Downer
Relationships creating success

Mentoring at Downer:

A how to guide for mentors of apprentices

AKO AOTEAROA
NATIONAL CENTRE FOR
TERTIARY TEACHING
EXCELLENCE

Trevor is completing a National Certificate in Water Treatment.

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Mentoring is a discreet relationship, built on trust and respect. A mentor is there to give support and encouragement, to allow the mentee to challenge their own learning, set goals and develop their skills.

Mentors have one thing in common – they genuinely want to help others succeed. When you mentor you will be helping to enable the mentee reach their full potential. In the process you will come away with unique experiences that will enrich your own life. The difference you make will not be forgotten by the employee – many will want to become mentors themselves in the future.
Your work will:

- Keep mentee's and other learners motivated and on track;
- Increase the likelihood that they will stay in the job;
- Increase the likelihood that they will complete their industry qualification; and
- Upskill and reward you.

Downer NZ values the role mentors play in assisting mentees to achieve and progress in their careers. Apprentices are a critical part of our talent pipeline. Through investing time in their development we will gain engaged employees with a broad understanding of what we do, as well as:

- Increased productivity;
- Decreased rework;
- Greater retention rates; and
- More qualified tradespeople.

This guide to mentoring aims to address many of the questions mentors may have around understanding what's involved, what the mentoring role is (and isn't) as well as providing mentors with some tools and places to go to get more support.

The role of a mentor

What good mentors do

- Build trust
- Focus on the mentee (whole of life)
- Be a positive role model
- Actively listen
- Use lots of focused, open ended questions
- Gather ideas about the mentee's goals and problems
- Encourage their mentee to think realistically
- Challenge the mentee's ideas
- Gain the mentee's commitment
- Help the mentee to set SMART objectives
- Be non judgemental
- Have sufficient time to commit to the mentor/mentee relationship

Mentors need to be

- Motivating
- Respectful
- Non-judgemental
- Committed
- Able to ask skilful questions
- Knowledgeable (life and technical skills)
- Organised
- Demonstrating organisational knowledge

Building trust

Trust is the key to building a strong mentoring relationship. It is important to focus on establishing and maintaining trust in the relationship. Ways to do this include:

1. Provide an appropriate and safe mentoring environment;
2. Meet with the mentee on a regular basis (fortnightly is recommended);
3. Provide feedback on progress;
4. Encourage independence; and
5. Understand the mentee.

Managers and Mentors

A mentor focuses on developing the mentee at work, in study and personally. The mentor isn't critical about the mentee's work and doesn't get involved in performance reviews. The mentor needs to build trust so the mentee feels free to discuss issues openly and honestly, without worrying about negative consequences on the job.

The manager is focused on achieving the objectives of the business. They assign tasks, evaluate work and manage performance.

On job learning with Integrated Traffic Solutions.

Understanding apprenticeships

Industry Training Organisations (ITOs)

ITOs are set up by industry to manage industry training. They set the standard for training providers. They also enrol apprentices in New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA) qualifications and award certification when the apprentice has completed. Downer currently has trainees enrolled in 4 ITOs:

