

Valuable Tips for Effective Mentoring Techniques

A Guide for Journey Workers and Frontline Supervisors/Mentors

Getting the job done right requires workers to use their head as well as their hands. But if your apprentices are not receiving quality on-the-job training, they won't become the skilled employees you need. Effectively applied training techniques help make apprentices become more proficient and self-reliant. Here are a few mentoring skills that will make a difference when you train apprentices:

Time Management. Time management means more than establishing priorities and delegating specific tasks. Time management should be a primary concern for the mentor. It is an important part of the apprentice's training to realize that there is always a dynamic tension between accomplishing all job requirements in a timely manner while maintaining a standard of quality workmanship. Good time management skills include:

- ❖ Ability to clarify priorities
- ❖ Ability to eliminate time wasters
- ❖ Ability to structure the day
- ❖ Ability to overcome procrastination
- ❖ Ability to control the details
- ❖ Ability to focus on results

Understand the Role of the Apprentice. The mentor must understand the role of the apprentice. Apprentices are learners. The supervisor must:

- ❖ Recognize the skill level of the apprentice
- ❖ Recognize the learning style of the apprentice
- ❖ Establish skill level advancement, so the apprentice knows how to reach the next step
- ❖ Explain the trade/occupational language, including tools and processes

The Supervisor Serves as a Mentor. Mentoring is a partnership based on mutual respect with both parties contributing to the discussion as the mentor and apprentice work together. The mentor will have more experience, insight or knowledge, but the relationship is one of sharing and teaching. The mentor's role includes:

- ❖ Explaining the expectations of the employer.
- ❖ Explaining the expectations of co-workers.
- ❖ Explaining what the apprentice can expect from the employer.
- ❖ Listening to the concerns of the apprentice.
- ❖ Explaining the working relationship between the trades.
- ❖ Making the apprentice aware of all safety aspects of the job.
- ❖ Actively participating in the apprentice's on-the-job learning.

Apprenticeship Advantage

Apprentices learn by doing. Apprenticeship training is 10 percent classroom instruction and 90 percent on-the-job learning. Good apprenticeship training takes planning and requires that a supervisor/mentor be responsible for that planning. The apprenticeship mentor must be diligent about planning work activities for the apprentice so that the apprentice is able to obtain the well-rounded skills he or she expected to receive when signing the apprentice training agreement.

The result will be better on-the-job training, more proficient employees, happier customers and a healthier bottom line.

To learn more about NCDOL's Transition to Trainer Workshop, call (919) 733-0327 or visit <http://www.nclabor.com/appren/appindex.htm>.