

# Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme

## Stage 1 - Preparation and negotiation

### Mentor



# Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme: Stage 1 - preparation and negotiation for mentors

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## Introduction

Motivation Australia's Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme responds to a need for more continuous professional development opportunities for health workers in Pacific Island countries (PICs), as part of the larger Pacific Wayfinders project.

### **Pacific Wayfinders project**

Pacific Wayfinders is an initiative of Motivation Australia (MA) with financial support from the Australian Government and other donors. Pacific Wayfinders responds to a need for targeted continuous professional development (CPD) for Pacific region personnel providing rehabilitation and assistive technology (AT).

The Pacific Wayfinders project aims to harness the expertise of experienced health professionals and business/organisational leaders from Australia and/or New Zealand to deliver continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities to strengthen the existing health workforce in Fiji, the Solomon Islands and Tonga. CPD activities will be delivered to partner staff working in the fields of rehabilitation, assistive technology (AT) and diabetic foot care services.

### **Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme**

The need for more continuous professional development opportunities, including mentoring, was first identified by Pacific region health workers at the 2019 Pacific Rehabilitation and Mobility Conference held in Nadi, Fiji. Ongoing consultation with partner staff since then and feedback requesting a one on one mentoring programme has led to the introduction of this programme.

In MA's 2020 Continuous Professional Development and Online Learning survey, 34% of 50 health workers in PICs surveyed indicated that they would learn best from one on one mentoring, in the same survey, 98% (49/50) of 50 health workers surveyed indicated they were interested in group mentoring sessions with other health professionals in the Pacific region.

There is a growing rehabilitation and AT workforce across the Pacific region. By providing an opportunity for the people in these workforces to collaborate with other professionals outside of their own country, we aim to strengthen the capacity of these workforces and to provide an opportunity for personal and professional growth for mentees and mentors alike.

The Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme is being piloted in 2020/21 and aims to develop the professional and personal skills of health workers and health service managers working in PICs, by providing them with access to mentoring from experienced health professionals and business leaders in other PICs, Australia and New Zealand.

MA will provide supporting resources throughout the programme. These resources aim to provide background information and a framework for mentees and mentors participating in the programme. MA recognises that each mentee and mentor pair will communicate, interact and achieve their programme goals differently. The programme and resources intend to facilitate the participation and positive growth of the mentoring relationship, enabling both parties to explore the great possibilities created when experience meets enthusiasm.

## Programme Purpose

The mentoring programme pairs health workers in PICs with experienced health professionals and business leaders in other PICs, Australia and New Zealand. Giving the mentees an opportunity to meet, communicate, interact with and learn from leaders in their field.

Through the structured programme, the mentee will be encouraged to drive the mentoring process and discussion, enabling them to gain insights and perspectives from experienced mentors, helping them to establish and work towards career goals, build confidence and develop their professional skills.

## Eligibility criteria for the Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme

To allow the best chance for a rewarding and enjoyable mentoring relationship and programme, the following eligibility criteria must be met by the mentee and mentor:

### For mentees

The following eligibility criteria exists for mentees in the Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme:

- Must be currently working as, or studying to be, a health worker or health service manager in the following countries; Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu
- Must be able to commit to the entire duration of the mentoring programme
- Must be able to commit to the minimum participation requirements.

### For mentors

The following eligibility criteria exists for mentors in the Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme:

- Must have at least three years' experience in their field
- Must have excellent communication skills and ability to listen
- Must be able to listen and analyse information, give feedback and encourage creation of new ideas
- Must be keen and willing to contribute to the learning and growth of the mentee and be able to commit their time and availability throughout the duration of the programme
- Must be a member of, and have completed the induction process with MA.

## What is Mentoring?

Mentoring can be defined as *'someone with experience sharing knowledge, skills, advice and life experience in a supportive and mutually beneficial learning relationship, to help guide another to reach their full potential'*. Mentoring relationships may develop naturally or via a formally structured programme, such as the Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme.

