



MENTOR PROGRAM

The LOTT Alliance Mentor Program was developed by the following team:

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Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael D. Strub", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

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Executive Director

7-1-08
Date

LOTT ALLIANCE MENTOR PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

Mentoring creates partnership that pairs a skilled or experienced individual (mentor) with a person with fewer skills or less experience (mentee). Mentoring is relationship-based and goes beyond technical training. The mentor serves as a role model, coach, confidante, guide, and source of valuable work-related information to the mentee. The goal of the partnership is to share knowledge, build skills, and provide support in a way that benefits the mentored employee, coworkers, and employer by increasing the knowledge, competencies, and confidence in the workforce.

This document outlines the LOTT Alliance's Mentor Program and details the purpose, goals, and guidelines for establishing employee mentoring partnerships.

PURPOSE

The LOTT Alliance Mentor Program is designed to be used for the following purposes:

1) New Employee Orientation:

Each new employee will have an assigned mentor for support, coaching, feedback, and to answer workplace questions. This will help new hires gain an understanding of the organizational culture, their roles, and the roles of their coworkers. The mentor may also help the new employee learn the duties of their positions, and provide support, guidance, and an experienced perspective that helps employees more quickly adjust to their new positions and their new employer. The mentoring requirement may be waived at the discretion of the employee's Division Director.

2) Technical Skills Refresher

Mentoring may be used to provide employees with an opportunity to relearn the technical requirements of their position, such as after an extended absence, following a shift reassignment, or as part of a performance improvement plan. The decision for an employee to enter into this type of mentorship may be based either on self-identified needs or supervisor-identified technical deficiencies as documented in an employee's PDP (Performance Development Plan).

3) Interpersonal Skills Development

Employees may utilize mentoring to strengthen their softer skills, such as interpersonal, communication, and conflict management skills. An employee may enter into this type of mentorship through self-selection or may be required to do so, based on needs identified by their supervisor through the PDP process.

4) Voluntary (Career Development or “Stand Alone” Mentorship):

Employees may enter voluntary mentorships to either build their skills for their current position, or as a means of learning the requirements of a position that they aspire to attain. Mentorships may be voluntarily accessed through the Career Development Program or on a stand alone basis by completing a Mentoring Partnership Agreement form (Appendix A). Some examples of these types of mentorships are:

- A) An experienced supervisor mentors a newly hired or promoted supervisor to serve as role model and coach to help the employee learn their new role in the organization;
- B) An employee may request a mentor to help develop leadership and management skills to be better able to compete for a future supervisory position; or
- C) An employee who is interested in changing careers within LOTT may use a mentorship to obtain a realistic job preview of another position.

PROGRAM GOALS

The Mentoring Program will benefit both the LOTT Alliance and participants, including mentored employees and mentors. Once implemented, mentoring should produce benefits for each of the following:

Mentored Employees:

- Feel welcome and comfortable in a new work environment
- Feel encouraged, motivated, and reassured
- Feel supported and valued
- Enhance knowledge, skills, and abilities by working closely with an expert
- Build competency and confidence
- Have a confidential, “safe” place to ask questions
- Receive one-on-one feedback that helps improve performance
- Learn organizational culture and coworker expectations
- Have a positive role model – an example to aspire to

Mentors:

- Sharpen their knowledge and skills and experience new challenges
- Gain a sense of pride from contributing to a coworker’s development
- Experience fresh perspectives and new ideas
- Feel valued in the workplace and experience increased job satisfaction
- Feel energized and gain a renewed enthusiasm for their jobs
- Exercise and build their communication skills
- Gain coaching and leadership experience and competencies

LOTT Alliance:

- Strengthened sense of community, camaraderie, and friendship amongst staff
- Increased institutional knowledge transfer that broadens organizational knowledge
- Increased productivity of new employees
- Expanded leadership abilities of staff
- Reduced turnover
- Increased teamwork and improved communication across the organization
- Reinforce organizational values and build a positive organizational climate through role modeling
- Increased respect and understanding of each others' roles in the organization
- Strengthened commitment to and improvement of workplace safety

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Mentorships will be required for all newly hired employees as an extension of the Employee Orientation process, unless waived by the employee's Division Director. The program will also be available as an additional learning opportunity for employees to incorporate into Career Development Proposals. Employees with documented performance deficiencies may be required by their supervisors to enter into a mentoring partnership as a means of refreshing technical skills or developing or improving soft skills, such as interpersonal, communication, or conflict management skills. Additionally, employees who would benefit from refreshing their technical skills may be required, at the discretion of their supervisors, to enter into a mentoring partnership. This may be appropriate for a variety of reasons, such as an employee's return to the workplace after an extended leave of absence, reassignment to a position or shift formerly held by an employee, or observed performance deficiencies. With supervisor approval, an employee may establish a technical skills refresher or soft skills development mentorship on a voluntary basis. An overview of the Mentoring Program can be found in Appendix B.

Roles/Responsibilities

Each participant plays an important part in ensuring success of the Mentoring Program. The following participant roles and responsibilities have been identified.

