**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Mentoring Works: Retaining Apprentices through Effective On-the-Job Learning**

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JONATHAN VEHLOW: Welcome to "Mentoring Works: Retaining Apprentices through Effective On-the-Job Learning."

So without further ado, I'd like to kick things off to our moderator today, Zodie Makonnen, grant lead dealing, Scaling Apprenticeship through Sector-Based Strategies, Division of Strategic Investments, Employment and Training Administration. Zodie, take it away.

ZODIE MAKONNEN: Thank you, Jon. Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you for joining us for today's webinar. Like Jon said, my name is Zodie Makonnen, and I'm the lead for the Scaling Apprenticeship through Sector-Based Strategies grant program.

Today, we've got several experts together that will be talking to you about mentorship and the importance and benefits of mentorships in apprenticeship programs. We have a great panel, and that will provide you with useful information that you can use as you work on developing and implementing your grant program.

I am now going to hand this over to Chris Spence, who is with Manhattan Strategy Group and is one of our Scaling Apprenticeship TA coaches. Chris?

CHRIS SPENCE: Thanks, Zodie. Hi, everyone. Thanks again for joining. I'm Chris Spence, as Zodie said, a Scaling Apprenticeship TA coach. I'm joined today by Paul Champion, an apprenticeship subject matter expert, and we are members of the Manhattan Strategy Group's Scaling Apprenticeship assistance team.

Paul, would you mind taking a few seconds to provide a bit of your background?

PAUL CHAMPION: Yes. Thanks, Chris. As Chris said, I'm Paul Champion, and nice to be on today. I am one of the subject matter experts with the Manhattan Strategy Group. I've been involved in the process for 30 years now, which seems like an age, I know. I've been involved in the U.S., as I am now, running a nonprofit called TranZed Apprenticeship Services and also executive director of apprenticeship for the Steve Wozniak Organization.

But in my recent past, I had my own business in the U.K. and also, I worked for the British government and some work in Hong Kong in China. So it's great to be here. Looking forward to having a discussion about – with everybody.

MR. SPENCE: Thanks, Paul. We're additionally joined today by members of the HealthWorks Project team, which is a Scaling Apprenticeship grant operating throughout the state of New Jersey and led by Bergen Community College. We'll introduce them further in a moment.

Just a couple of quick rules of engagement for today's session. The session is formatted so all questions, comments, and discussions are occurring via the chat. You can pose your questions, offer any thoughts at any time throughout the presentation. I'm the traffic cop. So I'll be monitoring the chat with the help of Jon Vehlow, who you heard a moment ago, and feeding questions to our speakers.

We have an interesting agenda today. Our topic is mentorship. We'll start off by providing an overview, a sort of who, what, when, where, why about mentorship provided by by Paul. We'll hear about examples of mentorship. We'll start off by providing an overview, a sort of who, what, when, where, why about mentorship provided by Paul.

We'll hear about examples of mentorship in action from Paul's portfolio of clients. Then, we'll turn to the HealthWorks team to showcase the great work that they're doing to build and enhance systems for mentorship in New Jersey.

The last segment of the webinar is a discussion Q&A. As the moderator, I have a set of questions that are queued up for the panelists. And you all, as members of the audience, are also invited to provide comments and thoughts or post questions at any time. You don't have to wait to ask your questions. You don't have to hold them until the Q&A. Feel free to pose your questions or comments at any time, and we'll work through them.

We also have a couple of poll questions that are kind of peppered in. So please participate in those as they come up.

Our intent is that you'll come away having added to your knowledge of techniques helpful in communicating the importance of mentorship, understanding of essential components of effective mentorship, strategies to set up and manage effective mentoring programs, and awareness of successful apprenticeship mentorship examples.

Here's a view of our HealthWorks team. We have Dr. Christine Gillespie, who's the HealthWorks project director and executive director of the Division of Continuing Education and Workforce Development at Bergen Community College, Andrea Nemetz, who's the HealthWorks grant manager, and Jaime Pardo, who's manager of workforce and career placement, all at Bergen. We'll look forward to hearing their comments in a short – a few minutes.

OK. And then jumping into the first poll question, if you don't mind, enter a response to this whole question. Most commonly, who serves as a mentor to your apprentices? There's a few options there, or you can put other thoughts that you have in the chat. And we'll ask you to respond and give us your insights, and when we're done with this, Paul, I'll turn it over to you to reflect on the poll responses and then start into the first segment.