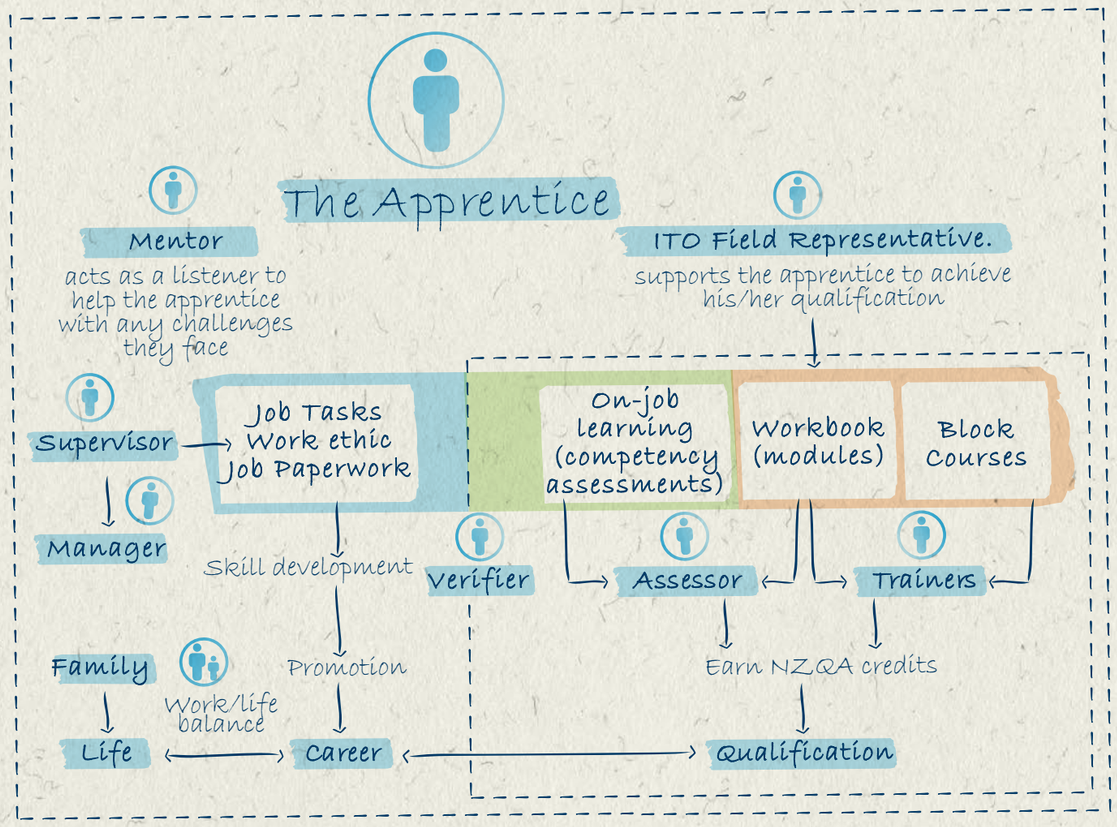
ITO Name:	Areas of training:
Infrastructure ITO	Telecommunication, transportation and water qualifications
Primary ITO	Water, sports turf, horticulture and pest management qualifications
Skills Organisation	Plumbing and drainlaying qualifications
Motor ITO	Extractive industries (mining) and automotive engineering qualifications

Qualifications

Apprentices are working towards a National Certificate and or a Diploma at the trade level. The qualification is made up of on job (competency assessments) and off job (block courses). The apprentice will need to focus on gaining *credits* towards their qualification.

The apprentice has the challenge of understanding how the new qualification will work, as well as learning a new job while juggling their personal commitments. Ultimately, there are a number of people involved to guide the apprentice through their studies. As a mentor you will need to support and understand the challenges the apprentice is facing and keep the end goal of gaining a trade qualification in mind.

Apprentice support framework



Apprentice support framework

ITO Field Rep: Manage the process of signing the apprentice into the right qualification for their needs, then monitor the apprentice's progress to ensure the apprentice is completing their qualification within the appropriate timeframes.

Verifier: A verifier is someone who will confirm the apprentice has completed the required tasks. In most work situations the verifier is generally the Supervisor, Foreperson, Manager, or Leading Hand.

Mentor: A mentor is there to give support and encouragement, to allow the mentee to challenge their learning and set goals to develop their skills.

Trainer: A trainer undertakes off job training for specific unit standards. Trainer's must be registered with the ITO responsible for the unit standard to count towards their qualification.

Assessor: An assessor ensures the apprentice is competent in the unit standards they complete. Assessors must be trained and registered with the ITO responsible for the unit standards. Downer has a number of qualified in-house assessors.

