



2025 Kick-off Breakfast

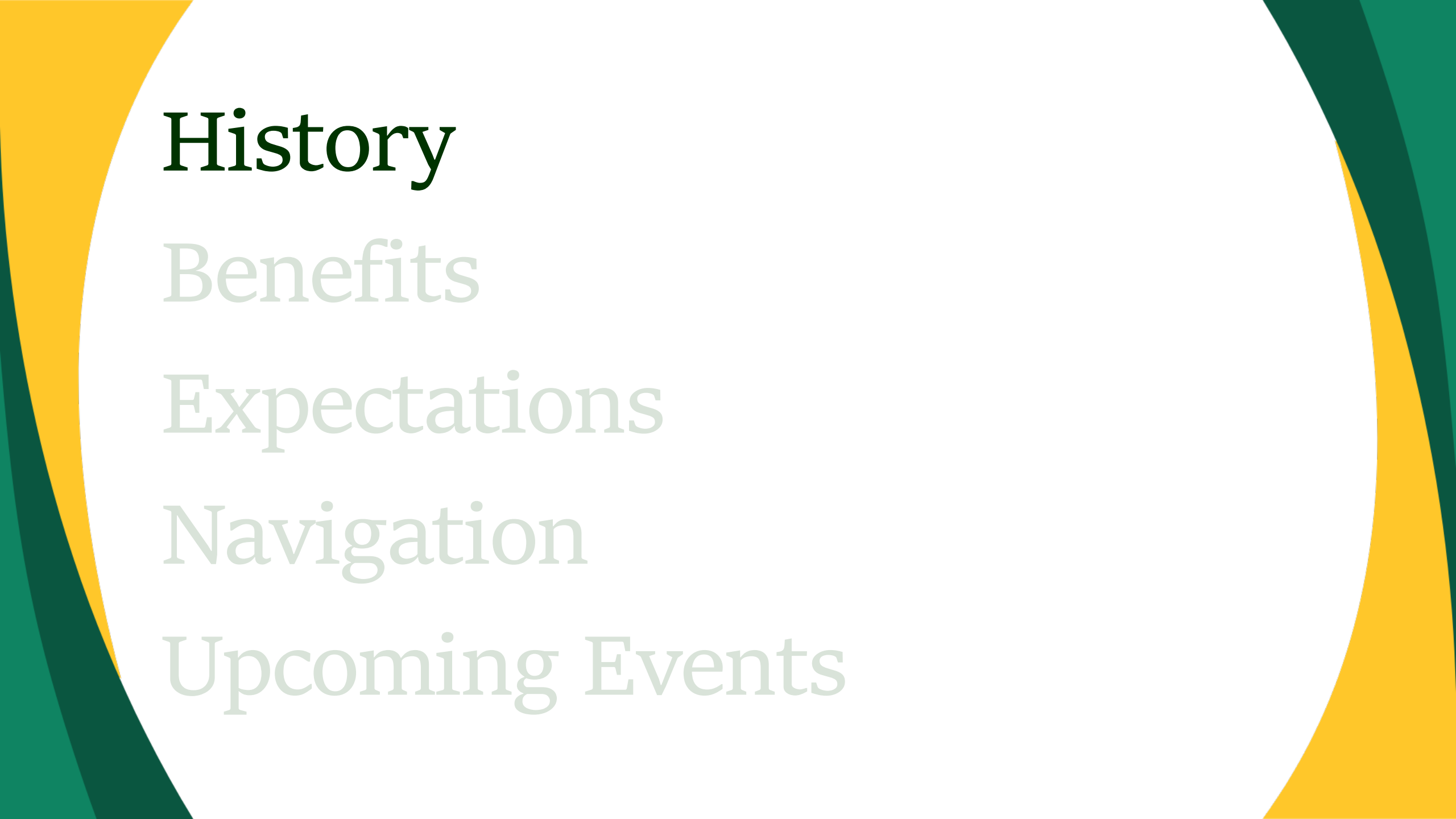
Welcome

Kathryn Birkeland, PhD

Ronald G. and Kaye S. Olson Dean

NDSU BUSINESS
CONNECTIONS





History

Benefits

Expectations

Navigation

Upcoming Events

History

2015-2016

- 15 Mentorship Pairs
- Sophomores & Juniors

2025-2026

- 72 Mentorship Pairs
- Freshmen-PhD

11

SESSIONS

500

STUDENTS

300

MENTORS



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Mentorship: A Two-Way Street

