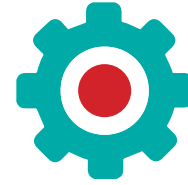


# APPRENTICESHIP MENTORING PRINCIPLES



## What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a required part of any Registered Apprenticeship Program in Utah. A mentoring relationship is between two individuals, the mentor and apprentice. The mentor fills the role of an advisor, coach and teacher throughout the apprenticeship. Mentoring makes a difference to effectively transfer the knowledge from experienced workers to the apprentices. The mentor has greater professional experience and is open and willing to share that experience with others. The apprentice, as the learner, is committed to continuous improvement, taking responsibility for the development of their own knowledge, skills and abilities.

## Benefits of Mentoring

Mentoring has many positive benefits for both businesses and the apprentices involved. These include:

- Increased employee retention
- Improved motivation and employee engagement
- Effective transfer of knowledge and experience from mentor to apprentice
- Increased innovation and creativity
- Improved communication and stronger team work
- Complements and reinforces related technical instruction

## How Does Mentoring Work in an Apprenticeship?

As a key element of an apprenticeship program, mentoring is flexible and can happen as often as needed and in a variety of settings. Some of the ideal circumstances might include:

- Targeting the growth and development of specific individuals in the organization to mentor apprentices
- Preparing the apprentice for the opportunity to take on new roles and responsibilities
- Increasing confidence and motivation of the apprentice
- Long horizon growth. Mentoring is very effective as a long-term relationship dedicated to the growth of the apprentice over time and fosters a culture of life-long learning within the business

- Transferring knowledge and expertise from the more experienced employee to the less experienced apprentice
- Focusing on developing the apprentice as a whole for continuous professional development

## KEY ATTRIBUTES OF A SUCCESSFUL MENTOR

The mentor actively leverages opportunities to use their experience and knowledge to advise, guide and train the apprentice.

### Attributes of a successful mentor might include:

- **A desire to help others develop** – You should genuinely have a desire to help others grow and be successful.
- **Superior communication** – You need the ability to clearly communicate ideas and feedback.
- **Self-awareness** – You should be aware of personal strengths and weaknesses.
- **Active listener** – You need to be willing to simply listen and validate the thoughts of the apprentice.
- **Feedback** – You must be comfortable providing honest and constructive feedback.
- **Available and flexible** – You need to be prepared to commit time and effort to the success of the apprentice.
- **Praise and motivation** – You must be comfortable giving regular praise and recognition of success.
- **Challenge and encourage** – You need to be comfortable challenging and encouraging the apprentice to stretch, grow and develop.

## KEY ATTRIBUTES OF A SUCCESSFUL APPRENTICE

While the apprentice relies heavily on the knowledge, experience and guidance of the mentor, the primary role of growth and development lies with the apprentice. The apprentice must be accountable for their own improvement and success.



### Attributes of a successful apprentice might include:

- **Commitment to self-development** – They must be committed to their own growth and development.
- **Open communication** – They must be open and communicate needs and concerns clearly.
- **Open to feedback** – They actively seek advice and feedback from their mentor.
- **Active listener** – They actively listen and ask thoughtful questions.
- **Commitment and dedication** – They will need to stay committed for the duration of the apprenticeship.
- **Open to change** – They are committed to accepting feedback and making necessary changes and improvements as needed.
- **Giving feedback** – They need to be comfortable giving feedback to the mentor about what is and is not working.

## APPROACHES TO WORKING WITH APPRENTICES

Identifying and engaging in various approaches to working with apprentices can be a key to long-term success.

Approaches might include:

- **A collaborative approach** — Ask questions, find out what the apprentice knows, assist in moving forward in the process, assess what they know and can do and find out how much they are willing and able to do.
- **A strength-based approach** — Focus on trusting and workable relationships, empower people to take a lead in their own apprenticeship process, work in collaborative ways to mutually agree upon goals, draw upon the personal resources of motivation and create a sustainable change through learning and experiential growth.