Apprentice qualifications

The Downer definition of an apprentice or advanced trainee is anyone completing study towards a level 3 or 4 trade related qualification. The most common qualifications Downer apprentices are working towards are listed on page 18 and 19.

A collaborative approach to mentoring apprentices

Downer is adopting a collaborative model to assist apprentices get through their qualification and to kick start their career.

This means we will work with Industry Training Organisations, understand what their role is and keep open communication between Downer and the ITO regarding the apprentice. The collaborative model shows the different roles for the apprentice, mentor, ITO representative and Downer.

The Collaborative Model

Amon is a Cable Jointer in our Telecommunications team.

Defining roles

	Accountability	Start Up	Ongoing Learning	Meetings	Reporting	Results
Apprentice	Learn and complete qualification within required timeframes. Apply learning on the job.	Make commitment. Understand qualification and develop a study plan.	Attend off job training. Meet agreed study goals.	Attend regular mentoring meetings as required. Attend ITO rep meetings.	Submit qualification requirements on time. Report back to manager when unit standard achieved or not achieved.	Gain a broad based skill set. Progress steadily and achieve results. Qualify as a tradesperson.
Mentor	Engage learner. Build relationship and challenge.	Hold start up meeting. Develop study and life goals with mentee.	Technical and personal support. Link with ITO.	Regular contact.	Support for apprentice as required.	Increased productivity/ retention. Increased ability for Downer to win work.
ITO Field Rep.	Set up qualifications. Oversee progression and qualification completions.	Register qualification for apprentice. Make contact with apprentice and allocate assessor.	Contact/meet, minimum standard requirements for qualification /practical support. Inform Downer apprentice manager if issues.	Check in with manager on progress. Manager/ mentor education on qualification.	Apprentice Progress reports monthly.	Qualification completion success rates.
Learning and Development	Manage apprentice programme.	Assist qualification/ career pathways. Support programme development and implementation.	Manage national relationships with ITOs. Mentor the mentors.	Facilitate National Apprentice Steering Group. Multiple business contacts.	Manage funding. ITO reports into the talent pipeline database.	Grow our talent. Grow our business.

Planning sessions

It's likely this will be your mentee's first mentoring experience, so you will need to take the lead in setting up the first meeting and what the mentee can expect by having a mentor.

The first session

Ensure you have sufficient time and privacy for the following:

- discussing how the sessions will be run (see mentor/mentee agreement);
- learning a little about each other (whole of life approach);
- discussing confidentiality and boundaries of the mentoring relationship;
- planning your ongoing schedule of meeting times, duration and place;
- discussing work and study aspects requirements for the mentee; and
- set a study goal.

Further tips for conducting all sessions

- Allow the discussion to go beyond any immediate issue;
- Be clear about what you can and can't do as a mentor;
- Listen carefully to the mentee's ideas and concerns;
- Reflect back what they say before offering a new perspective (be a mirror);
- Try not to be the knowledgeable person who tells the mentee how to do it;
- Admit when you don't have answers – work together to find them;
- Encourage the mentee – even if he / she doesn't seem to need it;
- Avoid infringing on the relationship between the mentee and their manager;
- Help the mentee to find ways to deal with problems; avoid sorting it out for them; and
- Gain the mentee's agreement before discussing issues with anyone else.

Jesse and Andrew are both studying and are part of the AKO Mentoring Programme.

Planning the first mentoring session

Mentee's name: Joe Bloggs **Mentor's name:** Donald Trump

Meeting place: Smoko room Is this space private? Yes/No

Date for first session: 25 April 2014

Start Time: 3:30pm How long will you allow?: 1 hour

Introductions?

Interests

What do they want out of this

Confidentiality

What will be the focus?

Future sessions (where, when, how often)

Set boundaries, mentoring agreement, Code Of Ethics

What does Joe want out of this relationship (GROW model)

Set a work goal (smart goal)

What outcomes should there be?