Mentee

- Be open to and accepting of the mentoring partnership
- Continue to seek direction from your supervisor – the mentor does not replace the supervisor/employee relationship
- Meet or check in at the agreed upon time
- Use constructive feedback for improvement
- Evaluate your needs and prepare in advance for meeting with your mentor to optimize your time together

Mentee (continued)

- Be proactive in asking questions and seeking advice to benefit from the experience of your mentor
- Consider your active participation in the Mentoring Program as an important part of successfully fulfilling the duties of your job
- Offer suggestions for improving the Mentoring Program

Mentor

- Guide and encourage the mentee
- Foster a climate of trust and maintain confidences to the extent allowed by policy and/or law
- Respect the role of the mentee's supervisor – mentors do not replace the supervisor
- Commit your time and energy – be available and give your full attention to the mentee when you meet
- Provide constructive and honest feedback
- Coordinate with the supervisor to set goals to ensure that time and effort are well-spent and that employee is receiving a consistent message
- Serve as a role model
- Know your own limits and seek additional assistance from others when needed
- Encourage mentee to communicate directly with the supervisor when appropriate
- Gain agreement from mentee prior to sharing discussions or issues with others, unless related to violations of law or policy, or pose a risk to self, others, or the LOTT Alliance
- Offer suggestions for improving the Mentoring Program

Supervisor

- Assign a suitable mentor prior to a new employee's first week of work
- Check in with the employee and mentor to ensure that the partnership is a good match for both; if not, reassign employee to a new mentor
- Allow time for the employee to meet or check in with the mentor
- Respect the confidentiality of the mentoring relationship
- Help define the mentor's role and expectations for the relationship
- Continue to provide direction, support, and feedback to the employee in your role as a supervisor
- Coordinate with the mentor to ensure that the organization's message and values are consistently represented
- Offer suggestions for improving the Mentoring Program

Human Resources

- Coordinate mentor volunteers, supervisor approval, and partnering documentation
- Provide training to prospective mentors on:
 - program goals, roles and responsibilities;
 - communication skills such as listening, coaching, and providing feedback;
 - an overview of available resources such as the Employee Assistance Program;
 - situations that require mentors to disclose information from the mentorship
- Provide opportunities for all mentoring pairs to get together
- Conduct “exit interviews” of participants to seek areas for improvement
- Plan for program evaluation and revision, if necessary

LOTT Alliance

- Refrain from requiring mentors to share information obtained from mentee unless required by law or policy

Mentor Selection Criteria

While serving as a mentor is voluntary, work time will be allowed for participation in the Mentoring Program. Supervisor approval is required to participate because employees must commit to being available during working hours for mentoring meetings.

Additionally, the following attributes and criteria should be considered when selecting individuals to become mentors:

- Tenure or experience
- Sufficient time available to devote to the mentee
- Positive attitude toward work and coworkers
- Skilled in the area that mentee is seeking to improve
- Reliable attendance and excellent work history
- Strong interpersonal communication skills
- Dedication to coworkers and LOTT's mission
- Respected team-member
- Supportive and patient
- Ability to maintain confidences
- Actively participates in workplace activities
- Professionalism and respectful of others

Documentation of Mentoring Partnerships

Mentoring Program participants should use the Mentoring Partnership Agreement form (Appendix A) to document new mentoring partnerships. This form identifies the participants; establishes agreements for goals, meeting frequency, and the projected duration of the mentoring partnership; and provides for supervisor approval. Appendix A

Appendix B

MENTOR PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Purpose	Required or voluntary?	Mentoring Relationship	Typical Duration	Suggested Meeting Frequency	Other Considerations?
New Employee Orientation	Required; may be waived by Division Director	Ideally from within same workgroup, but may not be possible for small teams	6 months; then evaluate extension	Initially weekly face-to-face; then face-to-face as needed after weekly check-in by phone, email, etc.	Mentor may provide supervisor with technical progress report; encourages mentee to share concerns/issues directly with supervisor
Technical Skills Refresher	Required by supervisor via PDP* process or voluntary	From same workgroup; typically one level up or more experienced peer	As established by supervisor in PDP; for voluntary mentoring, by mutual agreement	As established by supervisor in PDP; for voluntary mentoring, by mutual agreement	Mentor provides technical progress report to supervisor; details of mentorship goals may be specified in PDP.
Interpersonal Skills Development	Required by supervisor via PDP process or voluntary	As identified by supervisor; can be from any workgroup.	As established by supervisor in PDP; for voluntary mentoring, by mutual agreement	As established by supervisor in PDP; for voluntary mentoring, by mutual agreement	Mentor encourages mentee to discuss issues and progress directly with supervisor.
Career Development Program (CDP) or Stand-Alone Mentorship	Voluntary	By mutual agreement; may be within workgroup, from different workgroup, or external to LOTT	As defined in CDP and/or Mentoring Partnership Agreement form	As defined in CDP and/or Mentoring Partnership Agreement form	In CDP situations, mentor is also a member of Implementation Team**; other I-Team members may be additional mentoring resources.

* PDP refers to Performance Development Planning, LOTT's annual goal setting and performance evaluation process.

** Implementation Team members are identified in the employee's Career Development Plan