

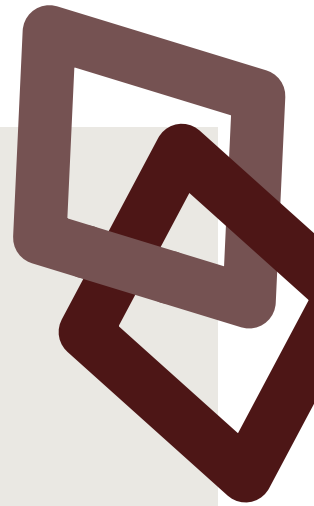


Mentorship Programs to Foster Diverse Leadership

Ottawa’s Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Resource Hub for Sport

Understanding Why

Mentorship programs provide a crucial role in equity-focused organizations, serving as a valuable strategy for retaining leaders who reflect the diverse populations they serve. These programs also recognize that not everyone aspires to be an athlete; some individuals may find their niche in the organizational and leadership aspects of their sport. A key benefit of mentorship programs is the increased representation of diverse voices and talents, ensuring that sport communities are more inclusive and reflective of the broader population



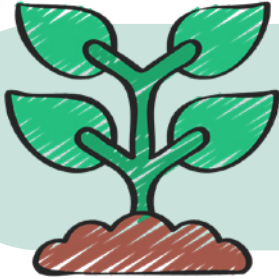
What is mentorship?

Mentorship is a relationship in which advice, information, guidance, support, or opportunity are offered from one person to another for personal and professional development.



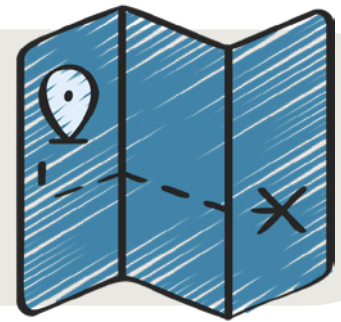
Developing a Mentorship Program

Learn about how someone wants to be involved and what works for their schedule.



Consider setting up a mentor/mentee relationship where the mentee takes the lead. This approach empowers the mentee to take ownership of their learning journey, fostering a sense of autonomy and motivation.

Develop a pathway to demonstrate what they need to do to move forward to their goals and how this connects to the organization's needs. By encouraging the mentee to take the lead, the discussions can be tailored to the mentee's specific needs and goals.



Connect them to someone (or a group) in the organization who can be a resource and support for their journey.

Provide supportive training and learning opportunities that consider barriers like time and costs.



Check in on progress and celebrate successes!

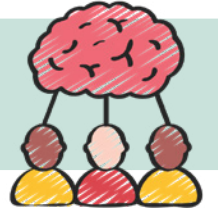


Optimizing Mentorship Programs

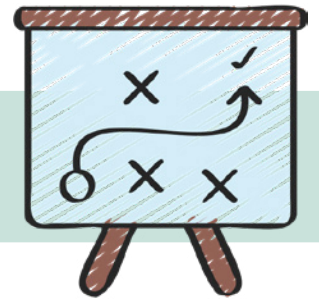
Be intentional about the goals you want to achieve through mentorship. Build a culture around undertaking that at all levels.



Training for mentors and mentees on the roles, responsibilities and what mentorship is ensures for a clear and safe environment.

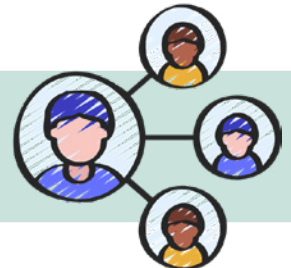


In a mentor/mentee relationship, allowing the mentee to take the lead in determining the frequency and agenda of meetings can be more advantageous for both parties. This approach empowers the mentee to take ownership of their learning journey, fostering a sense of autonomy and motivation. It also ensures that discussions are tailored to the mentee's specific needs and goals.



However, for younger mentees or those who are growing their confidence, this approach might not work and in those cases, the mentor should support by setting these up sessions and role modeling through leading the mentee forward which will help to build the confidence of the mentee.

Mentees appreciate the opportunity to network and connect with their mentors and others within the program.



The learning environment should promote agency and self-direction to gain the skills, knowledge and tools to become proficient in coaching.



Understanding the barriers and facilitators to the groups you may be serving will help to identify where your resources should be allocated in the program and may direct your attention to steps that may need to be in place to be a successful program.



Adapted from: [Coaching Association of Canada](https://www.coaching.ca/)



Nepean Nighthawks Field Hockey Club Learnings



In Ottawa, the Nepean Nighthawks have shown a very thoughtful and innovative approach to leadership development through a mentorship program.

1

The Mentorship Program is treated as a large part of the organization's Retention Plan rather than Recruitment Plan.

2

To have a diverse leadership, you must first have a diverse membership.

3

To have a diverse membership, targeted recruitment and programming is needed. This considers equity approaches around cost, time, location, equipment, access to registration, etc.

4

Identify key gaps that exist within coaching pathways. This may likely need to include meaningful partnerships with the equity deserving groups you are trying to serve. (ex. adding Indigenous Education as part of the core pathway)

5

Critically think about the coaching pathway and how people may wish to show up in these spaces. Sport for many is on a volunteer/extra-curricular basis. Time is often a privilege, so creating space for people to be as involved in the ways they are able will help to retaining a more diverse range of leaders.

6

Consider varying capacities and roles that could exist in a sporting environment to be inclusive and flexible.