MODULE 1 Facilitator's Guide

Cultivating a Strong Mentoring Culture Within the Workplace

In-Person Training Setup

- ✓ Arrange seating in small groups of 3-6 per table
- ✓ Have energizing music playing to set the tone
- ✓ Place the following on each table for small groups: pens, notecards, sharpies, and Post-it notes
- ✓ Have 1-2 flipcharts with markers to capture discussions
- ✓ Have projector screen prepared for training slides
  - o If using YouTube videos, download the videos in advance and save it on your computer to avoid buffering or internet connection issues. This tool can help you download from YouTube: https://y2mate.com/.
  - o Be sure you have audio capability in the room so people will be able to hear videos. Bring a speaker for your laptop as a back-up.

Facilitator's Tips

If you find yourself leading an in-person training, I want you to take a deep breath and know that you are not alone in communicating this content. This facilitator's guide provides a script you can use when presenting the content. In relevant sections, we include external resources you can review on your own to become more familiar with the subject matter.

Throughout this guide, you'll see callouts where you might want to tailor your message, depending on the audience. We also provide you with notes, tips, and context along the way. This information will be labeled "Facilitator's Tip."

Module 1: Agenda and Timeline

Duration (45-60 Minutes)	Topic/Activity
2-3 minutes	Hello & Introductions
5 minutes	Did You Know? Interactive Activity
2-3 minutes	Objectives/DEI Concept Specified
30-45 minutes	Core Content & Interactive Discussions
5 minutes	Reflective Examination Question

Objective: Participants will know what a mentoring mindset is and how it relates to workplace environment and culture.

Outcome: Inclusion for mentee and workplace fulfillment + Improved employee retention and satisfaction.

DEI Concepts and Integration: Cultural humility and understanding

Reflective Examination Question: Speaking and declarations

Audience: This module contains adaptations for mentors, mentees, and employers.

Module 1: Cultivating a Strong Mentoring Culture Within the Workplace

Color-Coded Sections:

White = Module script

Green = Facilitator's tips

Blue = Audience the script is addressing

Hello & Introductions

(2-3 minutes)

Addressing All Participants:

Hello there!

We are so excited that you have decided to spend the next 45 minutes with us. Together, we'll navigate ways to build deeper relationships.

This session will focus on cultivating a strong mentoring culture within your workplace.

◊ *Addressing Mentors and Mentees:*
We hope that by exploring ways to develop a mentoring mindset within your workplace, you can grow individually *and* professionally.

◊ *Addressing Employers:*
We hope that by exploring ways to develop a mentoring mindset within your workplace, you can help your employees *and* your business grow – leading to more satisfied customers and higher employee retention and production.

Addressing All Participants:

Now, some of you may be thinking, "I am here just to go through this training because "*I have to.*" But if you interact with the content and consciously plug in, you will leave with tangible and applicable concepts. These mentoring concepts will help you grow as a person and strengthen your team.

This training will be interactive, engaging, informative, and hopefully refreshing! Let's dive in!

Did You Know? Interactive Activity

(5 minutes)

Addressing All Participants:

Let's start by playing Two Truths and a Lie. The rules of this game are simple. You will be given three statistics. Of the three, two are true and one is a lie. It is your job to determine which are true and which one is false. Pretty simple, right?

1. Did you know that 23% of employees who were looking for a new job said that corporate culture was the main reason? – ***False; The right answer was 43% (Source: Hayes.com)***
2. Did you know that when surveyed, 92% of employees said they would be more likely to stay with their job if their bosses would show more empathy? - ***True (Source: Businessolver)***
3. Did you know that when surveyed, 76% of employees who don't feel valued at work sought out other job opportunities elsewhere? ***True (Source: Gallup)***

◊   ***Addressing Employers and Mentors:***

So, what does that tell us? It shows that workplace culture matters more than we might think. When workers don't feel valued and don't see opportunities for growth, their performance suffers. In fact, as many as 50% of employees have considered taking a pay cut because of dissatisfaction with their current organization.

Consider your own company's history. What is the most common reason employees have left for other employment in the past? One tangible way to improve your organization's culture is by developing a mentoring program within your workplace.