Agreement over future sessions

Mentoring agreement completed

Understand Joe's needs

Have a work goal to focus

What if it all goes to custard?

(What should I do if the meeting doesn't go well?)

How he can get in touch with me if he needs to

If things don't go well in this session practice Active Listening

Find out more about what Joe wants and let him steer the conversation

Any unanswered questions?

Mentor's checklist

For the first session you will need to:

- ☐ Decide on a place to meet (somewhere private and comfortable)
- ☐ Allow enough time for the meeting (1/2 hour to an hour uninterrupted)
- ☐ Plan what you are going to talk about for the first session (use the planning sheet)
- ☐ Get their agreement on how the mentoring relationship will work (use the mentoring agreement)
- ☐ Why are you here? (GROW model)

As a mentor you need to:

- ☐ Complete a mentoring agreement with your mentee
- ☐ Record each mentoring session using the record sheet
- ☐ Meet regularly with your mentee
- ☐ Be open and available
- ☐ Respect confidentiality
- ☐ Understand the difference between being a manager and a mentor

Build trust

- ☐ Provide positive feedback
- ☐ Encourage independence
- ☐ Respect the mentoring code of ethics

Actively listen

- ☐ Stop and listen! (count to 7)
- ☐ Show you were listening by what you say
- ☐ Accept what the mentee says as valid for them

Ask focused questions

- ☐ **G**oal (gather ideas about the issue/goal)
- ☐ **R**eality (encourage them to think realistically)
- ☐ **O**ption (challenge their ideas)
- ☐ **W**illingness (gain commitment)

Promote action

- ☐ Encourage them to make and commit to career goals
- ☐ Set SMART objectives

Tools for mentoring

Active listening

Active listening is more than just hearing the other person's words. It's your ability to really understand and know what is said, how it's said, and what is not said. An active listener uses their ears, eyes, brain, emotions and body language.

To actively listen:

Stop and listen:

- Stop talking (count to 7)
- Be prepared to listen
- Get rid of distractions
- Use attentive and open body language

Show you're listening:

- Use encouraging responses to show you're listening
- Use open questions to get more information
- Say back what you have heard to ensure you are on track

Accept what they say:

- Be non judgemental
- Accept their thoughts, opinions and feelings as valid for them
- Reflect on their feelings
- Reflect on what the other person is meaning

Focused questions

You won't have all the answers to the questions your mentee has, and telling them the answers isn't a mentor's job. Mentors guide mentees to think things through, form their own opinions and set their own career goals which they are responsible for achieving.

Using open and closed questions is a good way to do this. Closed questions can usually be answered with a single word or a short phrase. Whereas open questions are likely to receive a long answer and encourage the person to think, give their opinions and take control of the conversation.

Natalia and Mikhael are design cadets based in Auckland.

GROW Model

The GROW model is a great way to use focused questions. **GROW stands for:**

Goal

What is your goal?
» Exactly what do you want to achieve?
» What are 2-3 steps you can take to achieve your goal?
» How will you know if you are successful?

Reality

What is the current reality?
» What have you already tried?
» What's stopping you from achieving this goal?
» What are some of the challenges you might face?

Options

What options do you have?
» What would you gain/lose by doing that?
» Who else might be able to help?
» What has worked for you already?
» What else have you thought about as a possible solution?

Willingness

How willing/committed are you?
» What are three actions you can do this week towards your goal?
» On a scale of 1-10, how confident do you feel about taking these actions?
» What would increase that score? (e.g. clearer steps, more support)

SMART Goals

SMART goals help gain understanding about what really needs to be done. Helping your mentee set SMART goals around their career and study will help them identify what they really need to do.
SMART stands for:

	Description	SMART goal example
Specific	Which, what, who, where, when, why	Achieve my qualification
Measurable	How much or how many	By completing 35 credits every 6 months
Action oriented	Describe a result	Unit standards appear on my ITO transcript
Realistic and relevant	Realistic and relevant to what else is happening	Taking account of business and personal needs (what are they?)
Time based	By when	By December 2016

Resources and support for mentors

Here are some ideas you may like to explore with your mentee.

