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BPW Darwin Women's Mentoring Program – Mentoring Growth Groups

Aim:

To facilitate a six month women's mentoring program in 2021, comprising 30 mentors and 30 mentees.

About BPW Darwin:

BPW Darwin has extensive experience working to achieve equality at work, on boards and in leadership and is ideally placed to implement this women's mentoring program – the first of its kind in the Northern Territory.

The BPW Darwin Club is the largest club in Australia with the most rapid growth in members (an increase of 47% in the past 12 months) and the most diverse.

About the program:

This annual, six-month mentoring program seeks to empower women, build confidence and leadership capacity, strengthen economic independence, support female labour force participation and ultimately reduce the gender gap in the economic status of women in the Northern Territory.

Following a call for nominations and pairing of mentors and mentees, the program will partner them into groups of six (3 mentors, with one identified as the main facilitator, and 3 mentees) with participants attending a half day workshop to map their six month journey – these groups will be known as mentoring growth groups.

Commitment of Mentors and Mentees:

It is expected that mentors and mentees will meet face to face on a monthly basis for a Roundtable session, with a touch point each fortnight, be it through zoom/teleconference meetings, text, phone or otherwise. In addition, for each month of the program BPW Darwin will coordinate an appropriate professional development workshop for any interested participants to attend. Each month a 'value' topic will be presented with participants working through this value and providing individual actions and ratings against this monthly goal.

Mentors and mentees will need to attend one of the two workshops offered, on Saturday 24 July or Saturday 31 July 2021. *(Inability to attend will not mean you can't participate in the program however, these workshops will be an invaluable opportunity to engage with your mentoring growth group and glean an understanding of what the program will entail and appropriate goal setting.)*

Support offered:

An initial zoom meeting will be provided to mentors/facilitators prior to the workshop to strengthen their understanding of the program and expectations.

BPW Darwin will provide regular communications and contacts, coupled by zoom meetings to check in with participants, and additional support where and when required.

At any stage, mentors and mentees are encouraged to connect with their mentor growth group and nurture the relationships to glean the best results.

Timeframes:

Early June –BPW Darwin members and stakeholders invited to nominate as mentors and mentees

Mid June – Minister media announcement and call for participants, with an application to be completed.

Mid July – nominations close and pairing of mentors and mentees into groups of six

Mid July – Minister launch event with mentors, mentees, BPW Darwin members and key stakeholders

24 and 31 July – Launch workshop for mentors and mentees to attend outlining the program
Monthly professional development workshop and ongoing communications with mentors/facilitators (mentors and mentees must commit to one of these 2 ½ hour workshops)

August – Professional Development workshop – resume writing and interview techniques (open to any interested participants)

September, October and November – Professional Development workshop offered each month. Topics to be determined, suggestions welcomed.

October – workshop with mentors and mentees to gauge participation and review objectives

End November/Early December – Conclusion of first program and celebration event/award of certificates.

Overall program objectives for the mentee;

- Gain new insights into the mentor and mentee program
- Developing a successful relationship with mentors and other program participants
- Develop and make progress toward specific career goals and develop an enhanced sense of purpose and clarity through completing specific action steps
- Work with mentors to deliver a meaningful action and personal learnings by the end of the mentoring program.

Mentoring must be;

- reciprocal and benefits both parties in important ways
- Like leadership, some mentors and mentees have a greater natural affinity toward mentoring, but everyone can get better with education, awareness of key behaviours, and effort/motivation
- Mentoring can directly impact career success and mentoring can be useful any time you need to learn a new skill or take on a new role.

The Roundtable Method of Growth – Mentoring Growth Groups:

Values based Roundtables are a very powerful transformation tool to empower women, build confidence and leadership capacity within each participant. This in turn will strengthen women in leadership and their economic security.

Roundtables work because they enable participants to transform how they think about themselves. When participants meet regularly at Roundtables to examine, discuss and apply good values to their lives, they are changing their perspective about their identities. They are creating a core of good values within themselves and beliefs about themselves that impact every aspect of their lives.

