

Victoria's 2019 Women In Transport (WiT) Mentoring Program

Overview

Research shows that we tend to learn more from others and on-the-job experiences than we do alone. With this in mind we designed a mentoring program that enables both mentees and mentors to grow professionally and personally and supports their journey towards desired goals.

In 2017, our partners participated in a Think Tank session to determine the key critical success factors for female engineers in the transport sector. The 2018 pilot program was designed based on its findings, which included the importance of emotional intelligence, a growth mindset and using storytelling to transfer knowledge.

The 2019 WiT Mentoring Program has been grounded in best practice methodology paired with the 2017 Think Tank recommendation and an evaluation of the 2018 pilot program. This led to the program expanding beyond engineering and becoming more structured. The program will be a continuously updated initiative, taking into consideration ongoing feedback from participants in each round.

Month 1

- Mentoring benefits
- Roles and responsibilities
- Establishing a successful mentoring relationship
 - Rapport Building
- Setting goals

Mentoring

The best way to describe a mentor is a 'wise and trusted adviser'. The process of mentoring involves a more experienced, highly regarded, empathetic person (the mentor), guiding a less experienced individual (the mentee) in the development and examination of their own ideas, knowledge, skill, and ability.

Mentors encourage and empower mentees through the transfer of experiences, ideas and industry knowledge to help them achieve professional and personal goals. Mentoring is a two-way relationship based on encouragement, respect, willingness to share, honesty, trust and the courage to explore and open new doors.

What are the benefits of having a mentor?

- Expand your professional networks
- Guide your career development
- Gain a deeper understanding of Victoria's transport industry
- Increase self-awareness
- Explore your development areas and strengths
- Enhance your professional skills and capabilities
- Increase your awareness of potential stumbling blocks
- Challenge your thinking
- Explore multiple approaches to find the best solutions

What are the benefits of being a mentor?

- Expand your professional network
- Develop your leadership, coaching and communication skills
- Have the chance to give back to the industry
- Take time to self-reflect on your own journey and experience
- Have the opportunity to share and be recognised for your knowledge and experience
- Benefit from a sense of fulfilment and personal growth
- Have the opportunity to gain a fresh perspective and challenge your thinking.

What mentoring is not...

- A relationship that is critical or judgmental in any way
- Based on a power relationship
- A one-way relationship
- A transfer of technical skills

Roles and responsibilities

For both mentors and mentees:

- Be readily available and reliable
- Maintain confidentiality
- Demonstrate commitment to the relationship and getting the most out of the mentoring program.

The role as a **mentee** is to:

- Be clear about your goals and expectations for the program
- Set meetings and come prepared to them
- Ensure your goals are set and regularly reviewed with your mentor
- Be open to new knowledge and to being challenged
- Deliver on agreed activities explored with your mentor
- Provide feedback to your mentor on how the program is progressing for you
- Proactively seek guidance and be open to asking and receiving feedback
- Demonstrate drive and tenacity in acquiring new knowledge

The role of the **mentor** is to:

- Take a long-range view on the mentees career and help them see the destination without showing the mentee the detailed map of how to get there
- Provide support and encouragement to mentees by sharing experiences
- Act as a sounding board and active listener
- Support mentees to develop agreed goals and resolve problems through questioning and challenging
- Assist mentees in forecasting challenges and guide them through navigating these situations
- Create networking opportunities for mentees through facilitated relationships
- Support mentees in bridging capability gaps.

Establishing a successful mentoring relationship

The program will walk you through these steps and can serve as conversation-starters.

1. Rapport Building

Who am I? Who are you? How can we work well together?

2. Setting and Progressing the Direction

Mentees

What are your objectives? What do you want to achieve? What are your current challenges? How can your mentor guide you?

Mentors

Do you know your mentees objectives and challenges? How can you guide them?

3. Evaluate or Redefine

Mentees

Are you on track to achieving your objectives? If not, what is needed to get you back on track?
How is the mentoring relationship going?

Mentors

If your mentee isn't on track, what do they need to get back on track?
How is the mentoring relationship going?

4. Winding Up – Where to next?

Every mentoring experience is different and unique. How you develop and progress your mentoring objectives and relationship is up to you and how you work best with your mentor / mentee. Do not feel limited by the program. After all, the program only runs for six-months but your mentoring relationship can last a lifetime.

Rapport building

Come prepared to your first meeting

Come prepared to introduce yourself and talk about expectations, goals, expected outcomes, logistics and availability. Read up their profile and re-read this month's guide.

Share your story

Talk about yourself. What are your interests and passions? Share as much as you feel comfortable.

MENTEE

What do people not know about you? What do you want to get out of your career?

MENTOR

What are your career highlights? What do you love most about your role?

Talk about the 'big picture'

MENTEE

Begin building a picture of what your mentor is like and how you can build a valuable relationship with them.

MENTOR

Share any of your own mentoring experiences and the aspects of mentoring you enjoy most.

Discuss expectations, goals, and responsibilities

MENTEE

Discuss what you want to get out of the mentoring relationship including 3-4 specific goals you would like to achieve.

MENTOR

Discuss your expectations for the mentoring relationship and outline your purpose, role, and responsibilities as a mentor.

Confidentiality

Confirm confidentiality with your mentor/mentee and let them know that what they share with you will not go past the conversation. Emphasise the importance of confidentiality as required.

Be frank

MENTEE

To get the most benefit from the program, be as open and honest as possible with your mentor, even if you do not agree with your mentor's advice or feel that the relationship is not working.

MENTOR

Encourage your mentee to be open and honest in your meetings with them. Emphasise that it is safe for them to let you know if they feel the mentoring relationship is not working.

Confirm your meetings

Discuss and confirm the days and times most suitable for you. Discuss preferences for meeting locations and how you like to run them e.g. off-site, over lunch, in the office, over a morning coffee walk. It is up to both mentors and mentees to be accountable for scheduling the meetings.

Developing S.M.A.R.T. goals

Ideally, at least 2 of the mentees 3-4 goals should be achievable within the timeframe of this program (six months) and they should follow the S.M.A.R.T. model:

S Specific

A goal that is specific is more likely to be met than an ambiguous goal. Ask yourself: 'Is it clear what has to happen?' And 'Is the goal meaningful'.

M Measurement

Measures help you identify your progress in meeting your goal. Ask yourself: 'How will I know when the goal has been achieved?'

A Achievable

You should always ensure the goals you set are attainable. Ask yourself: 'Do I have the knowledge and skills to achieve this goal?' And 'What resources or support do I need to be able to successfully achieve the goal?'

R Realistic

A realistic goal is one that can be achieved within a specific timeframe and that you have or foresee you will have the capacity for within that timeframe. You can test this by asking yourself whether you have accomplished a similar challenge in the past and what conditions you might need to achieve the goal.

T Timely

Goals need a timeframe of when they should be achieved and milestones to track progress along the way. This creates a sense of urgency and gives you the opportunity to prioritise your goals.