Issues	Support avenues
Literacy Needs	» Downer in-house literacy champions » Literacy Aotearoa – 25 hours free one on one support » Dyslexia assessment (Primary ITO offer this) » Dragon Software: speech recognition software that turns your talk into text » ITO field representative
Maths	» Downer in-house literacy champions » Literacy Aotearoa – 25 hours free one on one support » Local maths tutors » ITO field representative
Time management	» Goal setting apps on their smart phone » Detail in mentor record » Set SMART objectives » ITO field representative
Employment issues or personal issues	» Employer Assistance Programme phone 0800 284 678 » Downer Human Resource Advisors » Please note: If contacting someone on their behalf, ensure you have their permission and respect their confidentiality.
More ideas on how to mentor	» Downer Learning Advisors » Local mentoring hubs » This guide

Cathy is a Subject Matter Expert in our Telecommunications team.

Mentoring in action

The following scenarios have been put together to help explore the types of issues your mentee may face and how you could approach each issue.

Scenario: Induction

It's the second week on the job. Steve is trying to keep up with the instructions given to him by his supervisor and co-workers. At the induction they said he needed to fill out a DJR if he wanted to be paid. He still hasn't filled one in, and he can't remember what DJR stands for. He has no idea where the forms are kept, or what to do with one after he has filled it in. He's been assigned a buddy, and had hoped to ask him, but the buddy is working with another team this week. He knocks on the supervisor's door, but the supervisor shouts "Not now!"

He asks another worker who is climbing into his truck. "Sorry, got to do a safety check, ask Rob." "Who's Rob?" asks Steve, but the worker has gone.

What could Steve have done differently?

How can you support Steve's understanding of Downer?

Scenario: Getting to work

Eddie lives in Massey and has to be at the site in Mt. Eden by 7am every morning. There are no buses or trains that arrive into Mt. Eden that early, so he always arrives a bit late for work.

He can tell that his co-workers and the supervisor are not happy.

Eddie's brother has moved to Australia, and his car is parked outside the house. Though he knows how to drive, Eddie hasn't used it because he doesn't have his licence yet. He can see it will take ages to get one. Maybe he should just use the car to get to work and get his licence later?

What would you suggest to Eddie?

How can you help him?

Scenario: Family support and transport

Tolly has been taken on as an older apprentice. He is very proud of himself. His wages will be low for quite a long time, but he will gain skills and a qualification! His family is not so pleased. His Dad says: "We need more money coming into the house. We must give money to the church, your Grandmother back home needs money, everybody wants money and I can't even pay the bills for us! Why don't you get a proper job?"

Tolly is determined to carry on in this job and do the training. The trouble is, he is always the one asked to mind the baby on weekends, which means he can't study and he can't volunteer when his boss wants him to work extra hours. He doesn't say anything about his home responsibilities to his boss. Maybe people at work think he is lazy?

What else do you need to know about Tolly's circumstances?

How might you support him?

Justin and Eliza work together in our Open Space Management team.

Scenario: Employment issues

Erin was excited about her apprenticeship in Downer's Open Space Management business. She has a cousin who started his apprenticeship in the same business and at the same time, but in a different region. They enjoyed swapping notes about their work. Yesterday she learned that her cousin was getting more pay than she was. She went straight to her supervisor and asked why she was being paid less.

She realised later that she had raised her voice a little and hoped the group of workers gathered near the door when she left, hadn't heard her.

What does Erin need to know about dealing with contractual matters?

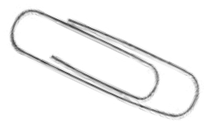
What would you suggest to her?

