



HDN Staff Mentoring Programme

The CPD award winning Staff Mentoring Programme supports participants to maximise their potential, increase their contribution and confidence at work and manage change in challenging times. Through a combination of one-to-one meetings (virtual/face-to-face when permitted) with an external mentor and group workshop sessions, individuals work towards their personal development goals.

Programme objectives and organisation benefits

The objectives outlined below are for all mentees. Individuals will also have their own personal objectives which they can address in their one-to-one meetings with their mentor and in networking with their peers.

1. Increase self-awareness
2. Improve confidence
3. Expand networks
4. Explore career aspirations and options
5. Increase awareness of wider sector issues
6. Enhance understanding of Unconscious Bias, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Participating organisations derive multiple benefits from mentoring, which include having staff who are more effective, motivated, confident, knowledgeable, diverse and productive.

Why do people become mentors?

Mentors are experienced professionals of senior and middle management levels, who want to share their time to support others. Often because of the support and inspiration they themselves have received earlier in their career, people want to “give back”.

Benefits of being a mentor include:

- Sharing their knowledge, expertise and experience
- Practicing and developing their coaching and mentoring skills
- Opportunity to gain a better understanding of people development
- Opportunity to continue their own learning and personal development
- Contributing to corporate social responsibility work

What we look for in a mentor

Experience of managing others is useful however, it is more important for a mentor to want to develop others, as is a strong commitment to valuing diversity. Some useful skills and qualities of great mentors are listed below – this list is not exhaustive nor is any one person expected to embody them all.

- Skills a mentor will find useful in a mentoring relationship include building relationships, listening, questioning, sensitively challenging, identifying options, setting boundaries or expectations, clarifying objectives, focusing, action planning, being creative and reflecting.
- Qualities of a helpful and successful mentor include being patient, giving encouragement, being open and honest, empowering mentees to lead sessions, creating a confidential space, showing an interest in the mentee, remaining objective and supporting to self-reflect.

Why do people become mentees?

Mentees join the programme for many reasons including:

- To gain confidence and build resilience
- To explore their options for development, current work and future opportunities
- To learn new skills and build on current skills
- To meet new people from the sector and share learning

What we look for in a Mentee

- A commitment to their own personal development, being open to the support, guidance and feedback of their mentor and to complete the programme.
- A commitment to valuing diversity to make the most of inclusive group workshops.
- Thought to their objectives and prepare for meetings with their mentor appropriately. As well as proactivity when arranging meetings and following up agreed actions to make the most of the opportunity.
- Treat mentors with respect and prioritise meetings.
- To respect and consider fellow mentees, facilitators and other mentors participating in the group workshops to ensure all gain the most from each other and the programme.

Timing

The programme runs for a period of 9 months approximately each year starting with a “Welcome” in September, includes a briefing session, five meetings with a mentor, four workshops and a national celebration conference at the end of the programme.

What mentees thought of the programme:

“It is an exciting and energetic experience that I would recommend to all individuals within my organization as it is an investment in yourself. An opportunity to discuss ideas, barriers, best practice, learn from other mentees and build networks within the enlightening and inspired mentoring classes.”

“The Mentoring Programme is a great stepping stone to develop a pipeline of future leaders who acknowledge and embrace the values and cultures of the industry and look forward to improving these and encourage equality and diversity.”

“Extremely positive experience. It helped me to achieve what I wanted through the restructure at work and has given me the confidence to look more positively at work and life.”

“I absolutely loved being on the programme! I learned so much about housing, the future of housing, and other mentee's experiences of housing. It helped me to realise that I am a powerful woman in my own right and I have the drive and ambition to succeed in anything I put my mind to.”

“The mentoring programme was fantastic and a huge benefit to me both professional and personally.”

“I have really enjoyed the whole programme and have put one of my direct reports forward for this year's programme.”

What mentors thought of the programme:

“I enjoyed the experience. It is good to have a wider network of mentors to learn from and share ideas and problems. It was lovely to see how my mentee eventually flourished and achieved her objectives. very satisfying.”

“I found it both interesting and useful personally and think that the mentees I have had over the years have definitely helped me develop my mentoring skills and own self-awareness and confidence.”

“I've mentored in the programme for several years now and think it is of high value and relevance.”

“I found it personally rewarding helping someone to achieve their personal goals and seeing a positive change in their approach. The program also made me change my management approach in my own team's I-I's- which are now focussed on personal development as well as being operational. It also made me update my CV and join LinkedIn as I wanted to lead by example!”