Mentor’s Reflect

***Introducing…..***

Hi, I’m Stephen Kent, I’m Head of the School of Psychological Science and last year my mentee was Ken McPhail.

Hi I am Browen Young, I’m the Director of Service Businesses here at La Trobe University and I have the priviledge of mentoring Sharon Rayner who works in the Health Sciences Faculty

My name is Paul Ramage, I’m the Acting Director of Faculty Planning and Operations in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. I was the mentor for Nicole Brooks, the Executive Officer in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

***My mentoring experience…….***

Sharon asked me when we first met what my motivation had been for being a mentor and I explained that across my career that I had had very few formal mentors and I had felt at various times across my career that I hadn’t really been able to go to someone to seek guidance and advice about progressing my career. And I felt kind of a little bit disappointed that I hadn’t had that opportunity and made a commitment to myself quite early in my career that were I in the situation to be able to give something back to emerging female leaders that I would do everything I possibly could.

I got involved in the staff mentoring program because I think it’s important to give back to any organisation or cause you are involved with and that you care about.

I became involved in the La Trobe mentoring program because I had worked in another organisation that had a similar program and I was a mentee there and saw the value of being able to get together regularly with somebody and just talk through issues.

***Outcomes***

It just allowed me, I’ve been at La Trobe for 18 years, and it allowed me to share some of that knowledge that I’ve acquired with someone in Ken’s case who was actually quite new to La Trobe and so in some ways I felt a little bit like I was a guide to some of the what might at times seem like obscure reasons for why things are the way they are.

I’ve found that its been mutually rewarding because I’ve been able to share with Sharon some of my business experiences and life experiences and she has been able to give me some wonderful insights and knowledge around life in a faculty which I didn’t have a great deal of knowledge about.

Its more an opportunity just to sort of know that there would be space In your week in your month to sort of reflect and to think about how things that might be done better and given Nicole and I were working in very similar roles it was just a really good opportunity to take some time out and do that, so that was certainly one of the really good outcomes that we had from the program. The other thing was I suppose as well just a sense of satisfaction that you are helping somebody in their career and as I had participated in the mentoring program in the past, I know the value I got out of it so I hoped I would be able to provide something for Nicole based on that too.

***Why I recommend mentoring……***

I’d recommend the staff mentoring program to anyone and everyone either as a mentor or as a mentee because being a mentor or a mentee means you are going to be interacting with someone from a different area of the university either a different school, a different faculty, maybe even a different campus. That interaction is a bit like travelling, it forces you out of your comfort zone it forces you to reconsider some of the things that you have assumed are the best way to do things, the best approaches the best processes, because we are a very large and rather diverse organisation and what you will find in interacting with people from other parts of the university is that they have different approaches or different views about aspects of how the university should be functioning, whether you be talking about lecturing, supervision, research etc and it’s through those interactions that you yourself can grow quite a bit.

Fulfil my commitment to myself about supporting development in young women and as I touched on in my earlier response, it’s taught me a lot, I’ve learned as lot from Sharon as much as I hope she has learnt from me.

It was a really good opportunity, to as I say, just to get together with somebody that I know, that wanted to get a better understanding of another part of the University as well, so hopefully it was a two way thing and that’s I think when the mentee- mentor relationship works is when both people are getting something out of it, there’s not much point if it is only one way.

That it’s another way that you can give back to the University, and just enhance the environment that we spend most of our waking time in so we might as well do what we can to make it as good a place as we possibly can.

Go staff mentoring.