS  
Unleash the Power of Mentoring®

# INTRODUCTION

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Running a successful mentoring program is only possible with a robust mentoring culture. A mentoring panel event is an effective promotional tool that can help you build excitement and engagement around mentoring to help establish a mentoring program. We have worked with our customers to compile best practices so you can plan and host a great mentoring panel event that will embolden employees to try mentoring for themselves. Inside, find suggested planning schedules, resources to market the event, and content for running the event itself.



LET'S GET STARTED.



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# IS A MENTORING PANEL RIGHT FOR YOU?

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Let's start by defining the who, what, why, and when.

## WHO IS THIS TOOLKIT FOR?

This toolkit was designed for administrators and program managers of corporate mentoring programs

## WHAT IS A MENTORING PANEL EVENT?

A mentoring panel brings together a mix of 4-6 highly visible leaders (directors or C-suite) and individual contributors to shed light on their amazing experiences with mentoring. The audience at the event are potential recruits for a program who have yet to join or yet to match.

## WHY HOLD A MENTORING PANEL EVENT?

A mentoring panel event will generate interest and excitement around your program, and recognize the efforts of your previous participants and their experiences. It will also help to bolster and expand the mentoring culture of your organization. *If this is your first time launching a formal program, you can still hold a panel — just crowdsource speakers who have experienced organic mentoring on their own.*

## WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO HOLD A MENTORING PANEL EVENT?

The ideal time to hold a mentoring panel event is 1-2 weeks before the launch or relaunch of your program. This timeframe will build momentum and excitement before you start enrolling people into the program.

# CREATING A TIMELINE FOR YOUR EVENT

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Once you've decided on a launch date for your mentoring program you can use the following worksheets to begin the initial planning, decisions, and timelines for your mentoring panel event.

Refer to these as you progress through the rest of the planning phases we have outlined in the following sections.

## 2-3 MONTHS BEFORE EVENT

### ☐ Select your panel event date.

(We suggest 1-2 weeks before program launch)

- Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### ☐ Reserve your room.

- Reserved room name: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### ☐ Recruit panelists.

- List of six panelists:

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# CREATING A TIMELINE FOR YOUR EVENT

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## 1-2 MONTH(S) BEFORE EVENT

☐ Decide who your audience will be.

- Prospective audience members to attend: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Create/edit marketing materials.

- Who needs to approve material: \_\_\_\_\_
- Revision/approval time needed: \_\_\_\_\_



Additional notes as necessary:

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# CREATING A TIMELINE FOR YOUR EVENT

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## 1-4 WEEK(S) BEFORE EVENT

- ☐ Distribute marketing materials.
  - Date to push marketing material: \_\_\_\_\_
  - People in charge of distribution: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Ensure event equipment and supplies are reserved/setup and will be at the event site before or on the morning of the event.
  - ☐ Tables
  - ☐ Chairs
  - ☐ Microphones
  - ☐ Event slideshow & projector
  - ☐ Panel questions
- ☐ Send out invitations.
  - ☐ Date of when invitations will be sent out: \_\_\_\_\_



**Additional notes as necessary:**

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# CREATING A TIMELINE FOR YOUR EVENT

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## DAY BEFORE (OR DAY OF) EVENT

- ☐ Send out reminder email day before the event.
- ☐ Ensure room is organized to your specifications.
- ☐ Ensure mic works.
- ☐ Ensure projector works. Test slide deck.
- ☐ All panelist are confirmed and aware of where they need to be by what time.



Additional notes as necessary:

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# FINDING THE RIGHT SPACE FOR YOUR EVENT

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With your date now selected, it's time to hunt for a room or space in which to hold your mentoring panel event. The first thing to consider is how many people you'll be notifying about this event. Taking headcount into consideration, find a room that will be able to accommodate your estimated attendees.



