

LIEBE GROUP MENTORING PROGRAM GUIDE 2018



PROGRAM FUNDED BY



CONTENTS

Page	Title
3	Program Outline
4	What is Mentoring?
5	Benefits of Mentoring
5	Shortcomings of Mentoring
6	Key Success Factors
7	Roles of the Mentor and Mentee
9	Phases of the Mentoring Partnership
10 - 16	Appendices
17	References

PROGRAM OUTLINE

This program can be used to engage farmers who are willing to offer their support and advice to innovative younger growers. It will assist farmers to share knowledge, experience and skills they may already have (mentor) or wish to build on (mentee). Potential topics for discussion can include:

- Natural resource management
- New technologies
- Social media
- New production and farming techniques
- Business management and much more.

The program will ideally be facilitated by a third party who will provide formal guidance throughout the course of the program. Workshops and periodical catch-ups to ensure the program is running smoothly will be held and changes will be made where necessary. The outcome for following this program will be increased capacity of farmers, creating networking and partnership opportunities that are sustainable for the future.

This program guide will provide support to ensure that the partnerships are successful and to achieve positive outcomes for all parties involved in the program. It will also assist in further programs in planning, organisation and implementation of both formal and informal mentoring activities.

Program Time-line and milestones

Initial workshop

Introduce the mentoring process and meet participants.

+ 2 months

Partnership check-ins to review the mentoring process

+ 6 months

Partnership check-ins to review the mentoring process

+ 6 months

Partnership check-ins to review the mentoring process

+ 2 months

Final workshop - Finalise partnerships, participants to complete feedback survey and share experiences.

Guidelines

- Partners should aim to meet up as often as agreed, for example one a month.
- In poorer seasons, check in more regularly
 - What are they doing?
 - How are you handling the challenges of the season?
 - How are they changing what they are doing compared to a good season?
- It is up to the mentee and mentor to schedule dates, times and places for meeting.
- It is fine to communicate over the phone if unable to meet up in person.
- All meetings are to be confidential.
- This program runs for approximately 15months.

1 - WHAT IS MENTORING

'A personal, helping relationship between a mentor and a mentee or protégé that includes professional development and growth and varying degrees of support. While mentoring relationships are reciprocal, mentors tend to be those with greater experience'

Mentoring tends to be quite broad as it is not only interested in 'maximising performance' but concerned with the person's overall life development. Mentors are significant others who play many roles and, at times, they can be coach, counsellor and trainer.

In formal mentoring programs, the purpose of mentoring is likely to be articulated in a set of guidelines or via training that is provided for both parties, where they are informed of the goals and purposes of the program. As an example, the purpose of a formal mentoring program for beginning teachers might be to help new teachers develop their teaching strategies and skills, become socialised into the school's values and culture, and develop a good working knowledge of school policies and procedures.

In contrast, in informal mentoring arrangements, the parties may not have any set goals or specific expectations except to get together informally and discuss work based issues as they arise. The purpose of the relationship may change depending on the needs of either party.

Whether the mentoring relationship is driven by an organisation or informal and more personally driven, it is likely that the overall purpose of the relationship will be for both parties to learn, engage in knowledge transfer, and support one another's development and growth.

Being involved in the mentoring process must also be voluntary to ensure that the participants stay committed and receive the benefits.



2 - BENEFITS OF MENTORING TO A FARM BUSINESS

Benefits for mentor	Benefits for mentee	Benefits for a farm business
Support, encouragement and friendship	Collegiality, collaboration and networking	Improved staff performance
Help with subject knowledge	Reflection	Increased productivity
Discussing and sharing ideas	Professional development in agriculture	Positive relationships
Providing feedback and constructive criticism	Personal satisfaction, reward/growth	Retention/continuity of staff
Increased self-confidence	Interpersonal skill development	Improved communication/partnerships within the industry
Career affirmation, advancement and commitment	Enjoyment, stimulation and challenges	More effective leadership
Being a role model	Improved, revitalised work practice	Increased profitability
Reflection	Role satisfaction	Increased support from staff

