
Community Mentorship Program

Mentoring is a fundamental part of the CAM program. Mentoring is provided at the community level as well as in the workplace during the workplace-training portion and into the employment phase. The role of the community mentor is to assist the CAM participants and their families with the challenges and successes they face during the training part of the program.

The community mentor can use both one-to-one and group mentoring. Having both forms of mentoring allows for communities with fewer mentors to be able to support all of the participants. The one-to-one program gives the mentor a chance to get to know the participant and his/her family. By making these connections, the mentor can more easily help the participant stay focused on the program. The group mentoring method gives the participants a chance to meet as a peer group and a safe environment to share and listen.

The role of the mentor, through both one-to-one and group mentoring, is to enhance the participant's sense of identity, and competence and effectiveness as both a CAM participant and family member. The relationship includes friendship, acceptance, coaching, confirmation, counseling and role modeling.

The benefit of working as a mentor in a community is that the mentor can draw on additional resources to provide assistance such as counseling and role modeling. For that reason, community mentors should have access to or be familiar with the following community resources:

- Successful journeymen in community (retired or currently employed)
- Chief and council
- Elders
- Community committees or resource teams

Expectations of Community Mentors

As a community mentor, you can expect to set aside up to 3 hours per week for each person you are mentoring. While it is difficult to predict exact time commitments required from the mentors, the following activity expectations will help mentors to estimate the amount of time they need to commit to the relationships.

For each participant, mentors need to include the following activities in their relationships:

- Participation in mentor orientation.
- Initial visit with participants and their families.
- Weekly check-ins via telephone, email or in-person for participants and their families.
- Coordination with any community resources that the mentor feels would be helpful for the participants and their families.
- Participation in Cultural Awareness Training course.

Recruitment and Selection Process for Community Mentors

1. Send out Mentor Recruitment forms to communities through the Aboriginal sub-committee members. Send out Participant Scan to participants.
2. Sub-committee members distribute forms to potential mentors through known channels (bulletin boards, Facebook, word of mouth, etc.)
3. Gather completed forms. Sub-committee members along with CAM review the forms and select mentors based on Selection Criteria. Match mentors with participants based on needs and experiences.
4. Inform mentors who have been selected. Have mentor complete Mentoring Agreement. Explain details of mentoring training including scheduled training dates.
5. Provide resources to mentors, such as a list of community resources including names and telephone numbers, WTC and U of W trainers, and CAM coordinators.
6. Provide calendars and program details to mentors for September to February timeline.

Mentor Selection Criteria

When selecting community mentors, consider the following criteria:

- Has the person had experience living away from the community in an urban centre?
- Can the person be a strong demonstrator of positive life skills?
- Does the person have some experience or understanding of the work ethic involved in manufacturing?
- Does the person have some experience in the trades?
- Does the person have the time to commit to the program?

Once mentors have been selected, have the mentors sign the required forms.

Matching Mentors with Participants

Informal community mentoring relationships are best formed through an organic approach at a community meet and greet type event. However the CAM mentor coordinator should review the following three documents prior to any matching event to identify any matches that appear to work on paper.

- 1) CAM application form, specifically the “why you want to be in the program” portion. The participant’s reasons will assist in making a strong match.
- 2) Participant questionnaire form.
- 3) Mentor recruitment form.

The matching process will vary in every community depending on the number of mentors available. Ideally the match should allow the participants to select a mentor with whom they feel the most comfortable. A community event could provide a time when participants and mentors can make their own matches.

Once a match is made, the CAM coordinator should sit down with the mentor and participant to review the Mentoring Agreement together. The mentor and participant should both read and sign the form. A copy should be made for both the mentor and the participant while the coordinator can keep the original.

Community Mentorship Program

Welcome to the Connecting Aboriginals to Manufacturing community mentoring program. Mentorship is traditionally an effective way of building skills, confidence and comfort for people. As CAM is a pre and post-employment program that focuses on holistic methods to find greater success in recruitment and retention, mentorship is a key component: it will allow mentees and their families to become comfortable and familiar with the program, the prospective jobs, the workplace, and the obstacles that may come from the transition into a commuter family.

What is a community mentor?

The community mentorship component of the CAM program will be an informal mentorship style delivery. The community mentor will be selected by a local Aboriginal sub-committee, and will possibly include elders and/or individuals who have had similar workplace experience (i.e. commuting, transitioning, manufacturing). Unstructured matching will take place during a community orientation event. Matching with informal mentorship should be as organic as possible, with mentors and mentees seeking each other out based on comfort and compatibility.

The community mentor will work hand in hand with the mentee to nurture, protect, and promote balance within families and individuals. During the project, the community mentor will spend time each week with the individual as well as the family. The community mentor will also be expected to take time to travel to the individual's workplace and provide support on-location at certain times during the program, interacting with co-workers, workplace mentors, supervisors, etc.

The community mentors will be in place to provide support through their own life experiences and teachings, and will act as advocates and guides for the mentees. Community mentors will attend team building and support meetings throughout the project (group mentoring). Community mentorship will conclude after the completion of the formal component of the workplace mentorship.

A community mentor provides support through your own life experiences and teachings, and act as advocate and guide for the participants. Here are a few quotes that help to explain the community mentor:

"A mentor is a person who is always there for you, inspires you to do the best you can, and encourages you to keep working to make your dreams come true." (Handbook for Aboriginal Mentoring by the Alberta Government)

*"Be non-judgmental in your approach to help foster a trusting relationship."
(Handbook for Aboriginal Mentoring by the Alberta Government)*

The majority of the CAM workplace-mentoring component will involve Formal Mentoring, however the community or "informal" mentoring will continue into the first year of employment.

