

**SHAPE YOUR
OWN FUTURE**



**ALUMNI COACH NETWORK
COACHEE MANUAL**



[EDUCATIONGUIDE.TUE.NL/COACHNETWORK](https://educationguide.tue.nl/coachnetwork)

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Introduction

Are you a student or a young alumnus/alumna exploring career possibilities? Who could then be more helpful to you than a TU/e engineer with first-hand experience? Start shaping your future with the support of an alumni coach. The TU/e Alumni Coach Network facilitates the meeting of experienced alumni willing to share their personal and professional insights, with students and young professionals.

Although it may seem far away, your days as a student are over sooner than you think. You'll then be graduated and you have to start looking for a job. Luckily, the Alumni Coach Network gives you the opportunity to start your career orientation during your studies.

The Alumni Coach Network facilitates the meeting of coach and coachee. Depending on both your personal preferences and interests, (professional) background, work experience and meeting preference, you set up the coaching relationship. The personal contact, which is made possible due to the network, allows you to talk and ask alumni about career possibilities, educational choices, professional ambitions and skills. It is an opportunity to expand your network and meet experts!

Having a coach will have the following benefits:

- Define your career and personal goals through relevant insights from experienced TU/e engineers from the professional field
- Gain access to an ideal sounding board that will support you in making choices concerning your studies and career choices
- Exchange ideas with your coach about interesting topics and gain new insights

As Eindhoven University of Technology, we are very enthusiastic about creating a connection between students, young and experienced alumni. We hope that you are also grateful towards your coach, who volunteers in this network for your sake.



"I was considering doing either a PhD or working for a company after my graduation. I found a coach with experience in both. He supported me in figuring out what I want to do, instead of focusing on what others think I'm good at." **Ria Sijabat, coachee - Master student Chemical Engineering and Chemistry**



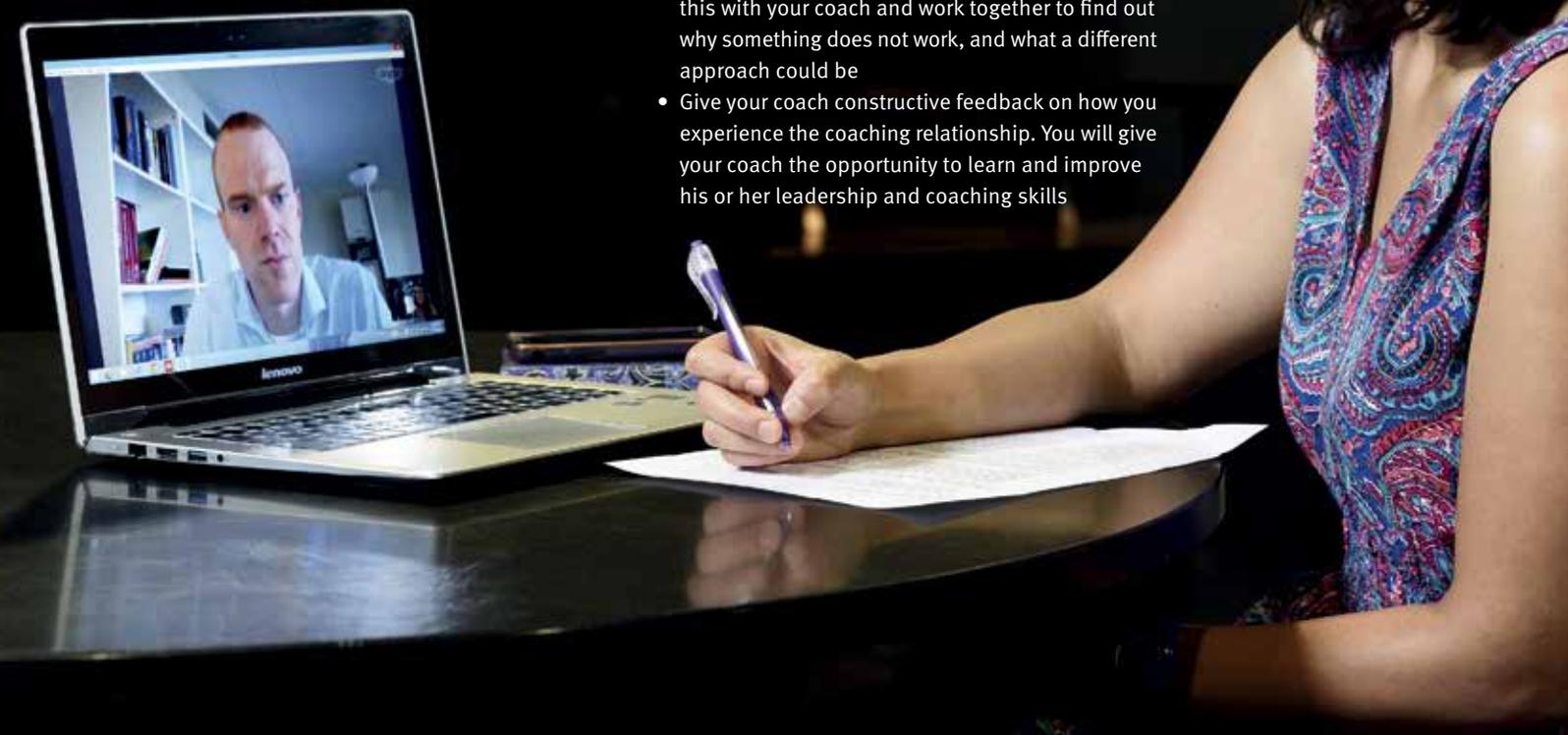
"I am fully focusing on graduating at the moment, but I know I should also think about my future. It would be useful for me to talk to alumni about their experience and network. This way I'll be more aware of the things I might come across later." **Luc Hermans, Master student Industrial Design**