MR. CHAMPION: Thanks a lot, Chris. Yeah. So as we can see already, there's four people – five now. So everybody seems to be pushing for the supervisors for the on-the-job stuff, which is what I expected to see really. Coming in not a very close second or third, but individuals in peer roles more experienced than journeyworkers, which is a good one. And also, individuals in other roles.

Yeah. So a lot of these are what we see in general. But, I mean, right up there, very, very sort of way out in the front is the supervisors, which is what we expected to see and which is what is the norm really.

So if we – it's that's everybody – – (inaudible) – everybody that voted, could we take that down so we can see the presentation again? Great. And then just move – (inaudible) – round one, if we can. And then just, again, please.

Yeah. So that gives me a really good lead into one of the things I wanted to say before we get into the meat of the whole presentation really, is that there is a natural thought – a natural and a correct thought that journeyworkers and supervisors and those sort of individuals who are working alongside the apprenticeship are the people who have the biggest influence and the best mentors within for the apprentices in the workplace. And that's correct.

But what I want – don't want us to sort of forget is that what we found in the rules and the mentor problems that we've run is that you have a bit of a triangle effect, which makes it even more stronger. You have your mentor – (inaudible) – who is also helping you do the related instruction, and that also helps to increase and have an impact on retention.

But also, we act as a sponsor intermediary. So you have the employer, the RTI instructor, which is sometimes not us. Sometimes another organization, and then you have the programs that we run. We have an independent mentor that works within our programs who is helping to track the apprentice up and to work with the apprentice, help them to – to get them over any problems that they don't want to talk to their RTI instructor or their employer a certain degree.

So as we go through, I just want you to think about some of the questions that you'll see there and some of the comments that we've – (inaudible) – make, is that for me, if you're talking about retention, you're talking about impact of mentoring on retention, it is not just the workplace supervisor that has the potential to improve and affect that. There is people in your organization who maybe – (inaudible) – in your RTI or an independent mentor, which I think is critical for ongoing success.

So the purpose of mentoring. I think very clearly it's something that we all really know what it is. We've all probably had members of our own or had people who helped us through our jobs. I think we all need somebody on a new job to help us find our way and find our place.

So mentor, an important part of the apprenticeship. It gives them support they need, and it's a listening are. It's somebody they can go to as they transition their roles. So that's just a basic mentoring principle.

So let's look at the benefits. Let's look at the benefits of everybody involved. So clearly, we want to understand what the benefits for the apprentice is. And I think they're receiving the coaching and the training. We all know that as you're learning the job and as you're learning the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that you're require to in your new role, it's difficult because you're learning skills. You've been asked to do things that maybe you don't quite understand. You're in a foreign environment sometimes in the sense of that some people don't actually know what it's like to work in a business.

So you've got somebody who's been there, seen it, done that who is hoping you and giving any support to not just navigate the skills that you need to do and actually helping you to get those competencies that you're required to to be effective in your role but also understand what it means to work in that environment.

Somebody with greater knowledge than you, somebody who's done the job and has been through the process and is really doing the job there today and how to solve those problems, all of those problems that everybody knows what they are when we start the first job and we're trying to learn a new skill, because we've all – sometimes that person could be isolated, and that's where the training piece comes because sometimes, when you're new in your job or when you're learning new skills, you don't want to talk to your employer.

You want another person to talk to who can then help you, give you strategies to engage with your mentor because, as we said in the poll, the mentor is generally a supervisor, the person that they report to. So sometimes those things are an external third-party that can help as well.

So for the mentor, what does that do? The mentors get to share their knowledge. They get to pass on their skills, and I think that's one of the great things about the journeyworker apprenticeship model is that they get to work with each other. They get to improve their own communication. They get to play an active part in sort of helping the business grow skills and also help them working with the apprentice and identify things that the business could do better.

As we know, apprentices brings fresh ideas that bring new ways of thinking. So the mentor themselves might be – identify those and help to build those as a core part of the business. So that's an important part that the mentor plays as well. It's not just working with the apprentice, but it's helping what's coming from the apprentice to impact on the business.