INFORMAL

FORMAL

What are the characteristics of a good mentor?

Here is a list of characteristics and behaviours of great mentors. The list is long, but read through it because it will give you a good idea of what is expected of a good mentor.

A great mentor:

- Listens.
- Can reflect on interactions and conversations with participants and their families.
- Uses storytelling as a means of imparting wisdom.
- Is accessible.
- Makes time and interaction with participants a priority.
- Studies and learns about participants and their families.
- Acknowledges fears.
- Seeks opportunities to offer support, praise and encouragement.
- Is genuine, consistent, warm, and accepting.
- Is open to discussing and exploring participant concerns and difficulties.
- Shares relevant and important personal experiences as a means of teaching, reassuring and connecting with participants.
- Accepts and encourage gradually increasing friendship.

Role and Responsibilities of the Mentor

As a mentor, your role is to:

- Act as a source of information on the resources available to the participants and their families
- Coach special skills, effective behaviour, and how to function in a learning and work environment
- Offer feedback on decisions and actions recounted in sessions
- Model behaviour that adds to experience and skill development
- Serve as a confidante
- Help the participant and/or their families to identify fears or discomforts and mutually develop a plan to deal with them
- Listen to the needs and goals of the mentee
- Help the mentee establish short- and long-term goals

Role and Responsibilities of the Participant

- You should also know that the participants have responsibilities in this relationship as well. They need to:
- Take responsibility to “own” the relationship.
- Respect the mentor’s time commitment by identifying, planning, and preparing topics or concerns for discussion.
- Request help in finding resources and making decisions.
- Share fears and concerns with the mentor, learning that it is acceptable and natural to sometimes feel helpless, lost, or frightened.

Mutual Responsibilities of Mentee and Mentor

- Bring enthusiasm, optimism, sensitivity, unselfishness, and respect to the relationship.
- Make a commitment of time and energy.
- Strive to be open to new ideas and feedback.
- Periodically assess and celebrate progress.

Mentoring Relationship

While your relationship with each participant will be unique, it is helpful to have a suggested list of activities that you can use and follow with your participants. Now that you have met the folks with whom you will be working, you are ready to go and visit them in their home so that you can meet their families. It is recommended that you hold your initial visits with participants and their families as soon as possible so that you can start the mentoring relationship.

After your initial visits, you should aim for at least one weekly “check-in” with each participant. Find out what each participant prefers in terms of day and time of the week, as well as how to check-in – you can use telephone calls, visits at home or another location, or occasionally email.

(Be sure to set guidelines for how email might be used in your relationships. It is fine to use it for housekeeping type information sharing or planning meetings, but not for key mentoring activities.)

As your relationship develops, be sure you are identifying additional resources that participants may need. Your role is to coordinate, encourage and follow-up when you suggest additional resources to participants and/or their families. Also, as your relationship grows, it is important that you review your relationship with each participant. This relationship review will allow you and the participant to discuss how the relationship is working – what is working well and how it might need to change.

Review First Family Meeting and Mentoring Session Notes.

Practice

Part of mentoring will involve setting goals. When you are setting goals with your participants, be sure you consider the following rules about SMART goals.

S - specific

M - measurable

A - attainable

R - relevant

T – time-bound

When writing goals, answer the following questions:

Step 1 – Answer the who, what, and when questions.

Step 2 – List the actions the participant will take to meet the goal

Step 3 – Check in on progress

Activity

Pair up and go through the following scenarios. Take turns being the mentor and participant. Use the session tracking forms to log your conversation. Practice coming up with SMART goals for the mock participants.

Scenario 1

Participant has just found out his girlfriend is pregnant. He is worried about the move to Winnipeg as she is due in March.

Scenario 2

Participant is having trouble getting to class on time. His Grandmother is worried.

Scenario 3

Participant has a chance to make some quick money at a job for a month. He is wondering what he should do.

Scenario 4

Participant needs to accompany his aunt to Winnipeg as she is having medical treatment. It means he will be away for a week.

Training

Cultural Awareness

Presented by the University of Winnipeg

This module is intended to present a cultural perspective of the manufacturing environment to students and community mentors. Understanding both the expectations in the manufacturing environment and the expectations in the learning environment will help the participants and community understand how to support the student throughout the program and reinforce their individual value in the workplace thus building self worth and esteem. Employers input will be sought regarding content and career opportunities.

Upon completion of this module students and community mentors will:

- Understand the general organizational culture found in a manufacturing environment and see examples of different types of manufacturing environments.
- Understand that the manufacturing workplace is a structured environment.
- Understand the importance of work ethic to the employer, i.e. being on time.
- Understand the impact (value) of the individual employee in the workplace, i.e., if late, miss shift etc., union/non-union work models.
- Be aware of the expectations the university has of students in relation to course attendance, course homework and assignments, managing priorities and organizing workloads to meet deadlines.
- Be able to apply strategies to help support the student during a period of studies.
- Understand the important role that families and community play in the success of the student.

Date: September 30 – October 7, 2011 (See agenda)

Confidentially and Emergency Policies

Review confidentiality and emergency policies of the CAM program. Review agreements to be signed.

Forms and Worksheets

The following pages contain forms and worksheets to be used for the mentorship program. Here is a list of the forms and worksheets you will find.

- Mentor Recruitment Form
- Participant Questionnaire
- Mentoring Agreement
- Program Support and Monitoring Scan
- Confidentiality Agreement
- Mentor Commitment Form
- Participant Agreement Form
- First Family Meeting Ideas
- Mentoring Session Notes