3 - SHORTCOMINGS OF MENTORING TO A FARM BUSINESS

Shortcomings for mentees	Shortcomings for mentors
Lack of mentor time	Lack of time
Professional expertise or personality mismatch	Professional expertise or personality mismatch
Mentor critical, out of touch, defensive, stifling or untrusting	Lack training/understanding of program goals and expectations
Difficulty meeting, observing or being observed	Extra burden/responsibility
Lack mentor support, guidance, knowledge sharing and feedback	Frustration with mentee performance/attitude/lack of commitment or trust
Lack mentor training or understanding of program goals and expectations	Conflicting mentor role - advice versus assessment
Lack of mentor interest, commitment or initiative	Lack of support, resources, encouragement and interest from others
Ineffective, inappropriate advice or modeling	Emotionally draining and stressful

4 - KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

There is no magic formula for making mentoring relationships or mentoring programs work effectively. What is known through research is that the effectiveness of any mentoring relationship is contingent on the quality of the relationship between the two parties. Where there is mutuality, respect and knowledge transfer, the mentoring is likely to work well. Where there is little mutuality and a mismatch in expectations, this is a recipe for difficulty. Several success factors are discussed here.

Time and commitment

Time and commitment are essential for mentoring relationships. A lack of time signals a 'lack of commitment', which is highly problematic in an interpersonal developmental relationship such as mentoring.

Compatibility (rapport)

Research has found that a mismatch in personality or professional experience between mentor and mentee may be problematic, especially if participants of the program have differences in opinion or personality. A difference in opinion could potentially lead to no communication, arguments, and general dissatisfaction with the mentoring relationship.

This research shows the importance of ensuring that formal mentoring programs provide participants with a good partnering process. By doing this, the risk of incompatible partnerships and lack of rapport is greatly reduced. In an informal mentoring program, lack of compatibility is generally not an issue as both parties volunteer to pursue the partnership and, in some cases know one another and are happy to work together.

Training

The purpose of mentor training is to provide participants with valuable information about the purpose of the program, the goals and objectives, and the roles and responsibilities of the parties. Moreover, the training component often provides mentors with a chance to develop their communication, listening and feedback skills. Without an understanding of the purpose and goals of the program (usually explored during training), the mentoring program is unlikely to work effectively.

Locus of power

In mentoring relationships, there is a need to negotiate issues of power. Who controls or should control the power in a mentoring relationship? Who sets the goals? Who leads the conversations? Is it the mentor or the mentee? The more formal the program, the more likely that the overall goals and aims will be both predetermined and articulated in official organisational documentation. Yet even within a formal program it is argued that mentors should work to empower mentees and allow them to identify their own needs and become increasingly independent. He says that mentors should respond to mentees' developmental needs, and the mentee should accept increasing responsibility for managing the relationship.

Ethical conduct

Ethical conduct is expected of all people when they are involved in professional development activities such as mentoring.

Four ethical principles that should be adhered to:

1. Integrity and impartiality
2. Promoting the best interests of both parties
3. Commitment to the uphold the law and use any information gained in a lawful way
4. Accountability and transparency between the parties

5 - ROLES OF MENTOR AND MENTEE

Mentor and mentee roles and functions vary according to the type of mentoring that is being used. For example, a sponsoring mentor is more likely to use his or her influence to ensure that a mentee accesses certain resources or key outcomes. Here, the mentee is likely to be passive in this situation. In contrast, a mentor who plays a more developmental role is likely to play a variety of roles that empower a mentee to grow in self-resourcefulness (Clutterbuck 2003, p. 259). Hence, the type of mentoring relationship that is apparent will determine the roles played by both parties.

