



Establishing Effective Mentorship to Help Women Apprentices Succeed

Mentoring is an established industry practice that is especially effective in helping women and diverse men succeed in apprenticeship. The following mentorship elements could contribute to apprentices from underrepresented groups gaining the crew connections and social guidance needed to develop a long term career in the trades.

1. New worker job site orientations

Request your apprentices receive thorough orientation to the job site and its expectations on the first day or week on the job. This orientation should cover how to be safe, attendance expectations, appropriate work behavior, etc. It is a best practice for workers giving the orientation to follow a checklist – sometimes job site expectations are so assumed by the established worker that they are not communicated to new workers.

2. Ensure that new workers are assigned a “go-to” journey worker

The established worker may not work every day with new apprentices, but assigning that worker the responsibility to help the new workers understand expectations, get questions answered, be safe, get settled in can help to create relationships on the job site from day one on the job.

3. Encourage or support culturally or gender-specific mentoring for women and minority apprentices

Some examples of mentoring support groups include the IBEW Electrical Minority Caucus, Carpenter’s Sisters in the Brotherhood, and tradeswomen organizations such as Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc. These groups provide a chance to learn survival and success skills in a safe environment from successful, cultural peers.