And for the employer, one of the key things is the transfer of knowledge, the getting the apprenticeship – the apprentice up to speed as quickly as possible so that they can contribute to the business, so that if the apprentice is doing really well and the mentor's really happy, then they can be given higher responsibility. If they're on a – (inaudible) – of this program, they get to build more companies and do different work. But it's all about knowledge transfer and employment of skills.

And I think what it also does is it helps to embed a whole new way of thinking, sort of excitement in the business. And the employer can then see how bringing new blood into the business through apprenticeships can have an impact on productivity and also on the overall culture of the business.

So what's the brief roles the role of mentorship in the apprenticeship? So the apprentices is receiving the training and is practicing those on-the-job skills with the support of the mentor. And the mentor will allow them, hopefully, to learn and reflect.

So they did a new skill. The mentor will give them feedback and sort of say, well, maybe you can do it this way. Maybe do it that way. So it helps that reflective process of the apprentice so that they can start to understand the skill and understand why it's done that way. But also, they get a chance to sort of say, well, maybe if we did it this way or I've seen it done this or I've seen this method used, maybe that can help.

The mentor sort of is a key person in observing and also sort of – and really signing off competencies, also looking at the progression. Is Paul progressing at a pace that is required, or is there more support that Paul might need from through RTI or through an external mentor or within the business? Do we need to pair him with another individual who has got those skills that they can help?

So the mentor or the supervisor is sort of somebody who can take a more rounded view of Paul's progress and get the right sort of support appointed by doing his job – for doing his job.

And also, if it's not the supervisor, but the supervisor mentor, as we've seen, has been one and the same in general, they have similar position, but that supervisor is involved in the evaluation.

And the way that we have approached evaluations is there is the RTI instructor, there is the mentor, the supervisor mentor, un-supervisor in some instances, and as a third-party mentor doing those reviews of progress and ensuring that there isn't any sort of pinch points in the process. There isn't any friction anywhere. And what it allows us to do with the mentor to help to look at how we can smooth that process out.

But as a third party, we've managed to have a third-party mentor who can coordinate and help that toleration happen more smoothly because in the heat of the job, the end of the day, there is sometimes things can just happen because they're – it's on the job. It has to happen quickly. As an outside mentor, we can help to sort of make that – smooth those things out and help that work in a more collaborative methodology.

So let's look at the stages of mentoring. These are crucial in not only the success of the mentor but also the subject that we're talking about today is how to increase the retention of the apprentices.

So one of the first things in the place where a lot of this work is done is getting to know each other. There's got to be a rapport. There's got to be a trust between the mentor and the apprentice. They've got to feel like they can go to them, go to the mentor and ask questions and ask for understanding and ask for clarity. So that timing in getting to know the mentor is really crucial.

And we suggest that there is – before getting into actually doing the job, that there's getting to know you sessions. And we did some training. That helps the mentor understand how to do that and give them key methodologies to help them understand what it means to be a mentor. Y

Make sure there's clear understandings and rules of engagement really. Make sure that the apprentice is able to [inaudible], this is what I – (inaudible) – and then the mentor say, well, this is what I can do. So there's clear – right at the start there's clear rules of engagement, understanding what each person is able to do and how things are going to work.

Then the next stage is sort of like any great planning process. It's about setting goals, building expectations. We can – we do this in partnership with our employers in the sense of that, how do we know Paul is going to progress? What are the goals that you need in the workplace? What skills do you need to know? What skills – (inaudible) – – well, they're on three. I'm on five.

In the past years, for those that have been on my webinars before, – (inaudible) – webinar, I talk about – (inaudible) – really goals of an individual – (inaudible) – mark of the apprentice are important, the scheduling, the planning, and the structure of how the work's going to take place.

Third aspect, if you've got a really great rapport and you've set really clear goals and you're talking about that and the mentor is helping them on that, monitoring progress, finding out whether Paul is falling behind or what can be done to help Paul get more skills? The supervisor will know if there's a project coming in that Paul can take part on. So integrating the apprentice into the whole structure.

And then, finally, one of the things that is also important thing is ending the relationship. Over over a one-, two- or three-year apprenticeship, they will have built up a really great relationship with their mentor. And sometimes that's difficult to break. Sometimes – and it needs to be broken, and sometimes it's not. Sometimes you might be working with that supervisor for the rest of your career. So it's about if it needs to be broken, how – or taken apart a little bit, how do you do that?