## CREATING AN INCLUSIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Apprentices take a non-traditional path to the work environment. Because of this, apprentices have various backgrounds and abilities. Individuals will come into the work environment with

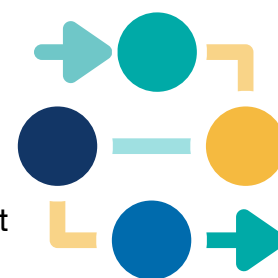
different experiences and it is important that the mentor get to know the apprentice as an individual. Some considerations include:

- Different generations — Be mindful of different attitudes about work ethics, authority and relationships.
- Diverse backgrounds — Be aware of different ethnicities, religious backgrounds and countries of origin. This is an opportunity for both the mentor and apprentice to learn about different cultures and to provide support in the workplace.
- Gender — There is an increasing number of women entering non-traditional occupations. Communication, respect and working together will be a key for success.

## HOW TO MAKE THE MAGIC HAPPEN — THE MENTORING PROCESS

### STEP 1 — IDENTIFY

Identify which mentoring approach will be most effective to the type of mentoring you are considering. Determine the timing for the mentoring. Will it be primarily for a short period of time such as a project or for the duration of the apprenticeship?



### STEP 2 — PLAN

Take a moment to gather your thoughts and make a list of the benefits that both the mentor and apprentice might expect to see from engaging in this new relationship. Come prepared to help paint the picture of how exciting this opportunity will be.

### STEP 3 — GET STARTED

Jump in! Don't let your fear get in the way. Connect with both the mentor and apprentice in a short appointment designed specifically for setting up expectations and goals.

### STEP 4 — THE INITIAL MEETING

The initial meeting is a key step to a successful long-term mentoring relationship. Here are a few important elements to consider for your initial planning meeting.

- Identify the purpose of the mentoring relationship and what you hope to accomplish.
- Format of meeting — How often, where and how long will you meet?
- Discuss the goals and objectives of the apprentice. What type of skills and characteristics are they hoping to develop?
- Review the competencies outlined to be learned on the job for the apprenticeship program.
- The apprentice should share their classroom training schedule, so the mentor knows what they will be learning.

- What are the expectations of the mentor?
- Discuss what a healthy and effective relationship will look like.
- Discuss what the closure of the experience will look like. Will the mentoring come to an end? If so, when do you anticipate the relationship will end?
- Establish boundaries. Are there any concerns of either party about what is and is not appropriate?
- Remind each other of the essential nature of confidentiality in the relationship.

## STEP 5 — THE ONE-ON-ONE SESSION

While daily supervision on the job will be occurring with the mentor, ongoing meetings to review goals and progress should also be held. The following are tips on how to make the ongoing one-on-one visits more effective and meaningful.

- **Review recent experience** — How did things go over the past days or weeks? Were there any challenges or successes to highlight?
- **Revisit goals and objectives** — Is the apprentice still on track? Are they accomplishing what they need to in order to complete their apprenticeship program?
- **Amend goals and objectives as needed** — Situations can change. Be open to making revisions and adjustments in order to stay on track.
- **Provide feedback** — As a mentor, take the opportunity to give constructive feedback. This is key in helping the apprentice to know where to focus efforts and energy.
- **Celebrate achievements** — Make a big deal out of successes. What were the efforts that led to those successes?
- **Learn from mistakes** — Accept that mistakes will occur and at times objectives may not be met. As a mentor, provide encouragement and help the apprentice know what to learn from the experience.
- **Establish new objectives** — Once goals are met, look for new opportunities for growth and establish new objectives.
- **Arrange for the next meeting** — Times can get very busy and other demands will encroach on your time. Remember your commitment to each other and schedule and protect the time you have together.

## STEP 6 — CONCLUSION

Not all great things will last forever. The mentoring relationship will likely need to come to an end. Truly effective mentoring relationships require a great deal of trust and commitment. Here are a few things to consider when concluding the relationship so that it can end on a high note.



- **Celebrate successes** – Take the time to really focus on what has been accomplished and the ongoing improvements that have been made.
- **Give advice** – As a mentor, take the opportunity to give some final thoughts and advice on how the apprentice can move forward including your hopes and vision for their future.