**On average only about 30% of invitees will actually attend an event, with variation based on organizational culture.**

Other things to take into consideration when looking for a room:

- Does it have a projector, or will you need to provide one?
- Does the projector onsite have compatible wiring for your device to project?
- Can you set up microphones in this space? If not, is it small enough that the panelists' voices will carry throughout the room?
- Does the space have chairs you can use, or will you have to provide them?
- Will you have to set up the space by yourself or can a team onsite set it up for you?

Once you've found the space that is perfect for you, reserve the room for your date and time. Reserve extra time for setup, so you can start on time. Be sure to record this information in the timeline worksheet on [page 5](#).

# WHO SHOULD BE A PANELIST?

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Good panel recruitment is important. You want to display diverse mentoring experiences.

The ideal number of panelists for the event is 4-6. Try to have an equal ratio of mentors to mentees. It is also important to have a backup list of 3-4 additional people in mind, just in case schedules change and your original panelists can't make it.



The ideal number of panelists is 4-6, keeping an equal ratio of mentors to mentees.

Include at least two highly visible, senior individuals who are well-known and admired. For the rest of the panelists, secure managers and individual contributors with backgrounds that people can relate to. Consider diversifying gender, ethnicity, business group and experience.

Once you have a solid list of 4-6 people and a couple of backups in mind, it's time to reach out and ask them. There is space to write in your panelists on the timeline worksheet on [page 5](#).

# HOW TO RECRUIT PANELISTS

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At Chronus, we are proponents of building human relationships. Although email is convenient, calling someone directly or stopping by their desk is much more personal and effective. Make sure you've identified the right people to contact.

If you're just starting a mentoring program, maybe it is someone who has participated in a program outside of your organization. If you're starting a new cohort of your existing mentoring program, look for someone who gave a good review or highly scored survey about the program previously.

If you're up for asking someone to be a panelist in person or on the phone, below is a quick talk track. On [page 12](#), you'll find a panelist recruitment email template.



## Panelist Recruitment Talk Track

"I wanted to see if you would be willing to be a panelist for a recruitment event I'm hosting for our mentoring program. It looks like you've had an amazing mentoring experience and it would be great for prospective participants to hear how mentoring has impacted you.

Would you be willing to participate?"

If they say yes, then provide them follow-up details. We've outlined on these on [pages 13-14](#).

# HOW TO RECRUIT PANELISTS

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## RECRUITMENT EMAIL

If you need to use email, below is an email template to recruit speakers.

To: specificpanelist@example.com

From: You

Subject: Mentoring Panel Event – Panelist Request

Hello **[Insert Name Here]**,

I've heard you had a great experience with mentoring and I'm wondering if you'd be willing to share it with others.

We have an upcoming mentoring panel event on **[Month XX, 20XX]**, and would love for you to join us as one of our esteemed panelists. This event is part of an initiative to develop the mentoring culture in our organization and increase participation in our mentoring program. We believe everyone should experience the benefits of mentoring. Your story could help others see it as impactful and approachable.

We'll provide you with the questions we will ask during the panel so you'll be prepped and ready to go.

If you are available and interested, please let me know by **[Day, Month XX, 20XX]**.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best,

**[Your Name Here]**

# HOW TO RECRUIT PANELISTS

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## FOLLOW-UP EMAIL

If you get a yes to your initial request, follow up with the email below that sheds more light into what the panelist should be prepared to do on the day of the event.

**To:** [specificpanelist@example.com](mailto:specificpanelist@example.com)

**From:** You

**Subject:** Mentoring Panel Event – Panelist Responsibilities

Thank you for agreeing to join us! Here is some information about what to expect the day of and a list of questions I'll be asking. Come prepared with answers that pertain to your role as either a mentor or a mentee. Some depth makes for a great story - 30 seconds per answer is a good rule of thumb to follow.

Location: **[insert location here]**

Arrival time for panelist: **[insert time here—it should be 30-45 minutes prior to the event starting]**

Questions for both mentors and mentees:

(If applicable) Why did you decide to join the mentoring program?

(If applicable) Why did you join as a mentor/mentee?

What was the most beneficial part of your mentor-mentee relationship?

