Mentoring Tools

anpBC

Nurturing a healthy Aboriginal non-profit sector *is* nurturing healthy communities—we are one.

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LIST OF TOOLS

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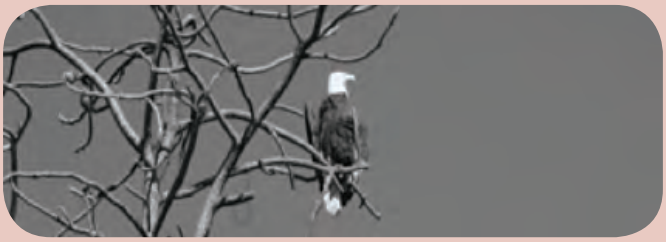
Introduction: Some questions to consider

Before creating a Mentoring strategy you may want to think about what you want to achieve and whether mentoring is the best approach.

Here are some questions for you and your workplace to potentially discuss.

- **What is our intent for mentorship within the workplace?**
- **Who will be involved in developing mentoring in our organization?**
- **What will be the timeline for participating in a mentoring relationship?**
- **When will mentoring be offered?**
- **How do we identify a mentor?**
- **How is Elder guidance incorporated?**
- **What are the Indigenous values that are important to us?**
- **What is the process for matching mentor/mentee/Elder?**
- **What kind of mentoring will be provided?**
- **How will the program be monitored?**



Identifying Values and Principles

Identifying guiding principles can lay the foundation to a mentoring approach. Many Aboriginal non-profit organizations already have guiding principles – for example, the four "R's" – Respect, Reciprocity, Responsibility, and Relevance*.

Another example is respect, caring, sharing, and teaching.**

These are examples of principles that capture core traditional values that can be useful in guiding mentoring processes in the workplace.

*Source: Kirkness, V. & Barnhardt, R. (1991). First Nations and Higher Education: The Four R's – Respect,Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility. Journal of American Indian Education, 30(3), 1-15.

**Source: Van Bibber, M. (2016). Fish Camp Guidebook, Selkirk First Nation.

Tool 1: Guiding Principles and Values

When you think about developing a mentorship strategy, what guiding principles would work for your agency?

WHERE ARE WE ON THE SELF-REFLECTION PATH?

We haven't thought about this yet	We are not sure where to start	We're thinking about doing this	We've started taking action	We are on our journey and doing well

How well do these values reflect your agency practice?

- Mentoring is based on respectful communications and relationships.
- Respecting traditional values and behaviours is important.
- Elders are a cultural resource at all levels of an organization.
- Learning is bidirectional – the wish to learn and the wish to teach.
- Learn the teachings that you want to preserve for the next generations.
- Employing teaching styles such as storytelling enables youth to develop their own answers through teachings.
- Sharing food is part of the teaching process.
- Embrace all people, even those who don't believe the same things as you.

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Tool 2a: Template for an Application for Mentoring

to help create a good match

PERSONAL PLAN FOR SUCCESS

Name: **Date:**

Position/Role:

- **What are you hoping to learn through being mentored? How would being in a mentorship relationship benefit you?**
- **The skills/qualities you would bring to the match are:**
- **What would other people say about you?**
- **How do you deal with/resolve conflicts?**
- **How would you know whether this has been a successful match?**

Tool 2b: Application for Mentoring

My goals for being mentored

	When I'd like to start	When I anticipate finishing
Specific skills or traditional knowledge I'd like to learn		

Tool 3: Application to be a Mentor

to help create a good match

- **What skills and/or qualities do you bring to the mentoring role?**
- **What would other people say about you?**
- **What are some teachings that you have found to be personally useful in guiding your life? How would you bring those teachings into the mentor relationship?**
- **How would being a mentor benefit you? E.G. opportunity to build my leadership skills; opportunity to share experience with someone else; satisfaction of giving to others**
- **How would you bring to life the values and vision of the agency in your role as mentor?**
- **How do you deal with/resolve conflicts?**
- **How would you know whether this has been a successful match?**

Tool 4: Contract to work together

Communication and commitment to work together

I understand that to be involved in providing or receiving mentoring, I am committing to the following:

- _____hrs per week/month/quarter/year
- At least_____face to face meetings (or phone meetings if distance is a factor)
- Projects and other assignments as required
- Group meetings as required
- Regular check-ins to determine how the mentoring process is going for both of us
- Being accessible and responding within a reasonable time

Additional ways of communication may involve:

- Email or telephone calls at agreed upon intervals
- Meetings/sessions/outings in the community

I agree to adhere to the above commitments and guidelines

Signature Date

Signature Date

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT At all times during the mentoring relationship and after its expiration or termination, the Mentor agrees not to disclose confidential information obtained during the relationship. The Mentor agrees to take reasonable measures to prevent accidental disclosure.

At all times during the mentoring relationship and after its expiration or termination, the Protégé/Mentee agrees not to disclose confidential information obtained during the relationship. The Protégé/Mentee agrees to take reasonable measures to prevent accidental disclosure.

In signing this document, both parties state that they have been provided with, read, understand, and agree to abide by the terms of the Agreement.

Tool 5: Getting Started

Questions to help Mentors and Mentees get to know each other:

- Tell me about yourself.
- Who is your family/clan?
- What are some teachings that you have grown up with?
- Who inspires you?
- What would you like to learn?
- What are the areas you would like to develop skills in or learn more about?

