

USQ WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP MENTOR PROGRAM 2009

Are you looking for a way of expanding your support networks?
Are you looking for greater work satisfaction?
Would you like to improve your chances of career progression?
Are you being as effective as you want to be in your present position?

**Then perhaps you need to consider being part of the
USQ WOMAN AND LEADERSHIP MENTOR PROGRAM.**

Following on from the very successful programs conducted from 2002 through to 2008, we are currently planning another USQ Women and Leadership Mentor Program for 2009. Participation in the program is open to female academic and general staff, with the aim of assisting them in overcoming barriers to career progression and improving their job satisfaction.

Positive outcomes identified by previous participants include:

- *Promotion to higher positions*
- *Success in gaining a new position*
- *Belonging to a network and/or supportive relationship*
- *Personal development/empowerment/confidence*
- *Increased knowledge about how to achieve your objectives within the University*
- *Increased political skills and 'know-how'*
- *Gaining difference perspectives and understanding of work environments*
- *Personal growth, commitment and effectiveness*
- *Clearer insights into personal and career goals*

What is mentoring?

Mentoring is the process of having a significant beneficial effect on the life or career of another individual, generally as a result of personal one-on-one contact. A mentor is one who offers knowledge, insight, perspective or wisdom that is especially useful to the other person.

Traditionally mentoring has been used to assist promising junior executives climb the career ladder. It usually involved a more skilled senior person sponsoring and encouraging the protégée. Very often this happened through informal networks. Recently the concept of mentoring has taken on a new dimension focused more specifically on career direction, goal setting, role models, mentee visibility, networking, support systems, and a revitalisation of self and career. Current practice has also found peer mentoring to be highly effective and while it is important that the mentor should be experienced and be able to pass on the wisdom of that experience to the protégée, it is not always necessary for the mentor to be at a very senior level within an organisation.

Who Benefits from Mentoring?

Both parties to the mentor process benefit. In the past it was assumed that mentoring was a one-way process in which only mentees gained. In fact, mentors report that their participation in mentor schemes have made them analyse their own career trajectories more carefully, that they have derived great personal benefit from helping another person, and that mentoring has enabled them to expand their networks and understanding of an organisation. This outcome is certainly supported by the data which emerged in the preliminary evaluation of the 2002 USQ Pilot Program¹.

What Will The USQ Mentoring Program Involve?

- One of the purposes of the program is to assist mentees achieve a specific objective, acquire a particular set of skills, or gain experiences that will further their career advancement. Mentees are therefore encouraged to identify a project or goals that they wish to achieve during the period of the mentor relationship². This forms the basis of the Mentor Contract and provides a benchmark for measuring future progress.
- The program will run over the year and finish in December 2009. During this period informal group meetings for participants will also be facilitated by HR in conjunction with the USQ Women's Network Inc to provide an opportunity for participants to give feedback on problems and progress, to share experiences with other participants, and to expand their professional networks.
- In addition, a series of optional seminars on relevant topics (nominated by the participants) will be organised throughout the semester. There will also be links with workshops offered by the USQ Women's Network Inc and Organisational Training and Development. More detailed information about these programs will be provided at the initial introductory session.

Will Mentoring take a lot of time?

The program is very flexible and can be designed to suit your needs. The frequency, duration and nature of the contacts between mentors and mentees should be arranged by the mentoring colleagues themselves according to their own time requirements. Some participants prefer to meet informally every two weeks; other very successful mentor arrangements have been conducted almost entirely through email and telephone contact.

Am I Eligible?

The program is open to all female staff (academic, general and research) irrespective of level.

¹ *USQ Pilot Program: A Preliminary Report*, Michelle Anifos and Lesley Willcoxson, Paper presented to mentoring project participants, USQ Report to the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, 2002-3.

² For example, managing a promotion or classification process, balancing career and family responsibilities, seeing through the completion a challenging undertaking, creating a higher personal profile, submitting a research grant, delivering a conference paper, handling particular committees more effectively, being more strategic in your workplace etc.

How Do I Participate?

- Complete the attached **Mentor Program Response Sheet**. This requires you to nominate your choice of participation as either mentor or mentee (or both if you wish), and to identify the skills and experience you have to offer (as a mentor), or the skills and goals you wish to attain (as a mentee).
- You will then be contacted by the Equity Office to provide further information that will facilitate the selection of the most suitable person as your mentor colleague.
- Based on the information you have supplied in your response sheet and from your discussions with the Equity Office, a Matching Panel will place you with an appropriate mentor/mentee.
- If you are comfortable with the match, you will then be required to attend an introductory session where you will meet your mentor colleague. At this session you will also learn more about the do's and don'ts of mentoring and how to make the program work most effectively for you.

If you would like to be involved please send your completed response sheet to the **Program Coordinator, Rebekah Davidson, Staff Equity Officer**. Applications are encouraged from women across all USQ Campuses. However, places are limited and will be filled based upon application receipt date.

You may return the form by mail or electronically. Hard copies should be directed to Rebekah Davidson, Staff Equity Officer, S 404, Toowoomba Campus. The completed form may also be emailed to davidson@usq.edu.au. **Forms should be returned by close of business Thursday 12 March 2009.**

Further information is also available at the following web page
<http://www.usq.edu.au/hr/equity/mentor/default.htm>