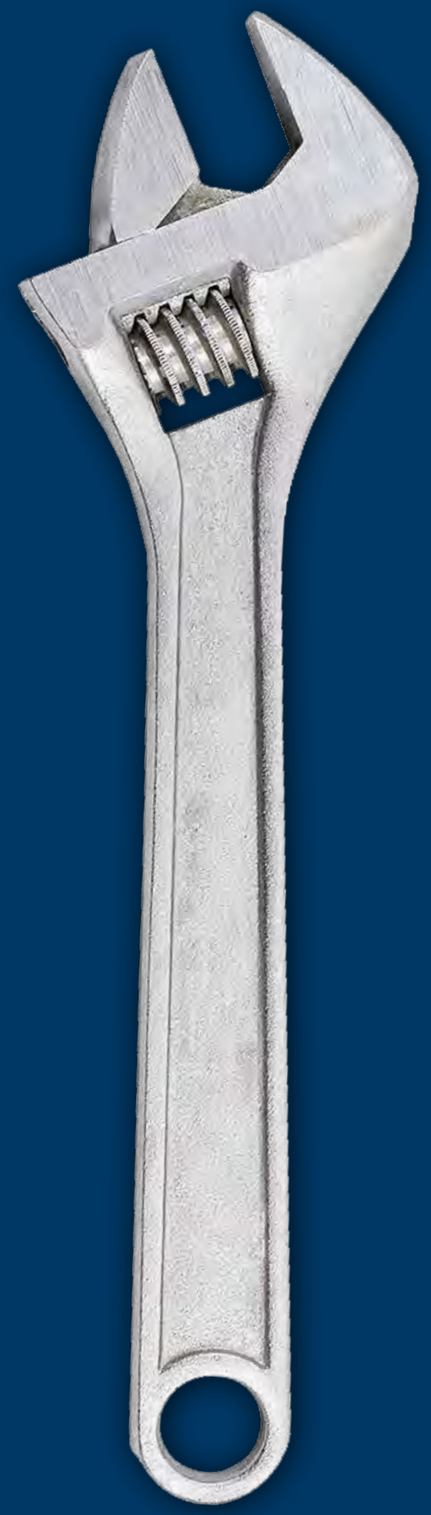
Scenario: Doing the paperwork

Allan is fast and efficient in his job. He has a great memory for details and he is really good with customers. He has been working for Downer for 15 years without having to read much – most communications are verbal. Now his boss says all Downer employees in the water business must complete their national qualification in water reticulation. The boss adds that completing the qualification will help Allan do his job well. What does he think Allan's been doing for the past 15 years?

The workbook the boss gave him looks really complicated and Allan is worried: Maybe if he doesn't do the training, he will lose his job.

How can you help him with that?





Mentoring at Downer:

Appendices and Templates

Overview of Qualifications

Telecommunications

Qualification	Competency Assessments %	Workbook (modules) %	Block Courses Y/N	Comments
Level 2 Telecommunications	75%	25%	Yes	3 courses required
Level 3 Telecommunications	66%	33%	Yes	2 courses required
New Level 3 Telecommunications	60%	40%	Yes	5 courses required
Level 4 Electrical Engineer	60%	40%	Yes	3 courses required + night classes
NZDE Level 6 Telecommunications		100%	Yes	Between 2 and 3 courses + night classes

Open Space Management

Qualification	Block Courses Y/N	Comments
Sports Turf management – Level 4	Yes	3 block courses (5 days each)
Horticulture – Level 3	No	Can be done all on-job. Training days aligned with electives.
Horticulture (Advanced) – Amenity Horticulture	No	4-5 training days (off job) per year in the classroom on average

Surjit is a Finance Analyst in our Telecommunications team.