### What is a mentor?

A mentor can be a coach, advisor or counsellor; they are someone who can provide advice, insight and perspective on a wide range of topics to help the mentee achieve their goals or better understand complex professional situations.

Mentors are usually people who have lived experience, and can share their experiences and the lessons learnt along their journey with the mentee to help them develop the skills and knowledge to achieve success.

## What are the benefits of mentoring as a mentor?

Mentoring can be a great way to share your knowledge with others and learn more about people, different cultures and ways of thinking and your field of work from your mentee. The Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme aims to provide equal benefit to the mentee and mentor. Mentoring can benefit the mentor by enabling you to:

- Contribute to the development of the future of your profession, specifically in the Pacific region
- Improve your management, leadership and communication skills
- Expand your professional networks
- Share and transfer your knowledge, skills and expertise
- Gain recognition for your knowledge, skills and dedication to your industry
- Increase awareness of new and different ideas and ways of doing things
- Reflect on your current and past practices and projects
- Learn from your mentee's expertise, different life experiences, culture and background
- Learn more about different learning styles and reflect on how you learn
- Gain personal satisfaction from having an impact on someone in your industry.

### **For the employers of the mentor/mentee**

Mentoring can provide both the mentor and mentee with a number of benefits in a time efficient way. The benefits to the mentor and mentee help their employer by:

- Increasing mentee and mentor productivity
- Improving management and technical skills
- Helping the mentee and mentor discover hidden talents
- Motivating the mentee and mentor.

## Minimum participation requirements for the Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme

To get the most out of mentoring programme and give the best opportunity for professional and personal development, a successful mentoring relationship must exist between the mentor and the mentee, and the mentee must be invested in setting career goals and working towards them.

To enable a greater chance of a successful mentoring relationship the following minimum participation requirements exist for this programme:

- The mentee and mentor must both attend an induction session with Motivation Australia on the advised date and time
- The mentee and mentor must prepare for, and participate in, at least eight meetings together over an approximate eight-month period
- The mentee and mentor must attend three group mentoring sessions facilitated by Motivation Australia
- The mentor must assist the mentee to set goals for the programme, their career and personal life, and negotiate the steps the mentee must take to work towards achieving those goals
- The mentor must assist the mentee to set open and clear boundaries and expectations for the programme
- The mentee and mentor must both submit reflections after each meeting (reflection template provided)
- The mentor must be willing to dedicate their time and availability to communicating with the mentee regularly and frequently throughout the programme

- The mentor must lead the opening one on one meetings with mentees and endeavour to establish trust in the relationship
- The mentee and mentor must both be willing to provide programme feedback and evaluation after the programme has ended.

## Participant responsibilities and role statements

### Responsibilities of mentors and mentees

- Act in an ethical and professional manner towards all other participants and MA staff
- Maintain strict confidentiality and professional boundaries
- Commitment to minimum participation requirements and commitment to attending all pre-arranged meetings
- Discuss expectations of the programme in the first meeting and review throughout the programme.

### Mentor role statement

The specific mentor responsibilities include:

- Signing the Mentoring Agreement with mentee
- Negotiating a commitment to ongoing and open communication through email or online text applications
- Lead initial meetings with mentees
- Assist the mentee to identify individual priorities, values and goals
- Support the mentee to develop a framework for achieving goals
- Support the personal and professional development of the mentee through coaching, advice, counselling, sharing of ideas and lived experiences
- Attend induction session with MA
- Contribute to discussion and resolution of issues raised in meetings.

A mentor may be able to achieve their responsibilities by:

- Challenging any assumptions made by the mentee
- Encouraging exploration of new ideas and creative thinking
- Being open minded and non-judgemental
- Listening to the mentee
- Assisting the mentee to identify and solve problems
- Providing appropriate advice based on lived experience, skills and knowledge
- Encouraging an understanding of career options, expectations and values
- Providing perspective on issues discussed based on lived experience
- Dedicating time and effort to the mentoring relationship and trying to establish trust with the mentee.

