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MENTOR GUIDE FOR TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS STAFF

1. Mentor Guide for Transport and Logistics Staff

The purpose of this guide is to provide Mentor's with guidance on how to assist participants of the Transport and Logistics Training Program.

2. What is a Mentor?

A Mentor is any experienced Transport and Logistics worker who is **willing** to undertake a formal role in assisting a Trainee in his or her learning and development.

Mentoring is defined as a 'deliberate pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with a lesser-skilled or experienced one, with the agreed upon goal of having the lesser-skilled person grow and develop specific competencies'.

3. What are the attributes of a successful Mentor?

It is anticipated that mentors participating in the Mentoring Program would possess the following attributes:

Knowledge

- in-depth knowledge and a number of years experience in the Transport and Logistics sector
- wide network of professional/business contacts

Skills

- communication and interpersonal skills
- ability to facilitate learning
- ability to provide feedback
- analytical skills

Attitudes

- willingness to share expertise and time
- commitment to helping the professional development of colleagues less-skilled or experienced in their area of expertise
- commitment to the Transport and Logistics industry
- respect for colleagues

4. What is required of a Mentor?

A Mentor's involvement is vital to the success of developing a Trainee's skills in the workplace. Whilst many people undertaking this training program will have previous Transport and Logistics and/or general transport industry experience, this experience may not extend across the full range of industry skills.

The Transport and Logistics Training Program has been designed as a workplace learning program. This requires each Trainee to complete a number of Learner's Workbooks and undertake workplace activities as part of their learning.

The Mentor(s) role will be to:

- Exchange information and ideas with your Trainee
- Act as a sounding board for ideas
- Suggest sources of information that may help the Trainee in their studies
- Help your Trainee to network with appropriate groups or individuals
- Facilitate the transfer of practical skills to your Trainee. This may involve liaising with management to secure work opportunities for the Trainee in particular activities
- Share expertise and experience with the Trainee
- Be accessible and encouraging
- Give honest feedback on things that are well done and on things that could be done differently
- Maintain confidentiality
- Respect and Support your Trainee
- Ensure the Trainee has sufficient time allocated each week to undertake training in a relaxed and supportive environment

5. What Mentoring is NOT?

Traditionally mentoring is seen as something that an older person undertakes by being 'in charge of' or in a position of influence over another person (usually a younger person). Within the Transport and Logistics Training Program, the term Mentor refers to an experienced person being a 'coach' for a Trainee and assisting them in ways outlined in point 4.

A Mentoring partnership is definitely not about:

- The Mentor exerting power or unduly influencing the Trainee
- The Mentor dominating or controlling the Trainee
- The Trainee relying heavily on the Mentor
- The Mentor assisting someone with the expectation of a return favour

6. How much time will the Mentoring role require?

This is an extremely difficult question to answer. Just as with new employees, some Trainees may require quite a deal of support particularly during the early stages of the Program. Others will require very little support.

The actual level of support provided will depend on a number of factors including the Trainee's:

- Previous Transport Industry and general work experience.
- Length and 'depth' of Transport and Logistics experience
- Level of initiative and independence
- Current role and responsibilities within their present job

In addition, some Mentors will see their role as a 'natural' staff development process and dedicate a greater amount of time to coaching the Trainee than is actually necessary under the Mentor format. This will definitely provide benefits to the participant and simply means that the Mentor has extended the role beyond the basic Mentor requirements.

As a rough guide each Mentor would need to be prepared to spend between 1 and 2 hours per week with their Trainee to meet the basic Mentor responsibilities

7. What are the benefits of being a Mentor?

The Mentor role is a voluntary one and should be filled by a person with a genuine desire to assist a fellow employee in their skills development.

In return for their involvement Mentors will gain:

- Improved skills in listening, counseling coaching and leadership
- Improved understanding and appreciation of the capabilities of other workers
- Added perspectives and approaches to a range of issues
- Greater understanding of barriers at various levels within organizations
- Personal satisfaction from helping people with potential to realise their goals
- Reaffirmation of their professional knowledge, experience and skills
- The opportunity to share their knowledge, experience and skills with colleagues
- Backup and support from Pentrans Consulting personnel

8. What are the benefits to the Trainee?

The Trainee benefits in a number of ways by having an on-site Mentor available during their learning journey.

These benefits include:

- Improved confidence, motivation and skills development
- Development of new/different perspectives
- Challenges to use talents and share expertise
- An improved support base to achieve goals
- Accelerated learning and personal development opportunities

Attached at the end of this Guide are samples of a formal Mentor Commitment Contract and a Development Plan. Formalisation of the Mentor/Trainee partnership through completion of these forms is highly recommended.

Mentor Commitment Contract

I, _____ agree to act as a workplace mentor and coach for _____ during the course of his/her formal development in the field of Transport and Logistics and transport industry operations.

I have willingly volunteered to act in this role and will actively assist the participant to develop and practice the skills to be learned by during their training.

I agree to provide support for the participant and, where necessary guide the participant to other sources where information and assistance can be found.

Should I be unable to perform the role outlined above for any reason, I will identify and implement alternative mentor(s)/arrangements to ensure the participant maintains uninterrupted access to a workplace mentor for the duration of their formal learning period.

Mentor Name

Participant Name

Mentor Signature

Participant Signature

Date

Development Plan Guidelines

Completion of the Development Plan format shown on the next page is optional but also highly recommended.

It has been included to provide a suggested format to those Trainees and Mentors who wish to formally structure and timetable the Trainees learning activities.

Your goals will ideally include practical skills development in a specific task or area, completion of individual Learners Workbooks, research activities in addition to other approaches to learning that the Mentor and Trainee feel appropriate.

Development Goal:

In this space list the goals you as a Trainee wish to achieve. Make the statement in terms of the outcome or end results, rather than the process you will use to get there. It is suggested that you start off with a small number of initial goals and add new goals as you progress in your learning

Action Steps:

List detailed, sequential steps for how to achieve this goal.

Target Dates:

For each action step, enter a target date for completion of the step. Pencil these dates in your daily planner to help keep on schedule.

Status/Progress Comments:

The Trainee should use this column to prepare for discussion with his or her mentor. Enter comments about the status of each action, progress made since the last meeting with the Mentor, etc.

When appropriate, note concerns that you wish to discuss with your Mentor. Enter date of discussion.

Add additional development goals, action steps and target dates when appropriate.

Development Plan

Name of Trainee:..... Mentor:.....

Date:

Development Goals	Action Steps	Target Dates	Status/Progress Comments