**Introducing…**

My name is Nicole Brooks. I’m the Executive Officer within the Faculty of Health Sciences. Last year my mentor was Paul Ramage who is the Executive Officer in the VP (Administration) office.

Hello, my name is Ken McPhail. I’m Professor of Accounting and Head of the Department of Accounting in La Trobe Business School. My mentor last year was Steve Kent, Head of the School of Psychology.

Hi, my name is Kiraly Wills and I’m a senior consultant in the Change and Culture team in HR. My mentor in the program last year was John Rosenberg and we’ve actually decided to continue our mentoring relationship this year as well.

**My mentoring experience…**

As part of the mentoring program, Paul and I would meet regularly over coffee. Our chats were generally informal but in our first session, we set up some goals and outlined what we were going to work through for the rest of the year.

The first really important aspect of the mentoring relationship was to find someone that matched my personality and my needs. Leanne Brown and her team helped me set up some initial meetings with Steve. I think mentoring relationships can work in different ways. We wanted to be quite focused and set a schedule where we would meet regularly and address specific issues. We spent the first few meetings identifying key areas that we would work on and so there was a lot of accountability placed on me to come prepared for those meetings and ensured that they happened.

When I joined the mentoring program last year, I was very keen to have a senior mentor, because I wanted to better understand the University’s strategic direction and the decisions and challenges the senior executive team face. When I first met with John, we had a coffee and talked about the things I had done already at the University including the various roles that I’d had and also the areas I felt like I wanted to develop in. I found John to be very responsive and he actually came to me straight after that meeting with a list of committees that I would be able to attend with him as a shadowing opportunity. I had the opportunity to attend PRC, the Finances and Resources Committee, and CALPS meetings. I would also then have the opportunity to debrief and reflect on the committee meetings I had shadowed him on. That was a great opportunity too.

**Outcomes…**

The mentoring program allowed me to better understand the work undertaken within other areas of the University. As a result of the program, I was fortunate enough o spend some time working in the office of the VP (Administration). Because I normally work in the Faculty, spending that time over in the VP (Administration) office was a great opportunity to work with other central divisions. During the time I spent over in the central office, I got to meet new people, experience different challenges, and undertake work I wouldn’t normally undertake as part of my normal job.

One of the key outcomes for me was helping to instil a sense of confidence when entering the role.

It happened that I was in attendance at one of the committee meetings where a project that I was working on was being discussed and I was actually able to present on that because I was there as a mentee. That was a fantastic opportunity.

**Learnings…**

One thing I learnt was that senior staff within the University are very approachable and more than willing to help.

One of the things that I was surprised to learn was that I can do so much more if I organise my time appropriately and setting prioritised goals during the mentoring process really helped with that.

Whilst I was really excited about the opportunities to have a mentor that was so senior within the organisation, I must say I was a little bit nervous. The minute that I actually started talking to John, he was absolutely involved in the mentoring relationship and made me feel very comfortable. I felt early on that I could talk about anything I wanted to talk about.

**Why I recommend mentoring…**

I would recommend the La Trobe Mentoring Program because it’s a great opportunity to meet senior staff that you otherwise wouldn’t have the opportunity to.

I would definitely recommend participating in the mentoring program. I think it’s really crucial to learn from people who have knowledge and experience in the same kinds of challenges that you have or may have further down the track. You can bring that experience into the challenges that you are facing. It was hugely beneficial for me. I would recommend that you participate in the Mentoring Program and get as much out of it as you can. Formulate a plan, set key and achievable goals, and have a reflective journal where you record those experiences and learn from those as you go forwards.

I would absolutely recommend the Mentoring Program to anybody and I’ve been doing that actually to lots of colleagues around the University. I think it is a great opportunity for you to really pair up with someone that you might not have the opportunity to do so in other aspects of your work. It can give you a different perspective on things and give you some wonderful opportunities that you just didn’t even know were possible.

Go staff mentoring!

**[credits roll]**