What would you tell someone who is thinking about participating in the program?

# HOW TO RECRUIT PANELISTS

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## FOLLOW-UP EMAIL, CONT'D

### Questions for mentors:

What was your biggest apprehension about serving as a mentor?  
What was the most rewarding part of being a mentor?  
How did you prepare to serve as a mentor?  
What would you tell someone who is thinking about being a mentor, but might be uncertain about the role?

### Questions for mentees:

What would you say to someone who thinks a mentoring relationship takes too much time out of their day?  
What is the greatest thing you've learned from your mentor?  
How has your mentor or mentee's advice impacted your growth or career development?

### Questions for panelist:

What is your full name?  
What is your role and department within the company?  
How long have you been with the company?  
Who is your personal hero?



# MARKETING YOUR EVENT

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Below is a list of promotional materials and a suggested marketing timeline for your event in order to get as much visibility possible with your target audience. In the subsequent pages, we provide you an overview of the editable materials you can customize and send out, along with guidance as to when you should release the materials.

It is important to find out your points of contact for these marketing channels, and contact them 4 weeks before your event to make sure they can add your marketing materials to their queue in order to distribute the materials by the suggested timeline on the next page.



## LIST OF MARKETING MATERIALS

- Newsletter/Intranet blurb
- Intranet banner
- Flyers
- Invitation
- Email Reminder for Audience Member
- Email Reminder for Panelist

A brief summary of each of these marketing items is shown in the following pages along with a sample of the item.

**You will find these items available in the downloaded zip file that accompanied this guide.** Links can be updated from within each item, and text may be altered to fit your needs.



# MARKETING YOUR EVENT

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## CREATING A MARKETING TIMELINE

### 6-8 WEEKS BEFORE EVENT

- ☐ Decide who your audience is and determine right communication channels (i.e. newsletter, intranet, listserv) to market to them.

### 4-6 WEEKS BEFORE EVENT

- ☐ Ask communications team if you can distribute your event material on the proper communication channels.

### 3-4 WEEKS BEFORE EVENT

- ☐ Create and submit marketing material to communications team to distribute.

### 2 WEEKS BEFORE EVENT

- ☐ Finalize newsletter/intranet blurb, intranet banners, and flyers
- ☐ Ensure that communications team distributes material

### 1 WEEK BEFORE EVENT

- ☐ Send email invitations.

### 1 DAY BEFORE EVENT

- ☐ Send reminder email.

# MARKETING YOUR EVENT

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## NEWSLETTER/INTRANET MESSAGE

### **Released two weeks prior to the event.**

The below text is a quick summary of the mentoring panel event that you can either run in a newsletter to employees, or post on the homepage of your intranet site.

#### **Why Mentoring: A Panel Discussion**

**[Insert program name and executive sponsor name here]** would like to invite you to “Why Mentoring: A Panel Discussion.” Come and discover how mentoring has helped in the success of your colleagues, and find out how you can try mentoring for yourself.

The panel will take on **[xx/xx/xxxx]** at **[xx:xx am/pm]** in **[insert reserved location]**.

For more information please contact **[insert your name and contact information here]**.

# MARKETING YOUR EVENT

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## INTRANET BANNER

**Released two weeks prior to the event.**

The below image is ideal for a carousel banner or on the home page of an intranet to spark initial intrigue about the event. If possible, link the banner to the 'About' landing page of your program.

*You will find this item available in the downloaded zip file that accompanied this guide.*

### WHY MENTORING:

**A Panel Discussion**

**Where:** Update Location Here

**When:** Day, Month XX, 2017

**RSVP:** Email [taylor.johnson@example.com](mailto:taylor.johnson@example.com) by [date]

# MARKETING YOUR EVENT

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## FLYER

**Released 2 weeks prior to the event.**

The flyer below should be distributed or placed in your offices where potential audience members will be able to see it. Examples of ideal places are kitchen areas, bulletin boards, hallways and anywhere that has high traffic and visibility.