I mean, I was an apprentice in 1980 and can still remember those interactions that I had with my mentor as an apprentice that were the key things that helped me stay there or the key things that we learned – (inaudible) – is learning how – what it meant to be at work. So – and also enable each other to have a bit of reflection and reflect on how did it work? What are the things that worked well? What do I need to do better with anybody that I mentor in the future?

Very quickly, and some things – (inaudible) – I just need to think about the structure of mentoring, that triangle effect, but also what I think would be good for a future questions and discussion that we have is start to think about – reflect on who was – if you've mentored somebody or somebody who had – who you have mentored or somebody who's mentored you, what qualities did they possess? What's the things that stick out for you in this whole process?

Start putting some thoughts into the chart. We can talk about – (inaudible) – because one of the key things that make a great mentor. If it's stuck in your mind now, it obviously worked and it's some something that had an impact.

So pretty quickly to go through some of those qualities of a good mentor. They've got to be able to motivate. We all know that apprentices sometimes, like anybody in a job, doesn't want to do the work, doesn't want to deal with the inspection, doesn't turn up on time. We have the same issues as we do with any other worker. The mentor's got to be able to understand that, find out the issues, and sort of then – and motivate a person to keep on track, to keep on doing the work, to keep on learning the skills.

Effective communicator. Ensure that there's great communication between the apprentice and the mentor but also a great communication between the employer themselves. Keep pushing it up the chain if there's anything that needs to be done, and also, back to the RTI instructor, all the other third-party sponsor like we are, to see how we can work together to maintain progress and also maintain the structure and retention of apprenticeship.

If things go wrong, a mentor needs somebody who can help that apprentice through the difficult times. Build confidence and trust, trust to act as a critical friend. We talked about building rapport. These are all key things that need to be part of the mentoring training, which is a key part.

We have an element in training and also visit – (inaudible) – mentors to continue professional development with them. And we have, hopefully, something about that later on with the healthcare one.

Be able to tackle sensitive issues. Sometimes the mentor is the only person that the apprentice is going to go to, and sometimes you'll be – the mentor will be faced with things that they didn't think they would be. In that case, – (inaudible) – a person to deal with that.

And an active listener, somebody who can listen and then give positive feedback and then give feedback that helps.

Effective practitioner or journeyworker. What an apprentice wants to see is somebody who's great at their job. I can remember my mentors were absolutely amazing at their job, and that made me want to be great. That made me want to be – to do this job really well and progress in it and become better every day.

Able to support other and reflect on their own practice. So you did something wrong. How did – why did it go wrong? What could you do better next time? How can you approach it in a different way? Learning is all about those steps that you didn't do right as well, all those steps that you need to change. And a good mentor will help people, not to say you did it wrong, try it again. They will help the apprentice to reflect and think differently.

Willing to devote time to the role and responsibility of mentoring. What you don't want is you don't want somebody who thinks mentoring is saying, well, Paul, I've looked at your work. That's great. I'll see you next Wednesday. That's not mentoring. That's just checking in. Do you know what I mean? And it's just doing the littlest thing that we possibly can.

There has got to be a relationship and it takes time and it takes energy to do that and it takes somebody who is willing to sacrifice a little bit of what they else have to do, because usually you find that mentors are people who have jobs to do as well. Surprisingly enough, they have a job already, and now, they're being asked to mentor somebody in that role. So I think, again, that needs some training and some expanding.

Respect the values of equality and inclusion because mentoring has a great way of enabling those learners that come from diverse backgrounds, who have an added level of sometimes of worry about going to a job. If they're going into a job and as we're seeing apprenticeships grow, we're seeing that increase in diversity and equity and inclusion of people going into certain jobs.

They have a higher level of sort of lack of confidence or a worry about going into the job because, not only are they going into a job that they don't know or a culture that they don't know, but people might not expect to see people of color in those roles. And, therefore, they have to assimilate. And the mentor needs to play a key role in ensuring that diversity inclusion is successful within employers.

And then practical considerations. Allocation of mentors. Is there a compatibility? An employer knows that – I remember my mentor was chosen because he had a son that had worked in the organization and he knew what his son has gone through. And he knew how to help teach. He knew how to help teach people skills. So that was a – that was why I was – (inaudible) – because it wasn't an official mentor. It was just somebody who helped me out when I was there.