◊   ***Addressing Mentees:***

So what does that tell us? It shows that workplace culture matters more than companies often realize. One tangible way to improve your organization's culture is by encouraging your manager to develop a mentoring program within your workplace. You'll likely find this leads to increased opportunities for you and your colleagues.

Objectives/DEI Concept Specified

(2-3 minutes)

Addressing All Participants:

In this section, we will dive into the importance of welcoming, developing, and maintaining a strong mentoring culture within the workplace. There are plenty of benefits, including:

1. Improved workplace morale
2. Higher levels of employee retention and satisfaction

Employees who have positive relationships with their bosses are more likely to remain at their place of employment. Cultural humility and understanding can play a major part in the reconciliation of communication between employers and employees.

If you're up for the challenge and ready to learn and grow, here is what you can expect to walk away with after this session:

- You will know what a mentoring mindset is and how it relates to the workplace environment and culture.
- You will understand how a mentoring mindset relates to improved employee retention and satisfaction.
- Cultural humility and understanding are the foundations of a truly inclusive environment. You will walk away with a stronger level of self-awareness and will be able to use that to connect and relate to others.

Let's dive into the content!

Core Content: Improving Workplace Culture with a Mentoring Mindset

(30 minutes)

So what exactly is a mentor?

Do you think of an image or person from your own life when you hear the word?

Facilitator's Tip: Feel free to share a brief example of a mentor from your own life or to solicit examples from the audience.

In the simplest terms, a mentor is someone trusted and experienced.

Mentors and mentees require mutual trust and aligned experiences and needs to be successful. A lack of trust on one or both sides is a common cause of a failed mentoring relationship. The mentee is seeking an adviser to guide them along their career path, but there must be a common understanding for the relationship to flourish.

◊ ***Addressing Mentees:***

These words apply, whether you're in an internship or registered apprenticeship program. You're seeking a trusted adviser to guide you along your career path.

◊ ***Addressing Mentors:***

In order for you and your mentee or apprentice to be successful, you need to build mutual trust. Your mentee is relying on you to guide them and share your knowledge and experience.

◊ ***Addressing Employers:***

Mentors and mentees require mutual trust and aligned experiences and needs to be successful. A lack of trust on one or both sides is a common cause of a failed mentoring relationship.

Addressing All Participants:

So, where does culture come into place here?

Just as every country has its own culture, comprised of their unique foods, traditions, beliefs, and other unspoken norms, every company also has its own culture.

The Culture Wheel

Greater Community · Knowledge & Stories · Language · Traditions & Rituals · Techniques & Skills · Tools & Objects · The Arts · Food & Drink · Values

Think about your own organization. What is the dress code? Do employees eat lunch together or at their desks? Is the office talkative or do most people keep to themselves? If you pass coworkers in the hallway, will they smile and wave or look the other way? Is teamwork more valued than competition?

These are *all* aspects of workplace culture. Think back to when you started here, and how long it took you to learn all these norms. Many of them were probably unspoken rules you simply had to learn over time.

Now, I'd like you to grab a sheet of paper and a pen and write down three or more words that come to mind when you think about *your* workplace culture.

Some of you may have jotted things down such as fast-paced, welcoming, stressful, high energy, competitive, or diverse.

Whether the words were positive or not so pleasant, the truth is, all workplaces have a culture that is established, expected, and experienced.

Now that you have identified your own workplace culture, let's discuss how you and your team can adapt a mentoring mindset. This can transform your own personal experiences, as well as those of your entire business, team, and customers.

The culture established in your organization

- How you communicate
- Relationships you build
- Who is drawn to your organization
- Self expression and acceptance
- The actions you take / don't take
- What else?

Your workplace culture impacts and influences five different ways you show up at your job. How do they influence the following five aspects?

1. How you communicate

Example: Do employees tend to communicate over email or by walking over to each other's desks?

2. Relationships you build

Example: Relationships that form between coworkers or with bosses and their employees.

3. Who is drawn to your business

Example: Do employees tend to come from a similar demographic background? Do you attract lots of talent from other states? Etc.

4. Your level of self-expression

Example: The clothes people wear or the part of their identity they feel comfortable sharing with coworkers.

5. The actions you take/don't take

Example: Do people feel empowered to try new things and take risks at work?