*You will find this item available in the downloaded zip file that accompanied this guide.*



# MARKETING YOUR EVENT

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## INVITATION

### Released 1 week prior to the event.

The below invitation image should be uploaded to the body of a calendar client invite (ex: Outlook Calendar, iCal, etc.) and sent with the date, time, location of your event, and contact info.

*You will find this item available in the downloaded zip file that accompanied this guide.*



# MARKETING YOUR EVENT

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## EMAIL REMINDER FOR AUDIENCE MEMBER

**Released 1 day prior to the event.**

The below image should be uploaded to the body of the email reminder that will go out to all prospective audience members and edited with the date, time, location of your event, and contact information.

*You will find this item available in the downloaded zip file that accompanied this guide.*



# MARKETING YOUR EVENT

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## EMAIL REMINDER FOR PANELIST

**Released 1 day prior to the event.**

The text below is an example of a reminder email you should send out to your panelists reminding them of the time and location of the event.

They should arrive 30-45 minutes beforehand to test microphones and confirm their introduction slide has the correct information on it.

**To:** specificpanelist@example.com

**From:** You

**Subject:** Panelist Reminder for Tomorrow's Event!

Hello **[insert panelist name here]**,

Tomorrow is the big day!

Please ensure that you arrive at **[insert event location here]** at **[X:XX am/pm]** which is about 30-45 minutes before the event so we can test out microphones and go over last minute details.

Thank you again for participating! Looking forward to seeing you tomorrow!

Best,  
**[Your name here]**



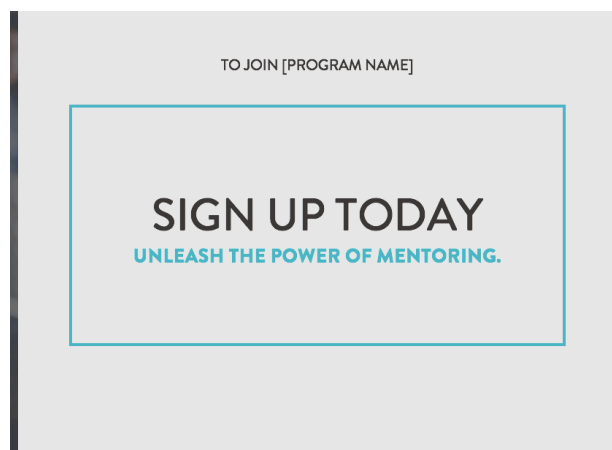
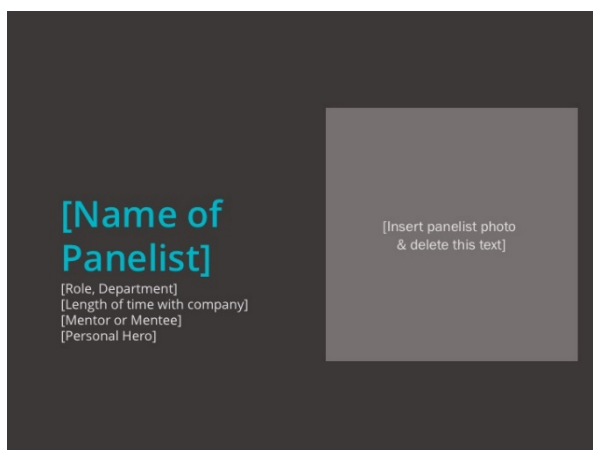
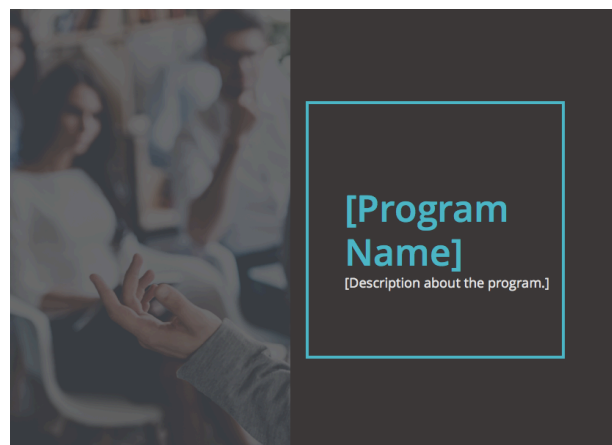
# MARKETING YOUR EVENT