Role of mentor

Mentoring that is developmental in nature focuses on the twin functions of support and challenge, as identified by Daloz's (1986) and Clutterbuck's (2004a) work. Cohen (1999) builds on these researchers' work and identifies six core interpersonal functions or roles that mentors perform:

1. Relationship emphasis involves psycho-social functions such as:
 - Encouragement
 - Active and empathetic listening
 - Understanding and acceptance
 - Creating a climate of trust with one's mentee (Cohen 1999, p. ix).
2. Facilitative focus refers to behaviours whereby the mentor guides the mentee to identify and explore their views, interests and beliefs. Its aim is to assist mentees to consider alternatives (Cohen 1999, p. ix). For example, mentors ask mentees what if questions, and questions that help them identify their assumptions.
3. Mentor model focus involves the process of self-disclosing work and relevant life experiences to the mentee to personalise the relationship (Cohen, 1999, p. x). Cohen (1999, p. 94) explains that mentors can achieve this in a number of ways, such as talking to the mentee about one's own difficult decisions and experiences and using real-life examples.
4. Confrontive focus involves skills required to challenge the mentees explanations and ideas by offering insights regarding their need to re-evaluate their beliefs, assumptions and practices, and take a different approach (Cohen 1999, p. 75). Confrontive focus is akin to the function of 'challenge' as identified by Daloz (2012) and Clutterbuck (2004a).
5. Information emphasis involves seeking detailed information from, or providing detailed information to, the mentee. Being aware of some basic facts about the mentees purpose should help the mentor gain a better understanding of the mentee, and be in a better position to meet his/her needs (Cohen 1999, p. ix). Cohen (1999, p. 50) gives the example of mentors asking questions that gain factual answers, and probing questions that reveal in-depth understandings.
6. Mentee vision function concerns stimulating mentees to think critically about their goals and to envision a future where these goals can be achieved (Cohen 1999, p. x). Cohen says that mentors encourage mentees to actively pursue their dreams.

QUESTIONING: A KEY MENTORING TECHNIQUE

Like coaches, mentors use questions to help mentees:

- Identify and describe problems, situations, events
- Reflect on their feelings, assumptions and beliefs
- Identify alternatives and options they may not have considered
- Come to new understandings about themselves and the issues at hand.

Writers in the field of mentoring (e.g. Hargrove 2003; Stanfield 2000) maintain that:

- Conversations between mentors and mentees should be planned
- A large part of the planning is to prepare well-constructed questions to ask mentees.

Key levels of questioning

According to Stanfield (2000), there are four levels of questions:

1. Objective level — questions based on facts and data and viewed as ‘external’ to the mind. These are seen as ‘what’ questions.
 - Where are you up to?
 - What work have you done since I saw you last?
 - With whom have you been working?
 - What have you achieved since we talked last?
 - What are your observations?
 - What words or phrases stood out for you?
2. Reflective level — questions that invite personal reaction to the data/facts presented. Sometimes the responses can be based on feelings. Questions viewed here are considered ‘internal’ — questions that relate to ‘gut feelings’.
 - What has been the response of others to the work you have done?
 - What have you enjoyed doing the most?
 - What have you enjoyed doing the least?
 - How are you feeling about things now?
 - What surprised you?
 - What’s missing for you?
 - What were you reminded of?
3. Interpretive level — questions that draw out meanings, values, beliefs and the significance of the issue. Questions here are concerned with: ‘what does this mean?’; ‘why’? Sometimes these questions are referred to as ‘so what’ questions.
 - What have you learned about yourself, others, so far?
 - What are some issues you continue to worry about? Why?
 - What alternatives are you thinking about for dealing with some of the ongoing challenges?
 - What makes x important?
 - What implications are there for you?
4. 4. Decisional level — questions that elicit resolution, new directions and actions. This is where the conversation is brought to a close and decisions are made — sometimes referred to as ‘now what’ questions:
 - What are you going to do next?
 - What is your plan and how are you going to achieve it?
 - Can I help and if so how?
 - Are things moving in the right direction for you?