Specialist knowledge. Can the mentor teach them not just the basics but beyond the basics? What's the next step after you've learned how to do this? What's the next thing you need to know? And how can I help you do that?

There needs to be a purpose to it. It can't just be something that you're supervisor – (inaudible) – supervisor. It's your job to look after the apprentices. Just go and do it. They've got to understand there's a purpose in it, that they are a knowledge transfer, that they are building skills, that they have an impact on the business.

And then the practical considerations. Can the mentor put the time in? Does the mentor not have to leave at 5:00 o'clock or can't get in early in the morning to do the work, if that's when the mentor is doing. Can they not handle the pressure of having that? So those practical considerations are key as well.

And then expectations. Confidentiality and professionalism, two things that we all need. But, if the apprentice is having an issue or having a problem, we need to be clear about the confidentiality of that. It may be trouble at home. It might be other things that that apprentice is involved in that need to be handled carefully, not just with the apprentice but with the employer. And that's something else that needs to be instilled in mentors when we are – (inaudible) – mentoring training.

And you need to be professional because, in essence, the apprentices look at the mentor as how should they act? How should they be? What does it mean to be doing this job? And what does it mean to be somebody who's qualified to do this job? They will not only learn the skills, but they'll learn what it means to be qualified and be a leader in that organization. So the professionalism is key as well because apprentices generally soak all of that up.

So yeah. So that's my part of the formal presentation complete. But we have a second poll question really. And, Chris, were you going to walk through this, or you just want me to do it?

MR. SPENCE: Yeah. Thanks, Paul. Thanks for that overview. I really appreciate the holistic overview of what all mentorship involves.

So we're going to transition to the Bergen team here in a moment, who are going to talk us through mentorship in their context, and then we'll transition by way of this poll slide. So please participate in the poll.

What sort of training or support do your mentors receive? There are a set of options here. Confessing that I'm the one that put the options together, maybe I didn't think of all the ways that mentors could be trained and supported. So please feel free to enter some comments in the chat.

Looks like we've got a mix of responses here. Interesting. And I see at Dallas there's a five-module training that includes a prerecorded content for each session, followed by live training. Very interesting.

OK. Thanks. Jon, let's take the poll down and move to the Bergen team. And take it away, Dr. Gillespie.

DR. CHRISTINE GILLESPIE: Good morning. Thank you very much, Chris, for the kind introduction. I am going to just give you an overview of what we have done here in New Jersey with our Scaling Apprenticeship grant.

As I looked at the attendees in the chat box, I noticed a lot of my colleagues and some of the folks that I consider to be very prominent in this field. So I'm very happy to have you join us today.

So as Chris mentioned, I'm Dr Chris Gillespie. I'm the executive director of Continuing Education and Workforce Development at Bergen Community College. With me today are Andrea Nemeth. She's our grant manager for the Scaling Apprenticeship grant. And in addition, we have brought Jaime Pardo, who is our manager of workforce and career placement here at Bergen Community College, and he's actually sort of the boots on the ground. And you may have questions for him as we move along. Next slide, please.

So Bergen Community College is the lead organization in a 15-member consortium that is named the New Jersey Health Professions Consortium. We did not create this Health Professions Consortium as a result of this grant. This is about the third major grant. We've had some other smaller grants previous to this, and the North Jersey and then became New Jersey Health Professionals Consortium was formed as a result of those grants. So we've grown and it's a flexible group and it really is dependent upon the institutions that want to join us on any particular funding opportunity.

For those of you not familiar with the East Coast and certainly not familiar with where Bergen Community College might be, I did include a map of New Jersey, included our little logo and the arrow of where we are. For those of you who are not sure of North Jersey, to give you some perspective, a little intrusion underneath the yellow arrow, that white intrusion, that's New York City. So

if you notice, New York City is bordered top and bottom by New Jersey, which is kind of an interesting – gives us an interesting flavor. I say that in terms of – I bring that out for this particular purpose because, as we scale – when we talk about scaling regionally, we've got North Jersey and South Jersey.

You can see realistically why we might have two very different cultural environments. And yes. South Jersey is the Jersey Shore, for those of you who watch that. Yes. We are different culturally, but it's – we're also very densely populated metropolitan area in the north. So for a very small state, we are a very intensive and diverse state, and that gives us opportunities and interesting challenges.