Support questions

- What kind of support do you want from me – e.g. gentle encouragement; challenges; lots of acknowledgement; honest appraisal?
- How can I, as a Mentor, best support you and your learning?
- Who initiates the meeting?
- How do you want to use our time together?
- How will this knowledge make a difference to you/ your life/your relationships?

Tool 6: Joint Obligations

General

- The mentoring arrangement will last for_____weeks/ months/year)
- Meetings should occur at least once a month, but this may vary depending on the needs of both parties and their availability.
- Meetings between the mentor and protégé are considered work time and shall be included in individual work plans as required.
- Information exchanged is considered confidential.

Obligations

- The mentor may voluntarily withdraw as mutually agreed to by both parties. If an extension is desired, this needs to be mutually agreed upon.
- Mentor activities are voluntary; any reimbursement of expenses needs to be agreed to before hand.
- Both parties pledge to be open, honest, and respectful with each other and to learn from each other.

Tool 7: Expectations of a Mentor

How would you describe the expectations of mentors at your agency?

Following are guidelines – adapted from the Ontario Native Women's Association mentorship program for Aboriginal Women's Leaders. They are included as examples only.

BE A PROFESSIONAL BUT BE A PERSON TOO. The point of this relationship is professional development, but sharing personal tidbits can be okay if intended to give your colleague a better snapshot of you. Plus, offering appropriate personal information makes the environment more open. Finding a balance is important though.

BE HONEST. A common and very important trait amongst mentors and mentees is self-awareness. Be clear about your professional strengths and weaknesses, your career goals, and how these tie into your overall goals for the mentorship experience. This is a give-and-take relationship, so be upfront about what you can give and what you hope to take away.

BE PROACTIVE. Plan weekly or monthly meetings, keeping in mind holidays and work deadlines/obligations. The more frequent and regular your meetings, the more comfortable you'll feel contacting each other.

SET REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS. This is very important! At the first meeting clarify what your respective expectations are and come to an agreement. Make sure you agree on the frequency and length of meetings, the time of day, confidentiality, and setting of the agenda.

RESPECT COMMUNICATION STYLES. For example some people are blunt and outspoken, while others are quiet and shy. Some people need time to think about issues before responding, while others blurt out answers immediately. Determine what kind of communication styles you each have and learn to accommodate each other.

LEAVE ROOM FOR SPONTANEITY. Having an agenda as a guide is a good idea, but leave time for discussions to take an unexpected turn.

FULFILL YOUR COMMITMENTS. Show how seriously you take your role as mentor and / or mentee by being on time and being fully prepared for each appointment. IF you have to cancel – and this should only be done rarely – explain why you are cancelling and offer dates to reschedule.

Source: Ontario Native Women's Association, Mentorship: Building Aboriginal Women's Leadership. Vol – 12, The Mentorship Program. www.onwa.ca/upload/documents/mentorship-vol-12.pdf pg 9

Tool 8: Conflict Resolution

What is your agency's conflict resolution policy or strategy? Would it work in a mentorship arrangement? If not, what is needed?

- Conflicts do occur, especially when one person sees something quite differently from the other person. When these differences emerge, the results can range from friendly disagreement to violence.
- While conflict can potentially cause the relationship to break down, if managed carefully and resolved in the spirit of open and honest communication, it can also lead to growth and learning. However, if left under the surface conflict can become quite damaging. Open communication is the means by which conflict can be managed, prevented, or resolved.
- A mentor can model and support behaviour that enhances the potential for resolution.

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Conflict Resolution Example

STEP 1: Identify and Define the Conflict

Decide on a good place and time to talk about the conflict

State clearly that there is a problem to be resolved

Own your stuff; don't blame the other person

Be clear that you want both of you to come up with an answer

Listen to the other person's point of view

STEP 2: Generate possible solutions

Both parties list all possible solutions without judgment

STEP 3: Evaluate the alternative solutions

Are any solutions better or more acceptable than others?

STEP 4: Walk away and then come back

Just as it sounds

After a cooling off, how does this situation look? Have the answers become clearer?

STEP 5: Decide on the best solution

Are you both satisfied?

Will this solve the problem?

Are you both committed to the solution?

STEP 6: Implement the Decision

Work out who will do what and by when

Do it and plan for a time to get together to renew the mentoring relationship or else to mutually agree to end the mentoring relationship

Adapted from: Vancouver Island University. (nd) Community Cousins Aboriginal Mentorship Program Manual. www.counselling.net/jnew/pdfs/Community%20Cousins%20Program%20Manual.pdf

About the anpBC Strategy

The Aboriginal Non-profit Workforce and HR Strategy is an effort to strengthen the aboriginal non-profit sector by developing human resources and workforce strategies. The sector includes agencies and organizations that deliver services in the areas of health, employment, child and family services, treatment, and housing.

About the Logo

"This print represents the perseverance and sustenance involved when we work for our communities. The salmon represents perseverance and is about respect for tradition, intuition, inner voice, determination, and the ability to follow your vision. The hummingbird represents sustenance and is the great nectar of Life, giver of beauty, love and harmony, the tireless song of joy."

Artist: Jaminn Zuroski, Namgis First Nation

Aboriginal Non-Profit Workforce Initiative

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