In order to form a successful mentoring relationship and give the relationship the best chance to grow, a successful mentor will:

- Respect and listen to the mentee
- Have a high level of communication skills and understanding of relationship building
- Have a high level of expertise, knowledge and skills in the same field or desired field of the mentee
- Have a genuine interest in the development and growth of the mentee and field of work
- Be committed to the mentoring programme

- Be able to encourage exploration of ideas, critically analyse issues and situations and provide constructive feedback to the mentee
- Be committed to forming a trusting relationship with the mentee by dedicating their time and availability throughout the programme.

## Confidentiality for mentees and mentors

During the mentoring programme, some topics or issues discussed may be personal, or of a sensitive or controversial nature. Anything discussed during the programme between mentors and mentees must remain strictly confidential. Meaning nothing that is discussed in the programme should be discussed outside of the programme. By signing the mentoring programme agreement (appendix A) the mentor and mentee agree to maintain confidentiality.

## Matching mentees and mentors

MA will use 'mentor profiles' to give mentees first choice over who they would prefer to be mentored by. Mentors will provide background information on their career, interests, goals, mentoring style and what they are looking for in a mentor to inform their mentor profiles.

All of the mentor profiles will be then sent out to the mentees, allowing them to select their first and second preferences of mentor.

In the situation that more than one mentee chooses one mentor, the mentor will be given the opportunity to provide mentoring to as many of those mentees they like, depending on their availability and willingness.

The mentor is under no obligation to choose more than one mentee to mentor and will be provided basic information about each of the mentees who have selected them to inform their choice.

In the situation that a mentor is not selected by any of the mentees, MA would still love to have them part of the group mentoring sessions if they wish to continue their involvement in the programme.

## Changing mentors or mentees

If the mentoring relationship is not developing as either the mentee or mentor had hoped, either the mentee or mentor can request to change their mentor or mentee. If you would like to discuss this more please contact Daniel at [danielnoll@motivation.org.au](mailto:danielnoll@motivation.org.au).

## Early closure

Situations may arise where it is necessary to end the mentor relationship early. The reasons for this may vary and as long as this is clearly communicated with MA staff this is perfectly acceptable. The early ending of the relationship is called an 'early closure' and can be initiated by the mentee or the mentor. No fault will be attributed in this situation and no one will be blamed for the early closure.

The process of an early closure can be facilitated between the mentee and mentor, or MA staff can also facilitate the early closure. Whoever chooses to end the relationship for whatever reason must do so with professionalism and respect.

## Programme review

To formally finalise the mentoring programme all mentees and mentors will be asked to attend a programme review session with MA at an advised date and time. The programme review gives an opportunity for all mentees and mentors involved in the Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme to give their feedback and discuss the difficulties and positive experiences they had during the programme.

All participants will be asked to complete evaluation surveys after the programme review to help MA plan for the future programmes. MA welcomes all feedback and suggestions during and after the programme.

## Suggested programme framework

MA has developed a suggested programme framework for mentees and mentors to follow throughout the mentoring programme. Participants may wish to follow this framework or all or part of the programme or they may wish to develop their own framework.

As you progress through the meetings, MA will provide you with the suggested programme framework for the next stage.

Below is an outline of the stages in the suggested programme framework.

### **Stage 1: Preparation and negotiation**

- Meeting 1
- Organising the first meeting
- Personal vision statement tool
- Goal setting tool
- Expectations, boundaries and goals
- Other discussion points for first meeting
- Some difficulties that may occur during this stage.

### **Stage 2: Continuing negotiation, establishing relationship and identifying areas for growth**

- Meeting 2
- 'Getting to know each other' tool
- Reflecting on the mentee's values, strengths and identifying development priorities
- Meeting 3
- Some difficulties that may occur during this stage

### **Stage 3: Enabling growth**

- Meetings 4-7
- Research assignment(s)
- Sustaining the relationship.