In this particular funding opportunity, the occupations that we've chosen to focus on are there on the slide. You can read them. They have changed. Well, they're the ones that are accurate, but they are somewhat different than what our original grant application included, mostly due to the needs and the opportunities presented as a result of the pandemic. Next slide, please.

So we are fortunate. In our grant, we have more than these, but these are our major national scaling partners that we're working with. CVS Health was one of our first national partners. We are working with pharmacy technicians. In addition to New Jersey, we've moved across the state with them where we've implemented cohorts. And as recently as a couple of days ago, we are in conversations – CVS has been in conversations with some of their other community college partners across the nation.

So in Hawaii. We're looking in Chicago, and I'm not going to throw out schools because then I'll forget one and then I'll be in big trouble. So we'll just leave it at that. But we are very, very pleased to be expanding our model with CVS across the country. It took some time to develop it, and I think that's one of the beauties of this scaling opportunity is it gives you a little bit of time to get it right, but you have to get it right in the beginning before you start to scale. Otherwise, it can get out of hand, as we can – you can understand.

Robert Wood Johnson Barnabas is another one of our major health care systems. Hackensack Meridian Health, another hospital healthcare system that has a lot of long-term care involved, and then CareOne, which has long-term care. We do – we're working with them with CNAs and community health workers. So that gives you an idea of some of our major employers that we're working with, all of whom have mentors.

Now, in the healthcare industry, many of you may know the term mentor as preceptor. And so, that is often a way for us to make a segue into healthcare as it relates to apprenticeships because we can talk about the concept of a preceptor and a mentor and how aligned they can be. And then that helps to smooth that transition somewhat.

As you might imagine, mentors are extremely important in the apprenticeship model. They're very important in the healthcare model. Next slide, please. And so, we had a need to come up with training for mentors, for those employers who say, well, what does a mentor have to do? Right?

You have to have a one-to-one relationship, although I will say that's one of the other emerging best practices I think that we're coming up with is that in – particularly now in health care, a one-to-one mentorship apprentice model is not always feasible. So we have received special permission in only special situations to have a two-to-one relationship because of the dearth of experienced mentors.

What we did is we actually – this slide is important for us because it shows how we leveraged a lot of the opportunities and all the activities in the ecosystem of apprenticeship right now. The German American Chamber of Commerce is one of the national scaling partners in the other SA grantee in New Jersey, which is the County College of Morris. They have an advanced manufacturing Scaling Apprenticeship grant.

We worked with the German American Chamber of Commerce. They were offering train the trainer certifications in advanced manufacturing. We sent some of our folks in healthcare to do the same thing. So we have two that were funded by HealthWorks. We had another two funded by the Career Advanced grant. So that was some of the leveraged funding. So now, we have two super trainers who know how to train mentors and train trainers to train mentors.

Move – the next step was to come up with a mentor training workshop. As we were talking about it, one of our own consortium members, Raritan Valley Community College, was awarded an expanding community college apprenticeship award, and that was specifically to develop curriculum for mentors and employers. So we used some of their funds. They had already put together a four-hour employer mentor training program, which is great in many situations. Again, because of the current situation in healthcare, very few of our partners have the time or our mentors have significant time to devote to a four-hour training on how to become a precept or a mentor.

So our goal then in HealthWorks, and I'm going to let this go off to Andrea, was to take those two funding awards and the groundwork that had been laid by those two activities, and we handed it off to Andrea, who I'm going to introduce now and let her talk to you about where we took it from there.

ANDREA NEMETH: Thanks, Chris. So from there, we developed the HealthWorks taskforce, and as Chris has mentioned, we first developed this four-hour training and there were a lot of time constraints. This initial training had techniques. It was including videos. It had exercises for those that were participating.

The goal ultimately was always to provide the employer mentors with meaningful tools to build cooperation and accountability. But based on their needs, we've taken that training, and we've condensed it further. The training now covers four key areas.

One is the value of the mentoring relationship. Two is the role of the mentor. Three is how to develop specific time-based goals that will create accountability between the mentor and the apprentice. And then the last one, number four, is to actually review the monthly reporting requirements that need to be submitted to our success coaches.

The HealthWorks grant has a success coach at each one of our college partners. And they are – their position is responsible for supporting the academic and the workplace success of all of our apprentices that are participating in the HealthWorks grant. And one of the things that they can provide is additional resources to the employer partners.

