LTM provides tailored Mentoring Training so that the Mentoring support provided meets the needs of its users. It prides itself in its uniqueness of working cross-sector.

This is reinforced by its unrivalled partnership relationships, collaborating with key players across the East of England, to deliver publicly funded and commercial projects in many diverse contexts...

All of which enables LTM to reach out to communities with a distinctive offering of expert-driven services.

LTM specialises in developing customised:

- Community Mentoring Programmes targeting young people and adults
- Business Mentoring Support Projects
- Delivering Accredited Mentoring Training and Qualifications
- Interpretation Services
- Providing Equalities and Cultural Diversity Training & Guidance
- Research and Development
- Engaging with the 'Hard to Reach' groups and Businesses

Our contact details are:

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Welcome to the Employers Guide to Mentoring for Apprentices

This guide has been designed to help you as an employer understand how apprentices can be supported through mentoring. By taking an apprentice you have made an investment by ensuring that he/she develops the skills and experience to meet your business needs. Mentoring makes a positive difference to both employer and apprentice.

Focused on your business needs this Guide outlines:-

Benefits to employers of being involved in this pilot mentoring programme

Mentoring is widely used to support the development of individuals and contribute to improve performance. Programmes delivered by Luton Training & Mentoring (LTM) has shown success in using mentors to reduce drop out rates, support improvements in academic performance, helping the development of key skills, enhance confidence level and broaden outlook of young people from diverse community groups.

The benefits of mentoring recognised by many businesses include:

- Retention of quality staff
- Enhanced transfer of skills
- Gains in productivity and the performance of individuals
- Increased on-job learning that reduces off-job training costs
- Better communication, commitment and motivation
- A cost-effective method to enhance staff development

Benefits to apprentices being mentored on this pilot programme

Some essential do’s and don’ts for mentoring:

- Take the time to develop a good rapport with your apprentice.
- Be encouraging and positive.
- Express interest in remembering what your apprentice has said and done, as it is one of the best ways of developing trust and a strong relationship.
- A mentor and apprentice should plan to meet at least once a month.
- Any information and advice given by mentors will be based on their personal experience and is not intended to replace professional advice where appropriate. The mentor and apprentice should not visit each other’s home.
- No alcohol should be consumed at meetings between the mentor and apprentice.
- Please contact the LTM if you have anything you would like to discuss anything about the programme you wish to discuss at any time.
- Meeting record sheets should be completed at the end of each meeting and sent or emailed to LTM.
Mentoring is about one person helping another to achieve something that is important to them. It is about giving help and support in a non-threatening way, in a manner that the apprentice finds useful and empowers them to move forward with confidence towards what they want to achieve. Mentoring operates in an informal setting that facilitates open, frank and confidential discussion about an individual’s needs and circumstances with another person, who is in a position to help and explore options available to them in a positive manner.

LTM has been commissioned by LSC to pilot a mentoring programme for apprentices in Bedfordshire, Luton and Hertfordshire Local Learning Skills Council areas. The objective of this pilot is to challenge and change current participation trends in work based learning, by engaging existing apprentices from underrepresented groups. Employers will be supported to identify and address barriers and good practice to improve participation and success of apprenticeship schemes. For example, positive action strategies, marketing materials, recruitment and selection criteria, flexible working, use of role models etc. It is highlighted that this pilot comes to an end in July 2009.

The elements of this pilot programme are to:

- Engage up to 50 apprentices from under-represented groups.
- Provide mentoring using LTM personnel.
- Give apprentices the opportunity to gain mentoring skills customise to fit in with their existing workload either a Level 1 / 2 mentoring qualification or bespoke mentor training programme

What is required from apprentices acting as mentors?

What am I expected to achieve with the mentee?

When an apprentice begins mentoring, we will provide you with the know-how to develop your skills in mentoring other apprentices. In many ways your mentee will have similar needs as you had when you were receiving mentoring from LTM.

However you will not be alone as LTM will continue to provide you with the support needed to assist others. You will act as a role model. The qualities required of a mentor are: - good listening skills, approachable, non judgemental, make the time to assist others and reliable.

How will I know if what I am doing is useful?

You are encouraged to talk to LTM’s Project Manager to share information about their progress through its “Starting Out” programme of buddying support.

Welcome to mentoring

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The apprentice is given the opportunity to talk with a LTM mentor about their current work and personal issues. Our mentor will provide advice based on their own knowledge and personal experiences. Also the mentor will give constructive feedback on the apprentice’s activities and progress. All LTM mentors have be cleared by the Criminal Records Bureau.

An LTM mentor is not expected to replace the role of a supervisor/manager, a lecturer or a counsellor. If an apprentice requires the services or these people, the mentor will advise the individual to contact their employer or work based learning provider.

What does mentoring involve?

- Mentors and apprentices will meet every fortnight. There is the flexibility to vary this to meet the needs of employers and apprentices.

- At this meeting apprentices generally talk about their work and course goals.

How will mentoring work in this pilot programme?

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Mentors and apprentices can meet at college, at the employer’s premises, or at LTM’s offices.

Apprentices can choose to be mentored one-to-one, in a pair or in a larger group.

LTM Mentors will:
- Meet regularly with the apprentice until July 2009.
- Provide support and guidance to the apprentice in relation to the individual’s aspirations and career plans.

Roles and Responsibilities

The relationship between mentor and apprentice is based on mutual respect.

The role of the mentor is to support the apprentice’s needs, respond to the apprentice’s aspirations and career plans and make recommendations.

The apprentice should consider the mentor’s suggestions and make their own judgement call including not to follow any given advice.

Disclosure of personal details is at the discretion of the mentor and the apprentice.

After July 2009 when the mentoring programme has been a discussion with LTM’s Project Manager, the Employer and the apprentice will determine the next steps.

What is my involvement as an employer in this pilot mentoring programme?

Your role is to:

- Encourage apprentices to take part in the Pilot.
- Identify a named person, who LTM can communicate with during this pilot programme in order make this experience positive for the apprentice in your workplace employers.
- Participate on the Steering Group and give feedback on an ongoing basis of what is working well on the pilot and what needs to be improved for future programmes.
- Provide a room for the mentoring meeting to take place if you have this facility. Alternatively allow your apprentices the time to attend the mentoring session off site. It should be noted that LTM will agree in advance schedule of meetings both with the apprentice and your named employee to factor in the workplace demands.

Obviously a degree of flexibility is required if the mentoring session has to be cancelled or re-scheduled by either the mentor or apprentice.

The benefits of mentoring for apprentices are that it:

- Enhances their training and career development
- Influences their attitudes and professional outlook
- Helps them to explore options to overcome barriers
- Improves their problem solving skills by challenging their assumptions
- Provides support and advice from someone outside the apprenticeship scheme

LTM’s experience of mentoring programme with under represented groups especially young people indicates that those who become mentors:

- Find satisfaction from helping others and seeing them progress
- Have the opportunity to practise and develop management skills not readily available to them in the workplace
- Increased their self-confidence and higher visibility within the business
- Improved their self-confidence and understanding what is required from them to progress their career aspirations.
- Gain personal satisfaction and insight through supporting other peers by becoming a role model

LTM will provide qualified Mentors. There is no cost to the employer or apprentices for the FREE mentoring. The apprentices have the opportunity to acquire an additional Level 1 / 2 Mentoring qualifications or alternatively receive bespoke training that will enable them to act as mentors to other apprentices.