The teaching method of the Roundtable is very simple but highly effective. Every person understands the value of two-way communication. Roundtables employ two-way communication in a structured environment. Ideas are not taught they are facilitated.

During a Roundtable, a designated person leads, but all participants share from their own experience. Although personal growth does happen individually, the Roundtable process allows participants to learn from the experiences of others. When the facilitator is transparent, it creates an environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their experiences. As a result, everyone grows together – including the facilitator.

Mentee's Responsibilities:

Mentees have responsibilities, including:

- identify initial learning goals and measures of success for the mentoring relationship
- be open to and seek feedback
- take an active role in their own learning and help drive the process
- Schedule and attend mentor conversations
- follow through on commitments and take informed risks as they try new options and behaviours in support of career and development goals.

In your first mentoring conversations, you will want to discuss and clarify expectations with your mentor growth group.

Mentor's Responsibilities:

Working with a mentor can be an invaluable experience for both parties. The mentor and mentee will likely learn new things about themselves and each other that will help them move toward career goals. But to make a successful mentor mentee relationship, each party needs to understand the role they play.

The role of a mentor is to act as:

- Advisor and coach: provide advice, guidance, and feedback; share their experience and expertise as appropriate; act as a sounding board for ideas and action plans
- Champion and cheerleader: offer encouragement and support to try new things; help mentees move out their comfort zones; celebrate successes; help mentees understand when things do not go as planned; act as a role model for the mentee
- Resource and recommendations: identify resources that will help mentees with personal development and growth, such as recommending books, workshops, or other learning tools; encourage mentees to join networking organizations or introduce them to new contacts
- Devil's advocate and "truth-sayer": provide the tough feedback that mentees need to hear in order to move forward; push mentees to take risks when appropriate; help mentees consider and weigh potential consequences of decisions and actions to avoid the pitfalls and predictable surprises that may occur.

What a Mentor Does for you:

- Takes a long-range view of your growth and development.
- Helps you see the destination but does not give you a detailed map to get there.
- Offers encouragement and cheerleading, but not "how-to" advice.

A Mentor Does Not:

- Serve as a coach, as explained above.
- Function as an advocate of yours in the organisational environment such as your boss would; the relationship is more informal.
- Tell you how to do things.
- Support you on transactional, short-term problems.
- Serve as a counsellor or therapist.

Have Mentors and Mentees Clarify Their Ground Rules:

Mentoring pairs are encouraged to set their own ground rules for interaction and how they will work together toward their stated goals. Clear ground rules can help prevent misunderstandings.

Giving participants control over the process helps ensure their buy-in and makes it easier for them to fit mentoring into their schedules. Participants are encouraged to clearly define their respective roles in sustaining the relationship/s, as well as the logistical details of when and where to meet.

Mentorships may begin with mentors and mentees setting development goals and laying out logistics such as how often to meet, how they will contact each other, and the nature of the support the mentor growth group will offer. At group meetings, participants will track progress, verify professional growth, and set new challenges.

Ideas to help you succeed with a mentor:

Understanding the role of the mentor makes a critical starting point for success in this relationship.

Additional requirements include:

1. Investing your time in seeking out a mentor with whom you feel a natural fit.
2. Sharing your goals and fears openly.
3. Not expecting the mentor to solve your short-term problems or do the work for you.
4. Not expecting specific advice.
5. Sharing where you are struggling or failing.
6. Listening carefully and then researching and applying the mentor's guidance.
7. Showing that you value the mentor's support.

A mentor can make a real difference in your career and life. Come to the relationship with realistic expectations about the role and a willingness to work hard. The impact of a mentor's guidance and wisdom now may not be felt for some years to come, but you will realise its positive impact over time and go on to become a mentor to others.

Contact:

If you have any questions or queries relating to this grant, please contact BPW Darwin Vice President, Events and Marketing, Rebecca Forrest on:

0499 444 029

Email: bpwdarwinclub@gmail.com

[Click here](#) to nominate.

References:

[Roles and responsibilities of mentors](#)

[Mentors role and mentee role](#)

[Top tips for successful mentoring](#)

[Understanding the role of a mentor](#)