On a monthly basis, the mentors are supposed to provide field assessment of the apprentices, major achievements or concerns. They're tracking OJL hours and attendance. They're also completing the competency checklist.

So at this point, tomorrow, actually, Jaime will be providing an additional training session for our success coaches that want to be deemed super trainers. So they're going to be provided with the tools to facilitate these employer mentor training sessions, as our activities are increasing and our apprentices are enrolling.

So the success coaches will be actually delivering the training at a time convenient for the employer partners, and they're going to build those trusting relationships that were mentioned earlier. And they're going to serve as that additional resource to the employer mentor, and they have a relationship that they're building with the apprentices. So thank you. We can move on to the next slide.

MR. SPENCE: OK. Thank you, guys.

MS. NEMETH: Thank you.

MR. SPENCE: All right. So moving us into the Q&A portion, the Q&A segment here, I want to encourage the audience to fire away with your questions as we go. So Paul and the HealthWorks team have a lot of really rich experience when it comes to mentorship, rolling out mentorship systems, et cetera.

I've done my best to try to pose some discussion questions here but might not have nailed it. So I want everyone to please feel free to fire away. Send them in the chat, and we'll pose them to the panelists.

OK. So I am going to pose the first question to Paul. And, Paul, in your response here, I was really appreciating your overview of mentorship at the beginning. Maybe you could make your responses a little more real, give us some examples of work that you've done working with companies, et cetera. But, again, let me fire the first question at you.

How and in what ways does mentorship impact the retention of apprentices?

MR. CHAMPION: I mean, for me, just to put this in context, I think this – (inaudible) – thing was we expand apprenticeships that the key in ensuring that expansion is successful. There's obviously one engaging the employer and make sure you got the right employer, an invested employer. Two is then making the match between the right apprentice and that organization, making sure that all of that's done. And then three is the quality of the – (inaudible) – cost-related instruction that takes place.

But the one that I think has – once you've gotten through all of that, once you gone through all the process of getting an apprentice in the program, one of the most impactful ones is the relationship. Let's just call it the relationship – the apprentice relationship with the employer, and the conduit of that is generally the mentor or the supervisor or whatever you want to call them.

And I've seen examples of apprentices – two or three things, apprentice is about to be fired because one of the senior managers has said they are not progressing fast, and the mentor jumping in and going, hang on a second. It takes a long time for the apprentice to learn the skills. He's great at these skills. We've been working on these skills. They're being drawn together, and drawing together a plan with the RTI instructor to ensure that – (inaudible) – or the mentor has the methodology and the skill and the knowledge to be able to keep apprentices on the program.

And I think the same thing happens where an apprentice has had enough – (inaudible). I'm not learning fast enough. I really am struggling with doing this. That sort of relationship, not just between the worker's mentor but the mentor with the RTI people and, for us, the third-party mentor to create that sort of ring of support around that individual, to sort of talk them through it and liaise with the conversations, coordinate the conversation between the employer and the apprentice and sometimes the family.

If you've got – you've got younger people who are going into apprenticeships. They're they're just learning to work. Do you know what I mean? They're just learning to see themselves as an employee. And I think we've had apprentices who have lost the house or the car is not working. And as a group of mentors, along with the supervisor and the mentor in the workplace, we've managed to gather around that individual and help to sort that issue out.

So it's that ongoing relationship, that ongoing communication that can ensure that the apprentice – either if it's an apprentice problem or an employer problem, where some situations can be diffused. Some things that looks really tangled and really difficult and complex to get over can be teased apart by various people to come up with a solution.

So I think that's really key. And sometimes all the apprentice needs is somebody to talk to, not even – a mentor will face different things, not just work, but sometimes the mentor just needs to go in and just sort of offload on somebody, take a breath. And those sort of things are things that keep people in their jobs.

I mean, I'm going to say we as adults have been – who have been trained in our roles sometimes need that and go to somebody who's a trustworthy person in our organization. So sometimes those easy and those complex situations that you bring that ring of support around the apprentice, and that helps them continue the program.

MR. SPENCE: Great. Thanks, Paul. There's some activity going on in the chat. And the Bergen team, I wanted to give you some airtime to talk this through. So the question is around FTEs. "How many FTEs are working on mentor-related initiatives?" And, Chris, sounds like maybe there's maybe a longer form response to that question.

