

EMPLOYER MENTOR GUIDANCE NOTES

Mentoring is a formal or informal relationship established between an experienced, knowledgeable employee and an inexperienced or new employee. The purpose of a mentor is to help the new employee quickly absorb the organisation's cultural and social norms.

The mentor can help the new employee grow in their current position and become ready for new jobs and career opportunities. Mentoring can also assist an employee who is new to a specific job or area of responsibility, to quickly learn what they need to know to succeed in their job and role.

A mentor can serve as a sounding board as the new employee is assimilated into the company and help the employee become more knowledgeable and effective in their current job. They can help employees reach new levels of knowledge, sophistication, and career development.

The best mentoring relationships involve the exchange of a particular body of knowledge that helps the new employee quickly come up to speed as a contributor within your organisation.

THE THREE C'S OF MENTORSHIP

- Role 1: **Consultant.** This is the most obvious role for a mentor to play. ...
- Role 2: **Counsellor.** Listen. ...
- Role 3: **Cheerleader.** In addition to all of the constructive feedback and advice that a mentor can give, they should also provide support and enthusiasm.

THE MENTORING BUDDY

- In many organisations, a buddy is assigned to a new employee for new employee orientation and on boarding. The buddy is usually a co-worker and/or a more experienced peer of the new employee.
- The mentoring buddy is expected to do everything that he or she can to assist the new employee to become fully knowledgeable about and integrated into the organisation. The buddy relationship can last a long time, and the employees may even become friends.
- A good buddy provides additional assistance such as taking the new employee out to lunch with a small group. Another responsibility of a buddy is making sure that the employee is meeting the appropriate managers and members of the senior team.

"Mentoring is about much more than telling someone what to do - it requires working with employees to make decisions, solve problems and develop skills."

TOP TIPS FOR COACHING AND MENTORING EMPLOYEES

Build an Authentic Connection

A critical step to becoming a great mentor is making your mentee feel comfortable. This requires an authentic connection where both parties feel respected and understood.

- > **Greet employees warmly and personally. Remember that the person with the most power or authority is responsible for making the other person feel comfortable, so always be kind and warm with your employees.**
- > **Begin with a human connection. Ask open-ended questions such as, “How is it going?” or “How was your weekend?” so that the conversation can begin with a more casual and natural tone.**
- > **Maintain relaxed posture. Relax posture when meeting with an employee. If the employee makes a particularly sensitive or important point, lean in to indicate interest.**
- > **Practice humility and humour. Both humility and humour are grounded in vulnerability; these qualities lay the ground for authentic connections.**

Recognize Their Strengths

As a mentor, it is your job to help your mentees reach their full potential. To accomplish this, it is best that you help them understand and build upon their strengths. A good leader will pay attention to what people do outside of work to see what their talents are. As you get to know your employees, pay attention to what they do for fun and for free to see how this aligns with their roles in the workplace.

Earn Their Trust

In an effective mentor and mentee relationship, there is a high level of trust which gives employees the confidence needed to share their goals and concerns. Building a trusting relationship takes time and patience. There are daily behaviours that will help earn the trust of mentees, including:

- > **Give credit to your team for their accomplishments**
- > **Model the behaviour that you'd expect from your mentee**
- > **Complete or assist with assignments for employees who need time off**
- > **Be transparent and approachable regarding tough decisions and feedback**

Identify and Pursue Stretch Goals

As a mentor, don't be afraid to encourage your mentee to aim high with “stretch goals, stretch goals are lofty ambitions that can only be reached by taking big leaps.

To begin the stretch process, you should speak with your employees about where they see themselves in their careers in five or ten years. You should then work with your mentees and the college to define a path to their goals with measurable milestones. This will help to ensure that the mentees don't get overwhelmed or lose confidence.