IEMF™

The Facilitator Guide

How to run the IEMF™ Curriculum with the Field Guide

Five weeks. Two hours a week. You do not need to be an expert.

Inclusive Economic Mobility Framework™
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How to use this guide

This guide is for the person standing in front of the room. It assumes you know your people and may never have taught entrepreneurship. You do not need to be an expert. You need to be prepared, curious, and willing to let participants do most of the talking.

What you need

- A participant Field Guide for every person. It is the workbook. They write in it.
- This guide, and your tailored agenda from IEMF if you asked for one. The agenda picks the level and sections that fit your group.
- The Pre/Post Assessment Kit: the participant assessment, the Excel tracker and the one-page outcomes report.
- Meeting Students Where They Are. Read it before Week 1.
- A clock everyone can see, a flipchart or whiteboard, pens, and sticky notes.

The five weeks at a glance

Week	Sections	Participants leave with
1	Access · The Idea	A sense of belonging, a FAIL Forward™ score, a tested idea
2	Customers · Marketing	Real customer words and a marketing test
3	Money Basics · Finance	A Monthly Number and an MVP test plan
4	Legal · Team · Pitch build	A structure choice, a roles map, a pitch draft
5	Pitch · 30-Day Action Plan™	A final pitch and a dated plan

This is the Ideation level. For people who are launching or growing, see "Going deeper" after Week 5.

> **Say it your way**
> The "line to say" is a model, not a script. Use your own words. The point is to be clear and kind, not to recite.

Other ways to run it

Mode	How it works
Full program	Run all five weeks in order. This is the standard way.
Embedded	Pull a single week or activity into a class or program you already run. Each activity says how long it takes.
Self-paced with check-ins	Hand participants the Field Guide. Meet weekly for 20 minutes, ask the "Check before next week" questions, and answer what comes up.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Set up the room, and yourself

Most of what makes this work happens before Week 1.

Your mindset comes first

The most important variable in any learning environment is what the educator believes about the people in the room before a lesson begins. Meeting Students Where They Are names six practices. Here they are in short form:

1. Discard your preconceptions. A file, a record or a label is not the person.

2. Meet people where they actually are. Start from their starting point, not the one you planned for.

3. Respect the life they have already lived. Hardship teaches things no curriculum covers. Name it as knowledge.

4. Hold high standards and real belief. Lower the barrier to access. Do not lower the destination.

5. Learning moves in both directions. Participants know things you do not. Say so when you learn from them.

6. Support people as they are. Hold behavior expectations firmly. Release identity expectations.

The room

- Chairs in a circle or at small tables, not rows. People should face each other.
- Wall space for the agreement, and food if your budget allows. A snack is part of Access.
- 8 to 25 people works best. For more, add a second facilitator.

The community agreement

Use Creating Culture with Intention™ and the Community Agreement Template (both free at mattaconnell.com/toolkit) to plan this before Week 1. Come with three starter norms and ask the group to add its own. Post it every session. Refer back to it when something goes wrong.

Your story

Week 1 asks you to share a short true story about entrepreneurship, a career change or a turning point. It is the part most likely to feel awkward, so prepare it. A good story is true and specific, is about a turning point or a mistake and not only a success, takes five to ten minutes, and ends with a question for the group. No story that fits? Use a local entrepreneur or a former participant, with permission.

A simple structure
Where I was. What went wrong or what I did not know. Who or what helped. What I would tell someone starting today.

Access: what participants need to stay

Access is not only who gets into the program. It is whether people feel they belong in the room, and whether outside pressures make it hard to stay. Before Week 1, decide how you will:

- Check in with each person between sessions, even briefly. A text, a call or a note.
- Provide food or a snack.
- Hand people off warmly when they need more than you can offer: housing, food, legal help, transportation. Know a name, not just an agency.
- Make materials readable for different needs: large print, audio, extra time, a partner reader. Design for it from the start, not as an exception.

When people leave

Some participants will not finish. That happens in every program, especially when life priorities change. It does not mean the program failed, or that the person did. Decide in advance what you will say:

> **If someone goes quiet or stops coming**
>
> "We noticed you have been away. There is nothing you owe us. If you want to come back, there is a seat for you. If you need something, here is who to call."

Keep the door open. Note who left and when, so you can follow up with the next group.

Equity checkpoints to keep in every session

Checkpoint	What it looks like
Name barriers as structural	Say that barriers like credit history, collateral and banking exclusion come from systems, not from personal failure.
Validate community knowledge	Treat what people know from their neighborhood and family as real market research. Interviews with neighbors and relatives are a strength.
Every participant pitches	No opt-outs. Frame the first pitch as practice and celebrate each one as an act of courage.
Use Main Street examples	Salons, food vendors, childcare and trades, not tech startups.
Say what underpricing looks like	Name it as a common pattern to watch for, not a personal flaw.
Monthly Number is practical	It is a planning tool, not a poverty assessment. Honor irregular income and family obligations.
No one leaves without a next step	Every presenter gets specific feedback and at least one referral.

WEEK 1 · ACCESS AND THE IDEA

You belong here. Now test an idea.

Goal: people feel they belong, know their mindset, and name one real need worth solving.

Purpose. People take risks only in rooms where they belong. This session builds that room, then gets each person to name one real unmet need and start testing it.

Before the session

☐ Community agreement drafted, with three starter norms.

☐ Your story ready, under ten minutes.

☐ Pre-assessment copies printed.

☐ Resource list ready for the barrier map.

The 120 minutes

Min	What happens	Field Guide
10	Pre-assessment, on arrival.	(Kit)
15	Welcome, introductions, and the community agreement.	
10	Your story. End with one question for the group.	
10	Discussion: “What does opportunity look like where you work or live?”	
10	“I am the right person…” Write it, then share with a partner.	Access
15	Barrier → Resource map in pairs.	Access
15	FAIL Forward™ Self-Assessment and your lowest letter.	Access
20	Opportunity Spotting. Each person names one unmet need.	The Idea
10	Introduce the Business Idea Validator™. Start Questions 1 and 2.	The Idea
5	Wrap-up. Homework: three conversations. Preview Week 2.	Tracker

What to teach

Say it in your own words. These are the ideas behind each activity.

Access: FAIL Forward™ Self-Assessment

Failure is information, not a verdict. Your lowest letter is not a label. It is the best place to start.

F: you treat mistakes as a verdict. Practice naming what you assumed and what actually happened. A: you wait to feel ready. Practice launching a small version. I: you hold on to the plan. Practice changing one thing because of what you learned. L: you power through a bad setup. Practice fixing the environment instead of enduring it.