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## SLIDESHOW PRESENTATION

The below images are slides that we've created for you to utilize during the event. The three most important slides are the program slide where you give a brief summary of the program and what it provides for participants, the introduction slide for each panelist, and the call to action slide where you ask attendees to sign up for the mentoring program.

*You will find this item available in the downloaded zip file that accompanied this guide.*



# DAY OF EVENT

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## TIMELINE

If you need to set up the event site yourself, it is advised to arrive at the space 2-3 hours prior to event to arrange chairs, set up, test microphones, and to test your slideshow with the projector. *\*If you have access to the space the day before, get as much setup done as you can in order to create less work for yourself the day of the event.*

If the event site is already set up for your event, arrive 1-2 hours early to deal with anything unexpected.



## MENTORING PANEL EVENT TIMELINE

-00:15-0:30:	Panelist are present and in their seats
0:00 – 0:05:	Welcome remarks and mentoring program overview
0:05 – 0:06:	Define agenda of the panel
0:06 – 0:20:	Panelist introduction
0:20 – 0:45:	Panel discussion
0:45 – 0:55:	Audience questions
0:55 – 1:00:	Closing comments and thank-yous

# DAY OF EVENT

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## PANEL QUESTIONS

### QUESTIONS FOR MENTORS + MENTEES

- Why did you decide to join the mentoring program?
- Why did you join as a mentor/a mentee?
- What was the most beneficial part of your mentor-mentee relationship?
- What would you tell someone who is thinking about participating?

### QUESTIONS FOR MENTORS

- What was your biggest apprehension about serving as a mentor?
- What was the most rewarding part being a mentor?
- How did you prepare to serve as a mentor?
- What would you tell someone who is thinking about being a mentor, but might be uncertain about the role?