Bridging the generational gap: Learning from each other

6 GENERATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

1928 - 1945

TRADITIONALISTS	0.4%
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1981 - 1996

MILLENNIALS	36%
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1946 - 1964

BABY BOOMERS	13%
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1997 - 2009

GENERATION Z	20%
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1965 - 1980

GENERATION X	30%
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2010 - 2024

GENERATION ALPHA	
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Surprising Stats

Symptoms of a changing environment

Employers say Gen Z Grads...

Struggled with eye contact	53%
Asked for unreasonable compensation	50%
Dressed inappropriately	47%
Used inappropriate language	21%
Refused to turn on camera during a virtual interview	21%

Flip the Perspective

What Mentors Can Learn From Gen Z

- **Adaptability:** Gen Z has grown up navigating rapid change - technology, social shifts, and global uncertainty. They're quick learners.
- **Purpose-driven mindset:** They value authenticity and social impact, reminding us that meaningful work matters.
- **Digital fluency:** They know how to leverage technology to communicate, build communities, and innovate.
- **Mental health awareness:** They're normalizing conversations about balance and well-being that past generations avoided.
- **Diversity and inclusion:** They're more open-minded and expect inclusive workplaces.

Mutual Benefits

That's what makes Business Connections so powerful.

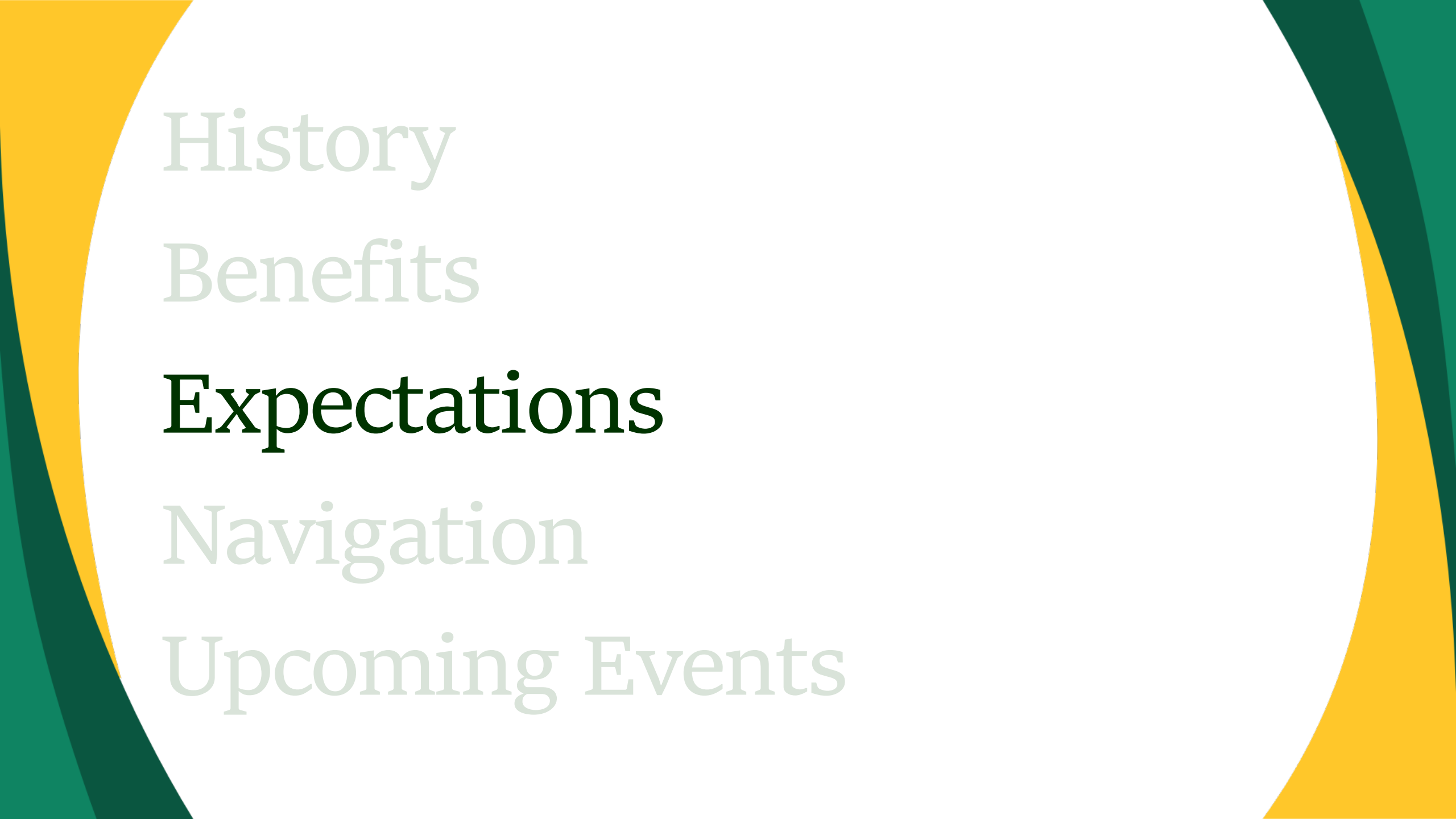
Mentors gain:

