



Sustain: Touchstone Mentorship

June 16, 2022

We are pleased to have partnered with The Akanksha Foundation, a not-for-profit organization that influences systemic educational reform in India and Global Mentorship Initiative (GMI), in the United States, that develops access to an ecosystem of opportunity and career placement, worldwide. Our collaboration supported a pro bono mentorship program that addresses bridging the challenging gap between education and employability in India, within Economically Weaker Sections.

Planned and coordinated by GMI, the program followed a structured sequence of 14 sessions, using pooled resources and guidelines via an online platform. The coursework covered setting SMART goals and career planning, professional networking via LinkedIn to target a job search, developing skills towards building a resume and interviewing, and finally, learning to distinguish oneself in the

workplace, being evaluated and continuing professional development. GMI supported the mentor-mentee partnership through regular communication and feedback, ensuring the efficient flow of each module.

Careful thought matched a Touchstone mentor with an Akanksha mentee. Each meeting was devoted to building the soft skills and confidence required to transcend distance and difference while aiming for transferability in the global workplace. Through this effort, our lawyers provided their time and professional guidance by sharing their business skills and personal experiences with Akanksha's Alumni, at present graduating college students in Pune, India.

Addressing the challenges faced in securing one's first placement, this association highlights the tremendous need in guiding and mentoring underserved youth towards gaining potential employment. Common problems

faced by our mentees, such as access to technology and the internet to conduct our meetings, time constraints with the students' personal schedules, focus of a clear goal and vision, proficiency in the English language and diffidence with expectations of professional business norms, protocol, and culture were many times stumbling blocks to making progress.

The goal and outcome of this valuable involvement emphasizes the crying need for human connection, empathy, and professional support in diverse communities, worldwide. By seeking and building global professional networks, this endeavour proves that 'it takes a village to raise a child,' and particularly in today's globalized, commoditized economy where opportunity is not always available nor egalitarian. We, at Touchstone Partners remain cognizant and committed to advancing equity and access through education, an enormous force of equalization for the advancement of all humanity.

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