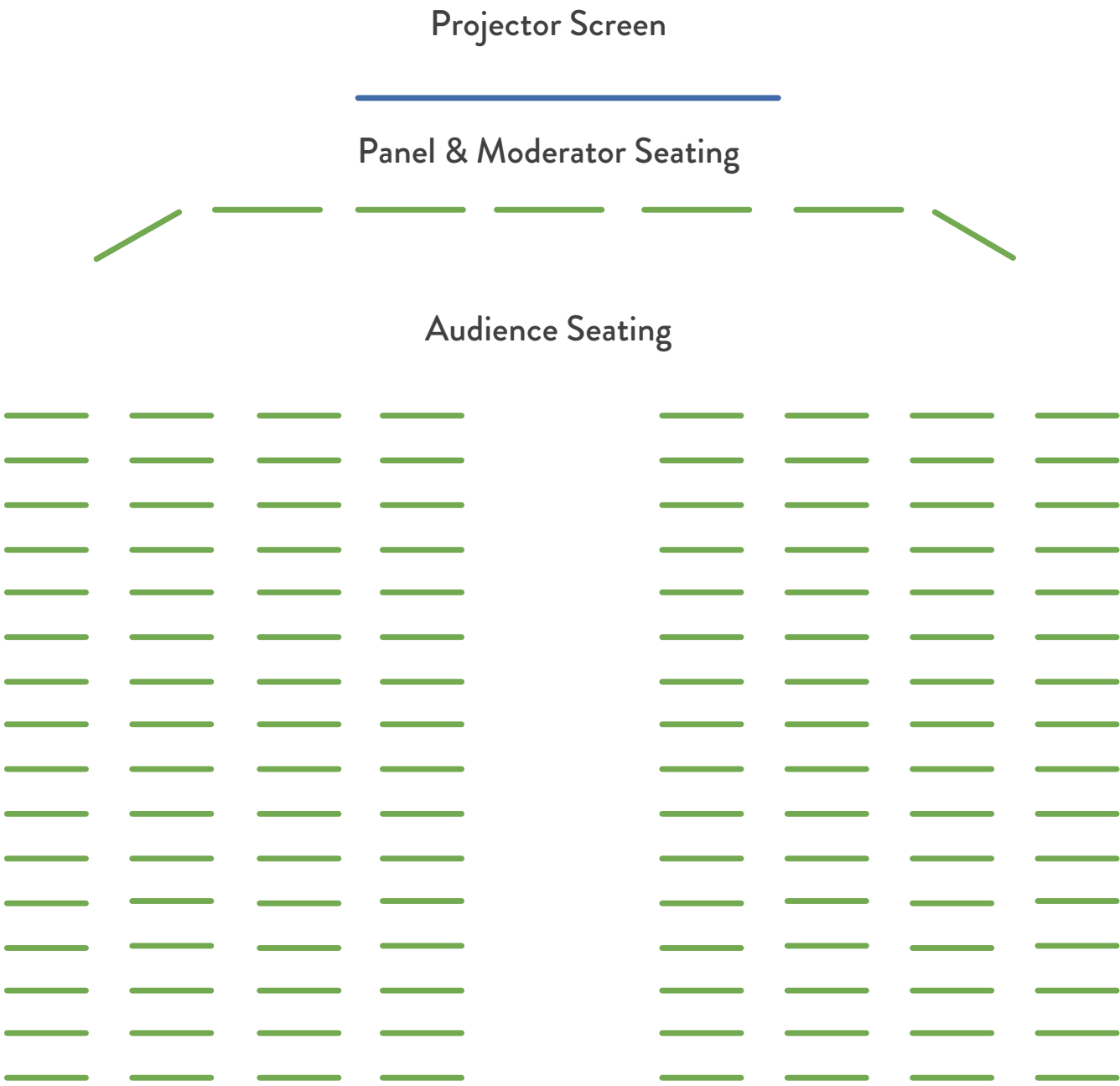
### QUESTIONS FOR MENTEES

- What would you say to someone who thinks a mentoring relationship takes too much time out of their day?
- What is the greatest thing you've learned from your mentor?
- How have you or how do you plan to implement any of the suggestions from your mentor?



# DAY OF EVENT

## ORGANIZING YOUR EVENT SPACE



# DAY OF EVENT

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

**Q:** *Should I have each person speak to all of their questions at once, or rotate questions around the group in a round-robin fashion?*

**A:** We suggest doing a round robin type of questioning to keep things interesting. This type of style will allow panelists to play off of each other's answers.

**Q:** *How long should each panelist speak to keep it engaging?*

**A:** Answer length will vary naturally, but 20-30 seconds on average should allow you to get to most of your questions with all 6 panelists within the 25-minute Q&A period.

**Q:** *Should I cut someone off if they're continuing on too long?*

**A:** In the majority of cases it's safe to let a person wrap up their idea and go on past the 20-second mark, but if they've dug themselves into a talking hole, a good way to redirect is to just say: "Sorry [insert name here] I am looking at time and want to make sure the other panelists get a chance to answer, but you brought up some really good points about [include salient points]. [insert next panelist name] what are your thoughts on the question?"

# THANK YOU

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**You are now fully equipped to market, launch, and facilitate your mentoring panel event!**

If you have any questions about mentoring, holding a panel event, or in general, feel free to reach out to your customer success manager or one of our sales representatives.

**- The Chronus Team**

# ABOUT CHRONUS

Chronus is the leader in mentoring software. Our configurable platform is powering hundreds of successful mentoring programs for some of the world's largest companies, educational institutions, and professional associations. With unique MatchIQ® technology, a guided experience for participants, and the most configurable platform in the industry, Chronus enables mentoring programs to efficiently scale and drive more strategic value for organizations worldwide.

**Visit [www.chronus.com](http://www.chronus.com) to learn more.**



**CHRONUS**

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