Transportation

Qualification	Block Courses Y/N	Comments
Infrastructure Works - Level 2 » IW L2 OS1 – Earthworks » IW L2 OS2 – Pavement surfacing » IW L2 OS3 – Roads » IW L2 OS4 – Rural contracting » IW L2 OS5 – Utilities	No	Depending on electives chosen there can be 1 day training courses.
Civil Plant Operation – Level 3 » CPO – Culverts and drainage systems » CPO – Earthworks » CPO – Road construction » CPO – Road maintenance	No	Depending on electives chosen there can be 1 day training courses.
Infrastructure Works Supervision – Level 4 » IWS L4 OS1 – Asphalt surfacing » IWS L4 OS2 – Chipseal surfacing » IWS L4 OS3 – Civil works and utilities » IWS L4 OS4 – Road works » IWS L4 OS5 – Water » IWS L4 OS6 – Wastewater	No	Depending on electives chosen there can be 1 day training courses.

Water

Qualification	Block Courses Y/N	Comments
Water Reticulation – Planned & Reactive Maintenance Technician – Level 3 » NCWR L3 W – Water » NCWR L3 WW – Wastewater	Yes	3 courses (2 days each)
Water Reticulation (Supervisor) – Level 4 » NCWR L4 W – Water » NCWR L4 WW – Wastewater	Yes	Minimum 2 block courses (2 days each)
Water Treatment – Level 4 » NCWT – Water Treatment	Yes	2 block courses (2 weeks each)

Mentoring: Code Of Ethics

A mentoring relationship is based on trust. The code of ethics is designed to define what is acceptable and responsible behaviour for bother mentor and mentee.

The purpose of this code of ethics is to assist mentors and mentees develop and maintain an effective mentoring relationship.

Participation of both mentees and mentors is voluntary. Either party may break off the relationship if they feel it is not working. Both parties share responsibility for the smooth winding down and proper ending of their relationship.

Mentoring is a confidential activity in which both parties have a duty of care towards each other. The mentor will only disclose information when explicitly agreed upon with the mentee or when the mentor believes there is a serious danger to the mentee or others if the information is withheld.

The mentor's role is to respond in a non-judgemental and primarily non-directive manner to the mentee's performance and development needs. The aim is to help the mentee to articulate and achieve goals. The mentor will not impose their own agenda, nor will they intrude into areas that the mentee wishes to keep off limits.

Both parties will respect each other's time and other responsibilities, ensuring they do not impose beyond what is reasonable. Both parties will also respect the position of third parties.

The mentor will be aware of and operate within the limits of their experience and expertise.

The mentor and mentee will be honest with each other about how the mentoring relationship is working.

Adapted from the Code of Ethics published by Harris-Worthington, P Dr., (June 2009), Mentoring Guidelines, Ako Aotearoa, New Zealand and the Code of Practice published by the European Mentoring and Coaching Council.

Planning the first mentoring session

Mentee's name: **Mentor's name:**

Meeting place: Is this space private? Yes/No

Date for first session:

Start Time: How long will you allow?:

Introductions?

What will be the focus?

What outcomes should there be?

What if it all goes to custard?

(What should I do if the meeting doesn't go well?)

Any unanswered questions?

Mentoring Agreement

Mentee's name:

Mentor's name:

This agreement begins on: **and ends on:**

Our long term goals for this mentoring relationship are:

How we will meet: (place, frequency and duration)

How we will communicate between meetings:

How we will record and monitor our progress:

Confidentiality

We agree to keep everything that is within the mentoring relationship confidential. Nothing will be shared without the permission of the other person.

Mentee: **Date:**

Mentor: **Date:**

Mentor Record

Mentee's name: **Mentor's name:**

Meeting place: **Time:**

What was discussed:

Any action points achieved? *(since last session)*

Any action points agreed?

Comments/feedback from the mentee

Date of next arranged meeting:

Mentee and mentor sign off: *(required)*

Mentee: **Date:**

Mentor: **Date:**

Please send to your local Learning Administrator

Notes

What did I learn today / this week / this month

What was significant about what I learnt?

What will I do differently?

What have I achieved?

Do I need to change or update my goal(s)?

This document was prepared by Downer New Zealand
with assistance from Dr Chris Holland, WERDS.

Downer

Relationships creating success

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