- Fresh perspectives on emerging trends
- Insights into recruiting and retaining Gen Z talent
- Opportunities to practice adaptive leadership

Mentees gain:

- Career guidance and real-world wisdom
- Networking and communication skills
- Confidence and professional identity

Together, we build the future of business.



History

Benefits

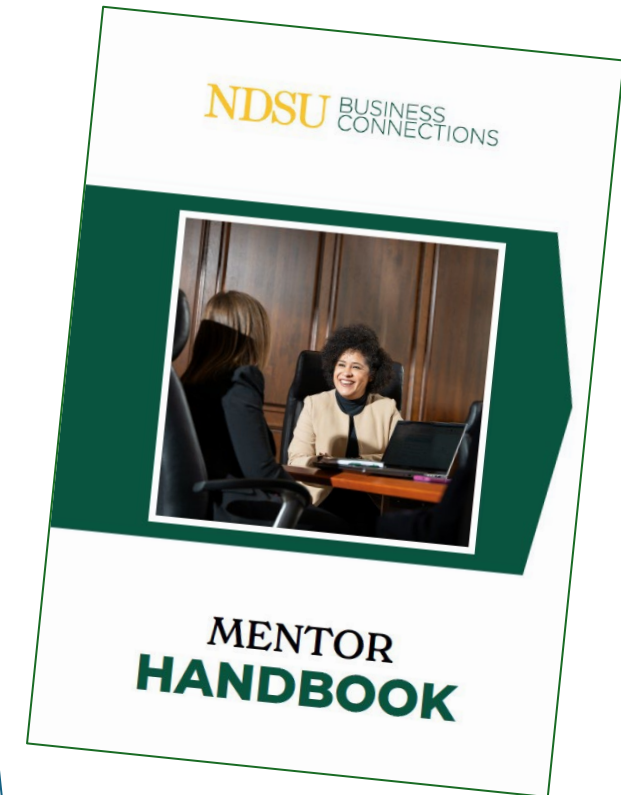
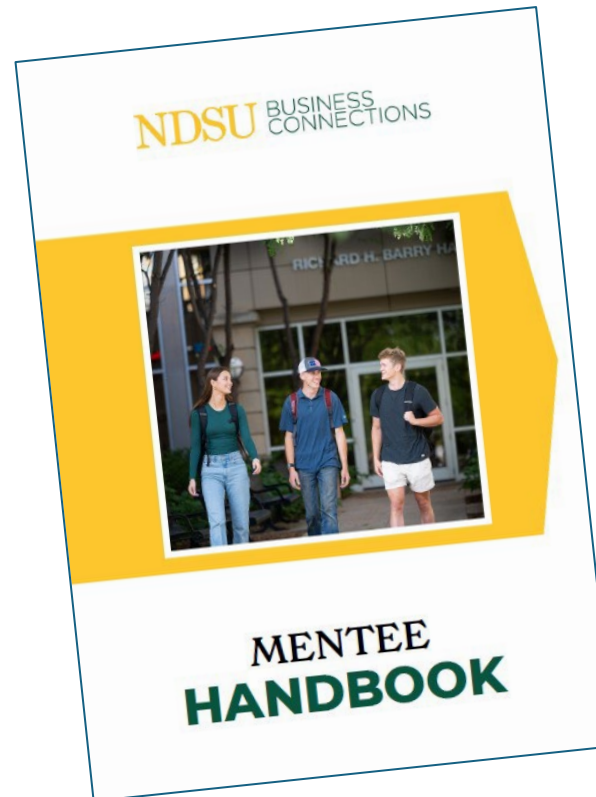
Expectations