Effective mentors are those people who ask questions that require their mentee to:

- *• Provide objective/factual data*
- *• Reflect on their feelings and ideas*
- *• Interpret issues and therefore identify meanings and significance*
- *• Make informed decisions based on a range of factors.*

Role of Mentee

Much of the writing in the field refers primarily to the role played by the mentor; yet the mentee must also play his or her part and be a willing and active participant in the dance of mentoring. Some key roles (taken from Clutterbuck 2004a; Johnson & Huwe 2003; Tovey 1999) include:

- Developing the relationship with respect, openness and trust
- Setting personal goals
- Communicating directly and honestly
- Having clear expectations of the mentoring relationship and process
- Being willing to share interests, views and beliefs with the mentor and bring issues forward for
- Discussion
- Being prepared to have one's beliefs and values challenged and to challenge the mentor
- Being ready to accept increasing responsibility for managing the mentoring relationship.

6 - PHASES OF THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

There can be great diversity in the way in which mentoring is experienced within formal programs and informal mentoring relationships. For instance, formal mentoring programs have a start and finish date, and are designed to take place over a set period of time, such as a year or 18 months, whereas informal mentoring relationships are not constructed in this way; they evolve and can take place over several years depending on the needs of the party. Regardless of the type of mentoring relationship employed, researchers and writers in the field maintain that mentoring relationships tend to be characterised by a number of important milestones or phases.

Kram (1985), Missirian (1982), Levinson et al. (1978) and Rolfe-Flett (2002) have referred to specific phases or stages that characterise a mentoring relationship:

1. Initial phase — the parties get to know one another and build the relationship that both deem very important.
2. Cultivation or development phase (Middle) — both parties benefit from the relationship, with learning and growth strongly present.
3. Termination or separation phase (End) — the relationship ends and contact decreases or
4. Redefinition — Where both parties decide to carry on the relationship albeit in a different way.

Rolfe-Flett (2002) clarifies 'redefinition'. She explains that this sometimes occurs at the end of the relationship, when both parties choose to work together, but with different expectations. For example, both parties might decide to work as 'peers' rather than as mentor and mentee because the mentee may have developed the requisite skills. Redefinition, then, signals a new type of relationship (Mullen & Schunk 2012).

The period of time that each mentoring day takes to undergo any of these phases is likely to depend on a variety of factors such as the type of mentoring that is used (i.e. formal or informal), as well as the readiness of the mentee and the motivation, goals and personality of both parties. Due to the developmental nature of mentoring relationships, they are unlikely to stay the same; they will evolve and change and, in most cases, they will end. An effective mentoring relationship is one where both parties feel satisfied that the journey has been rewarding and worthwhile.

APPENDICES: CHECKLISTS FOR MENTORS

A - Mentor pre-meeting #1 checklist

D - Mentor pre-meeting #2 checklist

B - Mentor meeting checklist

E - Sample mentor agreement

C - Mentor post-meeting reflection

F - Mentoring agreement

A - MENTOR PRE-MEETING #1 CHECKLIST

Purpose:

Help you plan and prepare requirements to facilitate a conversation with a mentee.

I have:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invited my mentee to the meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Arranged a time and place (ensure it is quiet to allow for in-depth conversation) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decided how 'formal' the relationship is going to be. (Decide whether you will use a mentor agreement contract (appendix F) or whether you will agree verbally to a number of key aspects governing the relationship. This can also be discussed in the first meeting). | <input type="checkbox"/> Considered carefully my role and responsibilities (see section 6). |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Clarified my expectations and what I hope to achieve from the mentoring relationship. |

My goals for this mentoring relationship are:

My expectations of myself for this mentoring program are:

Expectations I have of the mentee for this mentoring program are:

Some 'get to know you' questions to develop the relationship (if you already know your mentee, you may not need too many of these).