What is expected of me as a coachee?

- Approach your coach with an open mind, professionalism and respect. Be willing to learn and always be open to constructive feedback
- Be proactive in establishing and keeping contact with your coach
- Initiate and plan the first meeting within three weeks. Check the website for example e-mails (English and Dutch). Understand that your coach is active in the professional field and probably gets many e-mails a day. Do not expect an e-mail reply within one day. When your coach has not responded within a week you could send a friendly reminder
- Map your ambitions, goals and needs before your first meeting and always go to your meetings fully prepared (see page 5 and 7 manual)

Communication tips

- Prepare yourself for each meeting: think about your goals and what you would like to learn from your coach. In addition to your first e-mail you can send your coach an e-mail prior to each meeting, indicating what you would like to discuss
- Ask a lot of questions: do not be afraid to ask stupid questions. Your coach will understand when you do not know things, he or she has been in the same position
- Be open and honest in your communication and be prepared to share both ideas and feelings with your coach. A coaching relation is based on trust and mutual respect
- After each contact it is advisable to take a few minutes to reflect on what was discussed. Write down any agreements and learning objectives
- Communication between people is not perfect; be patient, listen and discuss the agreements you have made with your coach to avoid miscommunication
- The tips of your coach are very valuable. It may happen that the tips you receive do not work perfectly for you, every person is different. Share this with your coach and work together to find out why something does not work, and what a different approach could be
- Give your coach constructive feedback on how you experience the coaching relationship. You will give your coach the opportunity to learn and improve his or her leadership and coaching skills



How do I join the Alumni Coach Network?

To subscribe go to the online tool (dwillo.com/tue) which is easy to use and free for TU/e students and alumni. The coaching sessions, frequency or commitment depends on your personal preferences, availability and wishes. Ask your coach for his or her preferences.