By creating trusting environments for all people to be seen, heard, validated, and to thrive, your workplace can attract and develop talented employees.

We can ensure this occurs by creating equitable and inclusive spaces of trust. When trust is established and maintained, it creates security for people to bring their best selves. Innovation is cultivated, creativity is expressed, and satisfaction is the byproduct.

A major roadblock that often gets in the way of trust in workplace environments is a lack of diversity. Diversity encompasses so many different things, including socioeconomics, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, race, and culture.

Facilitator's Tip: Some people in the audience may be uncomfortable discussing this topic. That's okay. We are introducing them to these concepts so hopefully they will become more comfortable with them over time. The upcoming activities will help showcase why diversity is important.

Let's explore how these aspects impact the culture of openness, teamwork, growth, and development in your workplace.

Do you want to know one of the leading causes for a breakdown in these areas?

A lack of diversity and/or exposure to others and their different ways of doing things.

According to a recent study at Western Governors University, "A lack of diversity in a job can unintentionally create a hostile environment and contribute to higher turnover. When employees feel like they don't fit in, they're not likely to stick around."

Mentoring allows mentees to learn the unspoken cultural norms of the workplace, so they are more likely to feel like they belong.

Facilitator's Tip: At this point when you facilitate the training in person, you will want to allow participants to have a group discussion. Have participants discuss with each other how the three words they wrote down about their workplace culture relate with these five different aspects we discussed a few minutes ago.

1. How you communicate
2. Relationships you build
3. Who is drawn to your business
4. Your level of self-expression
5. The actions you take/don't take

Give participants about five minutes for discussion.

After they discuss amongst each other, it's important to connect workplace culture with the creation of trusting environments for all people to be seen, heard, validated, and to thrive.

Explain that one of the most powerful ways to ensure that this occurs is by creating equitable and inclusive spaces of trust.

Addressing All Participants:

To sum up, when trust is established and maintained it creates security for people to bring their best selves to work. Innovation is cultivated, creativity is expressed, and satisfaction is the byproduct, both internally with colleagues and externally with customers/clients

Facilitator's Tip: If you are interested in learning more about this topic, you can read this article on diversity in the workplace: *https://www.wgu.edu/blog/barriers-benefits-diversity-workplace1906.html*

Cultural Iceberg Activity
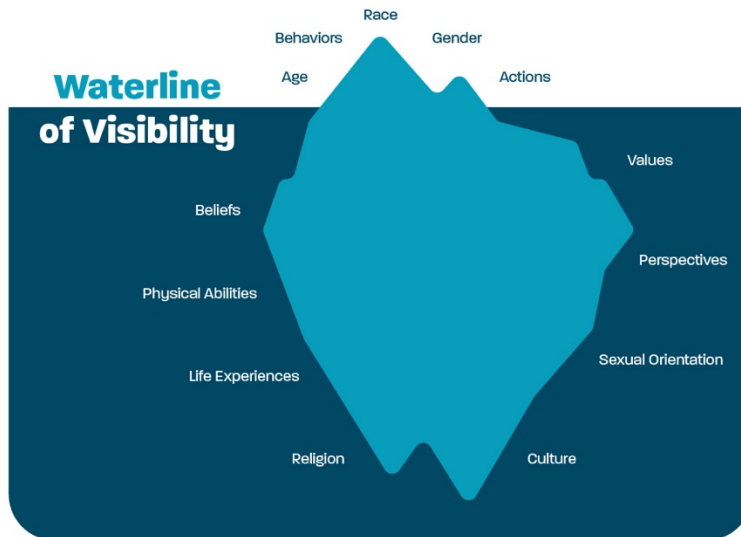
- About what percent of the iceberg can you see on the surface? *(Yes! About 10%)*
- What percent of the iceberg falls below the surface? *(Great job! Approximately 90% is below the waterline)*
- What are 2-3 surface elements that are fairly easy to identify of others in the workplace? *(Exactly – race or age are just a couple)*

It isn't as difficult to identify and name the elements that are above the waterline in your responses - a person's race, age, or gender. However, as you go beyond the surface, these are the less visible parts of culture such as life experiences, values, traditions, physical abilities, and religion to name a few.

