

Bethel/Nome LQC: Internal Mentoring Initiative

Updated
4/29/05

The Internal Mentoring Initiative matches the knowledge, skills and abilities of various staff with new staff or staff that who want personal growth opportunities. They will assist in coaching other as well as being a positive role model. The program is voluntary. We want to make sure the program is accessible to everyone. Anyone can volunteer to participate in the program. To encourage the use of the mentoring initiative, mentors and mentees will be allotted appropriate time to be involved in the exchange during work hours. Participation in the program is viewed as part of a workers job and is not as an addition to the job. Staff development plays an integral role in performance enhancement and increased productivity for the mentor and mentee. The program should be encouraged throughout a worker employment with Division of Public Assistance.

Purpose: To retain good employees while providing opportunities for each worker to achieve their personal development goals. Research shows mentoring relationships contribute to the overall job satisfaction and staff development. The Bethel/Nome Local Quality Council provides growth and confidence through the Internal Mentoring Initiative in technical, social and emotional aspects. We are dedicated to match highly qualified staff in specific areas with the needs of others.

What is a mentor and what is their responsibility?

A mentor is a coach and advisor. Responsible mentoring is a structured partnership that focuses on the needs of the mentee, encourages the mentee to develop to their fullest personal and career potential. Effective mentoring involves the transfer of knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes to build trust and communications resulting in a worker with the knowledge and confidence to grow professionally. Effective mentoring requires that people listen to each other, care about each other, and engage in cooperatively in a specific development activity. Each mentor brings specific knowledge to assist the mentee, but the mentor will learn from the exchange and enhance people-development skills. Everyone benefits!

To get the mentor started, he or she will receive an orientation of expectations and parameters when working with the mentee. The orientation will familiarize the mentor with strategies to foster a positive exchange, and to guide and support the mentee. Each mentor provides a level of commitment of at least six months. Mentors who have participated in the program have found great satisfaction that comes from seeing a person develop their skills and knowledge.

What is the difference between training and mentoring?

Training is a standardized formal approach to conveying knowledge and skills of a specific subject. ETIII's will still be required to conduct new worker training for ETIs as a follow-up to the formalized training from SD&T. Mentoring is the fastest growing way to develop staff. The great advantage of coaching as a developmental process is that it provides the opportunity for one-on-one training, guiding, instructing, observing, modeling and improvement.

What are the roles and responsibilities of the mentee?

View the coaching opportunity as a partnership to ask questions and share information to make it beneficial. Since the program is voluntary, the mentee will take a proactive role in identifying their needs and initiating contact. Cultivating a mentorship relationship may arise naturally, if that person is known in the office to possess a particular expertise. But, what about selecting a mentor located in another office? Mentors from other offices, are maintained on a list of *Mentor Contact Sheet*

<http://dpaweb.hss.state.ak.us/FIELD/PDF/MentorContactSheet.pdf>.

At first it may seem awkward to initiate contact with a worker in a separate office, but the mentor has been identified as one who possesses the knowledge and skills to assist in the learning process. The project will start small with a few categories and over time, the scope of topics will increase.

Once the relationship is initiated, the mentor and mentee will be respectful the exchange to openly discuss situations and gaps associated with the subject identified. The mentee will make a conscious effort to avoid overburdening the mentor or make unreasonable demands on them to act on the mentees behalf.

After a good mentoring experience from another worker, it may be an ample opportunity to create an environment where coaching and mentoring is part of the culture by becoming a mentor.

Mentorship Exchange

Coaching improves productivity through better communication, increases stability, and enhances change management. The relationship is *professional* and is different than relationships with personal friends or counselors. While there are no concrete rules about who can and cannot be a mentor, it's important to remember mentors and mentees mutually agree upon the exchange that suits the special need.

Communication can be achieved at the job site or even by telephone or email. For distance mentoring, the worker may use Net Meeting with the web cam to interact. Some other communication alternatives are email and fax. Mentoring occurs through regular sessions as the mentee is performing and applying the principles and ideas, with immediate feedback from the mentor. The length of time will depend on the subject and the level of need, which is mutually agreed upon by the mentor and mentee. The supervisory staff will support the mentorship exchange by allowing appropriate time for mentor and mentee to meet.

Matching a Mentor and Mentee

- Supervisor will incorporate into the new worker orientation and will be encouraged to use.
- Supervisor or designee will provide an orientation of the web cam.
- Mentee to identify the need.
 - If this is the first time the mentee is using the mentorship program, they may ask their supervisor to observe the mentorship process in action and/or ask a “mentorship resource person” to assist in starting the process.
- Mentee to check *Mentor Contact Sheet*.
- Mentee to contact the supervisor about use of mentorship.
- Mentee to make the initial contact with the mentor to check for availability, arrange a meeting time and include a summary of information to be discussed. If follow-up meetings are required, the mentor and mentee will agree on the date, time and duration.
- The Mentee will establish the agenda.
- The Mentor will coach, guide and provide the mentee with resources and discuss strategies.
- Mentor and Mentee to complete an evaluation after each exchange.

Evaluation

Feedback from the mentors and mentees are important to the success and improvement of the program. A feedback form is available for mentors and mentees. The mentorship feedback form is accessed through DPAweb: http://soar.hss.state.ak.us/polls/public/survey.php?name=Mentoring_eval . The regional manager or designee will gather the survey information and provide it with the local quality council. The local council will work to refine the program as needed. The entire program will be re-evaluated within a year of its initiation.

Mentorship Categories

The categories will be phased in over time. To become familiar with the project, the number of topics offered will be limited to the three most critical. This will allow the local quality council to analyze the feedback and make adjustments on a small scale. As the process is improved and the staff becomes comfortable with the process, more categories will be added.

To begin, the three categories will be:

- Interviewing Techniques
- Case Note Documentation
- Organizational Skills

Ultimately, a number of topics were identified to incorporate:

Policy & Procedure	Additional DPA Policy (not normally worked in my office)	Office Efficiencies	Technology	Time Management	Promotional Opportunities within Division	Other Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading LES • Self-Employment • DKC • Conversions • Transitional Medicaid • Ingens* • DOL* • CSSD* • SSA/SSI* • Family Med* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APA • ATAP • Long Term Care (TEFRA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Notices • Writing Case Notes • Desk organization • Leading a Team • Making the job fun • Planning and being prepared for Interviews • Pre-screening applications – ET & AC • Working alerts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word • Excel • Access • Outlook • Power Point • Navigation of internet • Navigation of DPAweb • Net Meeting web cam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working faster (and accurate) • Balancing phone calls and other job duties • Tickler file 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ET • ETIII • ETIV • HR interviewing • WPA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Reviewing • Professionalism • Training • Interviewing • Positive communication

*Interfaces – To provide more discussion about out of the ordinary areas and fields to look at when reviewing.