1. Find your Match!

Register to find a coach:

- Go to Alumni Coach Network (dwillo.com/tue) Click the blue “Register”-button on the right
- Enter your e-mail address, choose a password and your (mentee)role *Students; please use your TU/e e-mail address*
- Upload your profile by entering your details
- Activate your profile by clicking the link in the activation e-mail

When you have completed your registration, your profile will be visible on the website. You can now look for a coach and send a coaching request. You are supposed to initiate the first contact.

The Alumni Coach Network is on a voluntary basis, which means that it is possible that a coach rejects your request for example due to a busy schedule.

2. Plan your meetings

Together with your coach you will plan your first meeting. This can be anything from an e-mail, to a Skype or phone call, a face-to-face meeting or lunch. The way you meet is completely up to you and your coach.

- If you send your request describe your coaching question shortly. By doing so the coach of your choice can decide whether he is able to help you or not
- Please do not send a request to multiple coaches, only connect when you really want personal coaching
- Do not forget to provide your contact details and phone number in order to plan your first meeting. Discuss your preferences of meeting together

3. Share experiences

By sharing different perspectives both you and your coach might gain new insights and ideas. Share your questions and thoughts and expand your knowledge and network. Make sure you are well prepared for the first meeting. In this manual you can find preparation exercises and learn more about coaching in general.



Conversation and preparation

Before you meet, think about your coaching question and personal expectations. Try to get to know your coach first, by asking about his background, experience and – if accepted by the coach – personal life. By getting to know each other you show appreciation for his input and insights. Please take a look at the following questions and prepare your first meeting well. In your first meeting discuss your goal(s), the (frequency and form of your) meetings and mutual expectations.

How to...get to know each other?

- Where are you from (family structure, town, friends)?
- What do you do in your free time (hobbies, sports)?
- What do you expect from me as your coachee?
- How do you look back at your studies? And TU/e?
- How do you look back at your first work experiences?
- Why did you subscribe for the Alumni Coach Network as a coach?
- What do you want to learn or find out?
- What skills or qualities are you proud of? Why?
- What are your ambitions? Your dreams?
- Who inspires you most?

How to... prepare for the first meeting? (answer these questions for yourself)

- Why did you sign up for this Alumni Coach Network as coachee?
- What would you like to learn from your coach?
- What are your strengths? Maximum of 5.
- What are your weaknesses? Maximum of 5.
- Name a personal achievement you are proud of. Why?
- What was your biggest mistake?
- Where do you want to be in 5 years? What kind of person do you want to be?
- What are important motives for you when choosing a job/company? E.g. salary, growth opportunities, international opportunities, small distance from home, challenging targets etc.
- What do you admire in others?
- Which issues do you currently face? What is on your mind?



"I needed help choosing courses that would fit my future career. My coach and I are both chemical engineers, we discussed topics such as: expectations, tasks and the differences between companies."
Bart Hendriks, coachee - Master student Chemical Engineering and Chemistry



"I joined the Alumni Coach Network because I still feel connected to TU/e. Besides that it is a nice opportunity to develop my coaching skills. I really feel I was able to help the students I have coached recently."
Ard Koeken, coach-TU/e alumnus Chemical Engineering and Chemistry – senior engineer Dow Chemical Company



“During a personal coaching conversation, students quickly attain useful insights. By asking the right questions – not by giving the well-intentioned advice – they find the answers that suit them. That answer, makes all the difference!” Janneke van Baalen, coach - TU/e alumna Mechanical Engineering - owner Plané training & coaching

Your coaching question

There can be many reasons why you can request coaching to a coach. A range of topics can therefore surprise a coach if you do not provide him with sufficient information in order to prepare. By introducing your coaching question beforehand it is likely that you get more results and the coaching meets up better to your expectations. Prepare your coaching question using following theory.

First, choose a broad topic of your choice

- Career planning
- Career orientation
- Personal development
- Application and interview preparation
- Professional skills
- Leadership
- Entrepreneurship/start your own business
- International careers
- Specific career/profession interest
- Specific company/organization interest
- Networking
- Work-life balance
- Time management/personal effectiveness
- Post-master/graduate education
- Career different from educational background
- Cultural background and career
- ...