- It is important to acknowledge that both aspects – what is visible and what falls below the waterline – affect our workplace culture.
- To that end, we must acknowledge that our own culture and experiences may be very different than that of our co-workers. It is important to understand that because of these differences, we cannot assume that cultural norms that we have grown accustomed to in our lives are the same as what others have experienced.
- To adopt a mentoring mindset in the workplace, it is critical that we are open to exploring one another's cultures and life experiences – those aspects that fall below the surface.
- Practicing cultural humility, or being self-aware and open to other viewpoints and lived experiences, creates safe and trusted spaces in our workplace where differences are celebrated, not judged.

To sum up:

- As we learned through the iceberg visual, most of what makes up culture are the things that fall below the waterline – those that are less visible.
- Practicing cultural humility helps us to build trust and respect for different lived experiences. In turn, this can build more unity in our teams and workplace.

With all of that said, it does take practice and intention to create spaces where viewpoints can be both shared and heard. The next activity provides a tool that individuals and teams can use when we face roadblocks in the workplace. This activity is based on the Ladder of Inference Theory.

**Ladder of Inference Activity**

Addressing All Participants:

I'm sure we can all think of a time where we interacted with someone who just didn't "get" us. It could have been a friend, neighbor, co-worker, or supervisor. They may have misinterpreted your intentions, your behaviors, or even who you were as a person in general.

It is important that we discuss some of the roadblocks that can get in the way of us building connections. Assumptions and misinterpretations often get in the way, especially in the workplace.

A really useful tool we can use to avoid these roadblocks is the Ladder of Inference. The Ladder of Inference describes the thinking process that we go through, usually without realizing it, to get from a fact to a decision or action. The thinking stages can be visualized as rungs on a ladder.

Facilitator's Tip: If you would like to become more familiar with this topic, you can read more in this guide: https://synergycommons.net/resources/the-ladder-of-inference/
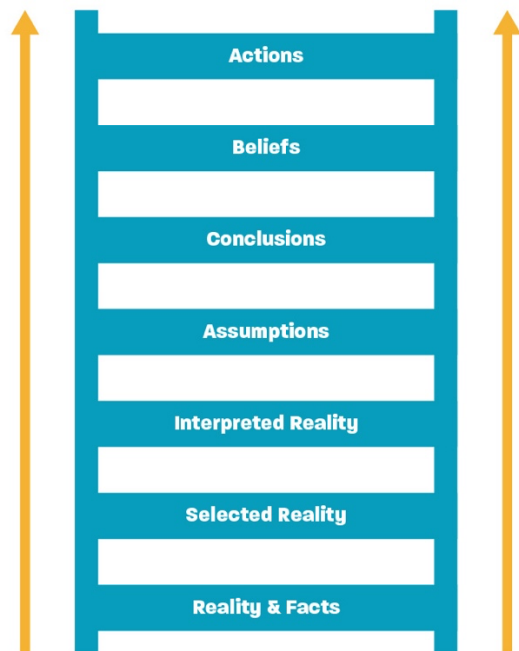
Starting with the bottom rung of the ladder, we have reality and facts.

From there:

- We experience reality and facts based on what we've encountered in the past.
- These facts are interpreted and given personal meaning.
- Assumptions are made based on the meaning you give - often without thinking them through.
- We draw conclusions based on our assumptions.
- Beliefs are created based on these conclusions.
- We take actions that feel justified because of what we believe.

Our beliefs often get in the way and can lead us to ignore the true facts altogether. This can lead us to jumping to conclusions – by missing important facts and skipping steps in the Ladder of Inference when we reason.

You can use the Ladder of Inference as a tool to troubleshoot issues in the workplace for a positive effect rather than jumping to conclusions.

How does this work in practice? Let's see by moving on to the next activity.

Facilitator's Tip: In this section, you will show how the Ladder of Inference works in real life. There are two options you can use to customize this activity to your audience. The first requires you to walk through an example using information about "Michael." The second involves playing a video and asking a few guided questions. You can also incorporate both activities if you have time.

Ladder of Inference Activity 1

Whether we know it or not, we have all probably been guilty of making assumptions about a person who looks different than us, is a different age or generation than us, has a different workstyle than us, or even dresses differently than us.