Referring to *A Key Mentoring Technique* (Section 6), some questions to ask your mentee, based on the four levels of questions advocated by Stanfield, are:

Objective	Reflective
Interpretive	Decisional

B - MENTOR MEETING CHECKLIST

Purpose:

- Get to know your mentee
- Share ideas about roles, responsibilities and expectations, and come to agreement about these aspects of the mentoring relationship
- Use Stanfield's four levels of questioning (objective, reflective, interpretive, decisional) in posing questions to your mentee

During the meeting I have:

- Welcomed and thanked my mentee for attending the meeting.
- Reinforced the discussions will be kept confidential.
- Introduced ourselves and got to know each other (objective question - can you tell me a little bit about yourself?).
- Clarified the purpose of the meeting:
 - To establish a mentoring relationship
 - To discuss what we see as our roles, responsibilities and expectations.
 - To determine whether we use a mentoring agreement to formalise the relationship.
- Included some key questions based on all four levels such as:
 - Based on what I have said about my roles and responsibilities, what is your response to that? (Reflective)
 - Can you tell me what you see as your roles and responsibilities? (Reflective)
 - What do you hope to get out of the mentoring relationship? (Interpretive)
 - How can I best support you and your learning? (Objective, reflective)
- Closed the meeting.
- Reflected on the meeting and asked my mentee to provide some feedback on the session.
 - What worked well in this session?
 - Can you comment on my questioning and listening skills?
 - What do you think I could have done differently that would have made the conversations more beneficial to you?
 - Any other comments?
- Set a time and date for the next session and asked my mentee to identify a topic/focus for the next conversation.

Make sure you complete the mentor post-meeting reflection template.

C - MENTOR POST-MEETING REFLECTION

Now that you have conducted your first conversation with your mentee, reflect on that conversation and answer the following questions. To help you respond to these questions, consider the following points when formulating your ideas:

- Your communication skills
- The dynamics of the relationship
- The role you played
- Your mentee's interest and comments
- Any other impressions.

What worked well?

What needed improvement?

What comments did your mentee provide regarding your performance? How can you use this feedback?

What do you need to work on to enhance your mentoring skills?

D - MENTOR PRE-MEETING #2 CHECKLIST

Purpose:

- Use Stanfield's four levels of questioning- (objective, reflective, interpretive, decisional) in posing questions to your mentee

I have:

Checked the meeting time and place.

Prepared questions using Stanfield's four levels of questioning.

Opening

Objective Questions

Reflective Questions

Interpretive Questions

Decisional Questions

Closing

Make sure you complete the mentor post-meeting reflection template.

E - SAMPLE MENTOR AGREEMENT

Mentor name: _____	Mentee name: _____
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OUR MENTORING AGREEMENT

By developing and signing this agreement together, we agree on ground rules which we believe will support the relationship. As we spend time together, we will both try to:

Meet at least once per **month** for at least **40 mins**

Commencement date: _____

Finish the mentoring relationship by: (date) _____

- Select meeting places that allow us to talk deeply
- Call or email ahead — giving at least 24 hours' notice if possible — if we have to cancel or reschedule
- Come to our meetings prepared. If we've agreed to do some assignment between meetings, have it completed
- If we have a problem or something doesn't feel right to one of us, we'll talk about it — even if it isn't easy. We won't avoid facing a problem. We'll deal with it together
- Keep what is said between us — maintain confidentiality
- Work on our shared goals for this mentorship
- Recognise that we are two different people, and that is a good thing. We can learn from each other if we respect and value each other and the ways we're alike and the ways we're different
- Make sure we get things done and remember to laugh.

SIGNATURE OF MENTOR: _____ DATE: _____

SIGNATURE OF MENTEE: _____ DATE: _____

F - MENTORING AGREEMENT

Mentor name: _____	Mentee name: _____
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OUR MENTORING AGREEMENT

By developing and signing this agreement together, we agree on ground rules which we believe will support the relationship. As we spend time together, we will both try to:

Meet at least once per _____ for at least _____ (amount of time per session)

Commencement date: _____

Finish the mentoring relationship by: (date) _____

Agreement Terms:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

SIGNATURE OF MENTOR: _____ DATE: _____

SIGNATURE OF MENTEE: _____ DATE: _____

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