Note that you can select coaches on their knowledge in specific topics by using the search bar “mentor topics”. From this broader topic, which sets direction, you narrow down your question more specifically. For example, if your topic is career planning, you could narrow it down to: career switch, first job or how to get promotion, etc.

In my topic

I want to talk specifically about

Using the SMART System

Using the coaching theory SMART you can narrow down your question even more. By doing so you can effectively work on (quick) wins in your coaching conversation. What does SMART mean? A SMART goal is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely.

- **Specific:** A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. Set a specific goal by answering six W-questions;
Who? _____
What? _____
Where? _____
When? _____
Which (requirements/constraints)? _____
Why? _____
- **Measurable:** Establish specific criteria to see if your goal is achievable or not. Which criteria will you use to measure your progress?

- **Assignable:** Specify who will do it: Is there anyone who can help? Who will benefit from your goal and therefore can support you?

- **Realistic:** To be realistic, a goal must represent an objective towards which you are both willing and able to work. Specify your question even further if it is not realistic yet.

- **Timely:** A goal should be kept within a time frame. What's your time frame?

An example of a SMART goal: 'I will call (what) a job-recruiter (who) every day for four weeks' (when). It is also more effective when a goal is formulated positively!

The GROW Model

An important model in coaching theory is the GROW-Model. GROW stands for Goal, Reality, Options and Way Forward. The model is designed to help you think things through and drive towards improved performance. GROW is also SMART, but it provides your coach with more and structured

background information to context your SMART goal. Think through the following questions, test and update your SMART coaching question. By using the GROW model you can work to a concrete answer to your coaching question.

Goal Questions

(for both the session and the coachee's short and long-term goals)- Coaching starts with the Goal; What is the objective or desired outcome? It must be specific and measurable, think SMART again.

Reality Questions

The goal is related to the current reality: What is the current situation? What is stopping the goal from being reached at this moment?

Optional Questions

What choices do coachees have? What different journeys can they choose to reach the goal? Try to avoid making explicit suggestions on the coachee's behalf.

Way Forward Questions

What's the next step? What do they have to do tomorrow in order to reach their goal (soon)? This is also known as 'Will' or 'Wrap-Up.' Gain commitment to an action and a follow-up if required. If possible, try to find actions that boost motivation. As coach, identify any risks or barriers and remove them.

1.	What do you want to achieve?	Where are you now with your goal?	What are your options?	Which options work best for you?
2.	What is your ultimate, long-term goal?	On a scale of 1 to 10 where are you?	How have you tackled this or a similar situation in the past?	What is your next step? Write it down.
3.	What is important to you now?	What has contributed to your success so far?	What could you do differently?	What actions will you take?
4.	What would you like to get out of the next 60 minutes?	What skills, knowledge and attributes do you have?	Who else has encountered a similar situation?	When are you going to start?
5.	On what areas or issue do you want to work?	What progress have you made so far?	Which option feels right to you?	How will you make sure that you will actually do it?
6.	Describe your perfect world.	Does this goal conflict with anything else you are doing?	If anything was possible what would you do?	Who will help and support you? When?
7.	What would you like to have as a result of this coaching session?	What is working well?	What could you do if you had more time, money, freedom?	How will you know you have been successful?
8.	What steps can you identify that will be essential to achieving your long-term goal?	What is required of you?	If this constraint was removed, would it change things?	On a scale of 1 to 10 how committed are you to taking the agreed actions?
9.	What will make you feel this time has been well spent?	What can you control?	What do you need to stop doing to achieve this goal?	What will you do to get this closer to a 10?
10.	How will you know when you have achieved your goal?	What deadlines do you have?	What obstacles stand in your way?	When shall we meet again to check progress?

Contact If you have specific questions or you would like to have more information, please contact the Community Manager of the TU/e Alumni Coach Network: coachnetwork@tue.nl