### **Stage 4: Closure**

- Meeting 8

### **Programme review**

## Stage 1: Preparation and negotiation

### Meeting 1

The first meeting is important to establish the relationship between the mentee and mentor and beginning to form the objectives and goals for the programme. It is normal to feel nervous before and during the first meeting as a mentee and a mentor. MA have developed the personal vision statement tool and goal setting tool to help participants during the first meeting.

A successful mentoring relationship begins by making sure the mentees and mentors share the same objectives and expectations of the programme. All expectations and objectives should be discussed openly between the participants at the beginning of the programme.

#### **Organising the first meeting**

It is the responsibility of the mentee to contact the mentor to organise a time for the first meeting and all meetings that follow. Once the mentee has negotiated the meeting time with the mentor (remembering any time differences) they can contact Daniel at MA ([danielnoll@motivation.org.au](mailto:danielnoll@motivation.org.au)) to set up the zoom meeting and send out the link.

A good opportunity to set up the first meeting is during or immediately after the mentee induction session.

#### **Personal vision statement tool**

The personal vision statement tool is a tool developed by MA to help the mentee work out their most important values and establish a personal vision statement that may guide them to where they want to get to and to achieve what they want to achieve.

The personal vision statement tool can also be used by the mentor and should be filled in before the first meeting so that the answers can be discussed in detail between the mentee and mentor.

#### **Goal setting tool**

The goal setting tool is a tool developed by MA to help the mentee develop SMART goals for the short term and long term. The goal setting tool should be filled out by the mentee with the assistance and guidance of the mentor during the first meeting. The goal setting tool should be reviewed throughout the programme to track progress towards achieving goals.

As a mentor, please also fill out the goal setting tool to help set your own goals for the programme, familiarise yourself with the tool and reflect on your process of setting goals to assist the mentee.

#### **Expectations, boundaries and goals**

It is important that the mentee and mentor have a clear understanding of each other's expectations, boundaries and goals for the programme. These can be discussed and negotiated in the first meeting and should be upheld in any following meetings.

#### **Other discussion points for first meeting**

**Commitment:** As per the minimum participation requirements it is essential that the mentee and mentor meet at least eight times over the eight-month period, however, this must be discussed and negotiated between the mentee and the mentor. During the first meeting the mentor and mentee must also discuss the preferred method of communication outside of meetings, this may include via email or text applications.

Preferred framework for meetings: It is recommended to discuss what framework or style of meeting the mentee and mentor would prefer. Some people may wish to follow the suggested programme framework provided by MA, others may have their own framework or a more informal style of meeting. Any option for a framework is acceptable as long as it is agreed between the mentee and mentor.

### **Some difficulties that may occur in this stage**

As the mentoring programme is a mentee-driven programme, it is the responsibility of the mentee to lead discussion and plan future meetings, however leading and organising meetings may be a new experience for the mentee and the mentor should be understanding of this and assist where required, especially in the first few meetings.

Try to plan the next meeting at the end of every meeting. Sometimes there will be a need to cancel a meeting as personal issues and work schedules change, it is best not to be disheartened by this as mentors, like mentees, are often busy people. If someone needs to cancel, it is best to give the other person three different time options to reschedule and try again.

MA team members will always be happy to reschedule a meeting for you. If meetings have to be rescheduled for whatever reason, meaning that you may not be able to attend the minimum eight meetings in the eight-month period this is also okay. An MA team member will be happy to talk with you about this.

**Once you have reached the end of stage 1, MA will request some information from you on the progress of the relationship and provide you with the suggested programme framework for stage 2.**

**Thank you for participating in the Pacific Wayfinders mentoring programme, for any more details or support please contact [danielnoll@motivation.org.au](mailto:danielnoll@motivation.org.au).**

Some of the framework and contents from this handbook were adapted from the Planning Institute of Australia's Mentoring Programme Handbook – For Mentees and Mentors, available at <https://www.planning.org.au/documents/item/8391>.