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Expectations

- *Students* are expected to take the lead
- Develop goals and plan activities that will help you reach those goals
- Connect at least *six* times



Outcomes

Exposure to Real-World Experience

- Job shadowing, day-in-the-life stories, or practical advice
- Workplace culture, expectations, and challenges

Clarity on Career Goals

- Different industries, roles and paths
- Insight into what interests you, and what doesn't

Connection

- One strong professional relationship
- Network of professionals who you can connect with

Growth in Professional Skills

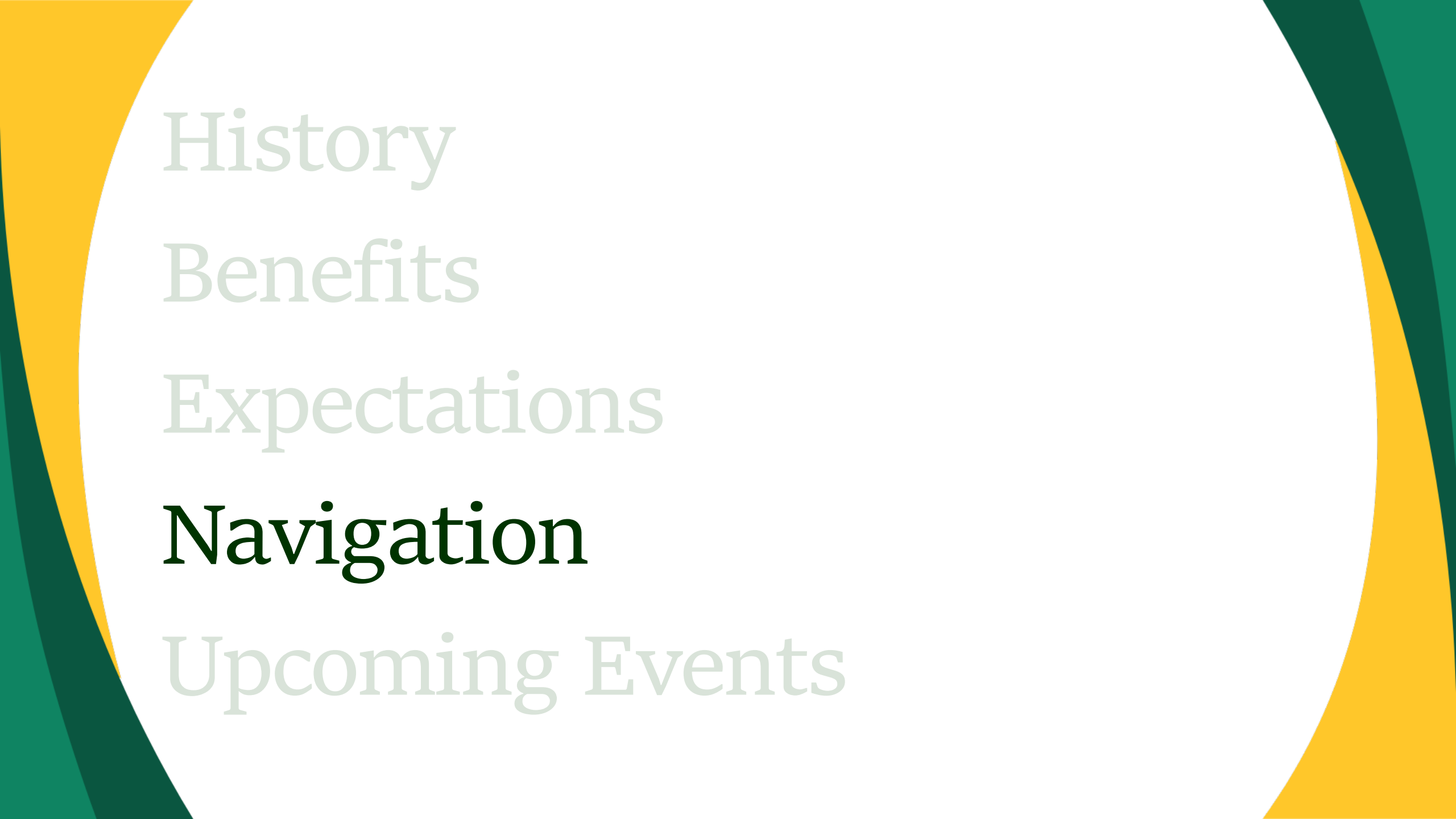
- Communication/Networking: Online, in-person, events
- Professional Branding: Resume, Cover letter, LinkedIn, Interview prep

Activities & Ideas (p. 6 & 7)

1. Company tours or virtual walk-throughs
2. Informational interviews
3. Learn about your mentor's day-to-day work
4. Meet your mentor's colleagues
5. Organizational overview/interview
6. Review company materials or case studies
7. Career guidance and professional development advice
8. Resume review or mock interview

Hot Seat Panel

- *Chase Balken*
 - *Senior, Marketing, 3rd year mentee*
- *Lucylia Paul*
 - *Senior, Business Administration, 3rd year mentee*
- *Brandon Schulze*
 - *New Product Development Lead, Doosan Bobcat*
 - *3rd year mentor + 3 years as a mentee*
- *Connor Johnson*
 - *Owner of CoJo Consulting and Co-Owner of Sundog Saucery*
 - *2nd year mentor*