Let's use the Ladder of Inference theory to test our assumptions we may make in the workplace.

You see Michael walking down the hallway in the office...

1.
   a. Answer: *Age, race, sex, generation, descriptors of clothing, appearance, just to name a few examples*
2. Facts are interpreted and given personal meaning. For example, we might interpret the clothing he ways and the smile on his face to mean Michael is casually dressed, smart, athletic, millennial, young, urban, etc.
3. Assumptions are made based on the meaning you give - sometimes without considering them. We might assume things about Michael's job, hobbies, living situation, and family structure.
4. Conclusions are drawn based on the interpreted facts and our assumptions. For example, we might conclude that Michael is an intern or applying for a summer job.
5. Beliefs are drawn based on these conclusions.
6. Actions are taken that seem "right" because they are based on what we believe.

Let me tell you a little about Michael:

o Michael is 25 years old.
o He is the founder of a successful tech company.
o He is coming to meet with our IT department about an app he is developing for our organization to streamline our work processes.

Ladder of Inference Activity 2

To illustrate the Ladder of Inference and an example of how this process works in our brain, let's watch this short video and a real-life experience we have all likely been through:

Ask participants:

- In the video, what stood out to you about the reaction of the driver whose parking spot was "stolen"?
- Have you ever felt that way?
- What is an example in the workplace where incorrect assumptions caused you to act or react in a certain manner?

Next time you find yourself reacting to an experience - pay focused attention to your ladder!

Think to yourself:

- What beliefs are at play? Where did they come from?
- What data and observations did you filter in as a result of your beliefs?
- Are your assumptions valid and supported by facts?
- Would a different set of assumptions create different feelings and result in new and better conclusions and actions?

Conclusion

As in the activity, we find ourselves going through this cycle thousands of times a day.

- Our beliefs, biases, life experiences, and thought patterns shape all of those steps.
- Self-reflection is critical in building a mentoring mindset in our workplace.
- By continually practicing cultural humility and staying low on the ladder of inference, we are less likely to jump to conclusions or make false assumptions.
- Consciously choosing to be aware of yourself and how you interact with others will foster an atmosphere of trust and understanding.
- In doing so, a mentoring mindset and culture will begin to blossom, making room for authentic connection, unity, and equity.

A mentoring mindset is simply seeing the good in someone and making it your mission to help them become better, while expecting to become better yourself in the meantime.

When individuals know they are safe to be themselves and trust is established, employee satisfaction is a given and retention is the outcome.

Reflective Examination Question: Using Speech and Declarations

(5 minutes)

Facilitator's Tip: As we conclude this session, it's important that as we begin to notice and check our assumptions that we also consciously practice something called "Mindfulness." If you are not familiar with this concept, you can read more about it here: *https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/consumer-health/in-depth/mindfulness-exercises/art-20046356#:~:text=Mindfulness%20is%20a%20type%20of,mind%20and%20help%20reduce%20stress*

Addressing All Participants:
Before we conclude this session, let's discuss another concept: Mindfulness.

Mindfulness encourages you to be aware of yourself and your surroundings. At work, we often get so caught up in rushing from one assignment to the next that we rarely pause to breathe and reflect on where we are going. Closing your eyes and focusing on your breath or utilizing guided imagery can help you relax, de-stress, and gain clarity.

Let's practice mindfulness together right now.

I encourage you to take the next few minutes to reflect on ways you will create inclusive spaces for others to thrive, feel included, and feel seen – and to offer those same benefits to yourself as well. What better way to do this than becoming more aware of what your needs are?

Write down these internal commitments.

Facilitator's Tip: This is another activity that may feel uncomfortable to some participants. Acknowledge their discomfort, but encourage them to participate anyway, explaining that there is power in declaring and speaking things aloud to yourself.

Here are a few examples:

- I make a commitment to myself to…

- I can control how I…

- I will work hard to…

Facilitator's Tip: Give participants a few minutes to write down their responses. At this point, you will want to wrap up the training and thank everyone for their time.

To All Participants
I am glad you chose to spend the past hour learning about the importance of mentoring within your workplace!
Good luck and see you soon!