

# Mentorship holds invaluable space in B2B credit

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Regardless of where you are in your career, learning from those with more experience is critical for professional growth and success. One effective way to do this is through mentorship—a relationship where a more experienced professional guides and nurtures the development of another. Whether you're looking for advice, advanced training or support, their knowledge and expertise can help you achieve your short and long-term goals.

Hear from credit professionals how mentorship has helped them in their careers:

## #1 Receive guidance and enhance learning

Experienced mentors have first-hand practical advice, helping build confidence while fostering career growth. “In a field that demands a strategic balance between risk management and business strategy, mentorship enhances professional expertise and creates opportunities for career advancement,” said Brian Wallace, director of corporate credit at N.B. Handy Industries (Lynchburg, VA). “For instance, my predecessor, Jeff Dower, was instrumental in grooming and shaping me into the regional credit manager that I grew to be. I also learned how to navigate tough conversations with stakeholders by understanding and gathering from multiple perspectives while ensuring that credit policies align both with financial prudence and strategic business growth.”

## #2 Gain fresh perspective

Each person has their own unique skills and experiences, therefore having multiple mentors can provide you with a well-rounded perspective on your journey. “Whether you're trying to attain a new skill or develop existing ones, having mentors who excel in specific areas can really benefit you,” said Alaina Worden, [CCE](#), credit and collections manager at CECO, Inc. (Portland, OR). “I say, don't be afraid to reach out to several different people for guidance and support. You'll never know unless you try.”

It's important to seek out mentors who inspire you and align with your career goals. Whether that's connecting with leaders within your organization, at industry events or through professional networks. “If you don't take the initiative to reach out, you might miss valuable opportunities for potential connections,” Wallace said. “An effective mentor should challenge you, offer constructive feedback and genuinely invest in your personal growth.”

## #3 Improve relationships

Mentorship can teach you the soft skills and strategies needed to tackle challenges and day-to-day operations. For example, in NACM's [Mentors and Mentees Thought Leaders Forum](#), Wallace learned more about emotional intelligence (EQ) and how it helps build relationships. “One notable meeting, Nancy Watson-Pistole, [CCE](#), [ICCE](#), discussed the key to building trust, establishing credibility and the powerful role that empathy and emotional intelligence play in fostering trust,” Wallace said. “Since then, I've truly connected with the idea of focusing on empathy and EQ to create a space where individuals feel safe, respected and confident in our relationship, ultimately strengthening trust. I want my team to know that I am here for them, that I support, trust and believe in them.”

**The bottom line:** “I think people come into your life for a reason,” Worden said. “We are all learning and growing continuously. Surrounding yourself with people from your past and present only benefits your growth. Then, later you are able to pay it forward by helping someone else coming up in their career.”