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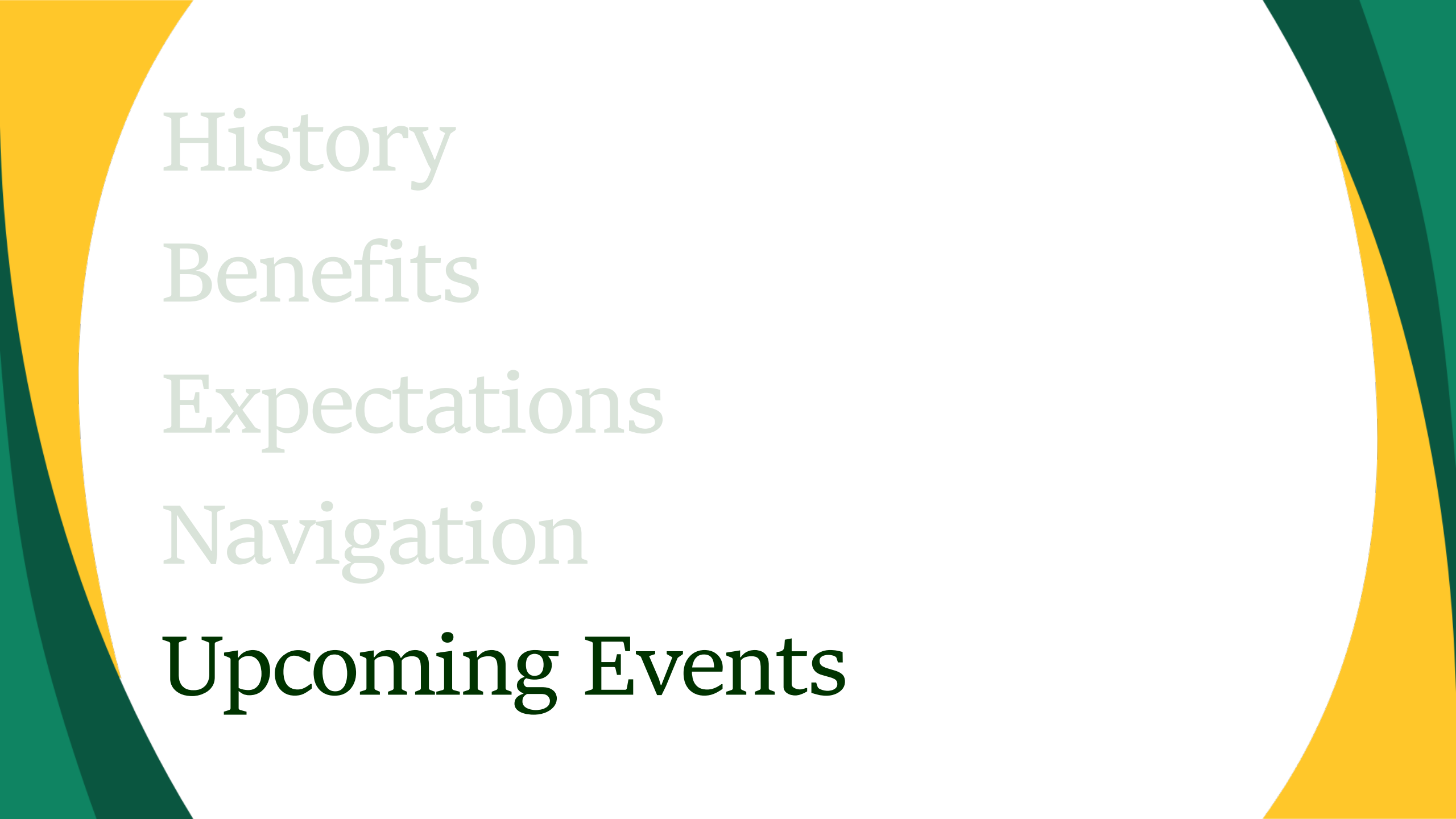
Expectations

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Upcoming Events

Leadership Drift to Radical Clarity:

Navigating Your Career Roadmap for Authentic Success

Thursday, January 22

8am – 9:30am

Barry Hall | Louise Auditorium



RSVP by Monday, January 5.



Happy Mentoring!

Connection Time

- *Review Mentor/Mentee Handbooks*
- *Set next meeting time*
 - *Date/time/location, and what you want to discuss/learn/do*
- *Discuss communication preferences*
 - *How often do you want to meet and/or connect*
 - *Email/text/phone/xinspire*
- *Discuss mid-year event – Leadership Drift to Radical Clarity*
 - *Thursday, January 22, 8am, Barry Hall*
 - *Can you attend?*
 - *If yes, RSVP by January 5*
using the QR code →