DR. GILLESPIE: Thank you very much, Chris. Yes. And I'm not always – my shorthand in the chat doesn't always come across maybe as intended.

So the structure of our grant-funded organization, each of the partners has one grant-funded position, which is called a success coach. That person is embedded at that institution, and they are the primary point of contact for the apprentice during their academic experience, as well as during their on-the-job training. So we keep that same person and do not have any kind of a transition from academics to employer just because we know how difficult that relationship is to build. So they are that person.

So in that sense, there's one FTE per school or per partner, per training partner. However, that is not their only responsibility. That – I mean they're – they also do all of the recruiting. They do a lot of the registration. They collect all the paperwork. They work with the employers. They collect the information from the mentors monthly, and they also prepare the monthly reports that come to us so that we can prepare our narrative. So they are the hub of activity at each school. So they are dedicated in that regard. I hope that answered your question.

MR. SPENCE: Great. Thank you. And, Amy, please feel free to keep firing away. Jaime, I want to queue up Jaime. Jaime, is there an additional response to this question from your point of view?

JAIME PARDO: Absolutely. So thank you so much for that, Chris, and everyone. I hope everyone is having a great day.

And I would say that, in essence, the secret sauce to working with students, with people, with just especially our apprentices is engagement; right? But what is engagement; right?

So engagement can mean many things. It can mean communicating. It can mean, in this case, what we established here in New Jersey is our weekly calls with our employer mentors; right? So this helps us ensure what our apprentices are doing; right? Which that follows up to the next part; right? This lets us forecast the challenges that they might have, which at that point can let us work on solutions.

Now, the reason that I always say, again, that engagement is our secret sauce is because, if we're not engaging, it's very difficult to build a relationship; right? And because – the better we can build the relationship with the apprentices and the employer mentors, the better retention goals we're going to have. So because of this, I would say the more that we can engage, the more that we can be present and making that relationship, the long-term forecast will be positive. Thank you.

MR. SPENCE: Thanks, Jaime. I'm going to move us forward here and ask this question to Paul. Paul, does membership look different across sectors or company environment?

MR. CHAMPION: Yeah. Yeah. To a certain degree. I think the core elements of mentoring role, as Jaime just said, it's all about that engagement, that relationship building. But we've seen – as COVID hit, we've seen two different methodologies of doing it.

There is some people who are working in work and have that sort of physical presence of a mentor. One program that we are working with now has got sort of – I think it's about 60 apprentices, and they are all – they have a direct supervisor who works with them. What the organization is doing will help us to have a remote mentoring service as well so that, because people are – because of the work patterns have changed so dramatically, nobody's at the same place. They might be at home. They, might be on site. They might not be. It's changed so dramatically.

But what underpins the whole system is that they have a remote mentoring service where they speak to – where they can, if they like, and generally do, speak to their mentor every week by a call and to talk about the challenges that they have because of COVID, because of work problems.

What you got to remember is that apprentices that started in this last 18 months have had wider challenges that mentors need to deal with than ever before because the whole world was kicked on its head, not just with the sort of – the being – the security of a sort of keeping safe, but also just where am I going to be? What am I going to do? How do I do it?

So I think there is different level of safety precautions and that sort of thing. So I think it's slightly different. But I think to sort of just put a cop on this one is that at the end of the day, if the core elements of the mentoring structure, which is that engagement that Jaime talked about, that relationship building, that good communication, and that trust is there, mentor – the actual practice of mentoring doesn't change that much, but the delivery of it may have to change because of different environments within which you work or distance that you are.

MR. SPENCE: Thanks, Paul. And I'll ask the next question to the New Jersey team about the resistance that can arise to mentorship and also wrap in the question that's remaining in the chat around how much time existing staff spend with apprentices and employer.

MS. PARDO: Chris, I can answer this one. So I would say to follow up on that question about what sort of resistance can arise due through – to mentorship in an organization and how do we overcome it, so, I would say some of those challenges that might happen, believe it or not, some of the resistance could be as simple as just people having different learning methods; right?

So for instance, some people just learn differently, whether it's through learning in a hands-on approach or a theoretical approach. So those challenges, that's one way of resistance.

But another one could just be attendance; right? So for instance, some of the apprentices might not show up because a car situation or transportation issues. Even here as we live minutes away from New York City, the trains and public transportation could be an issue at times; right?

But second to that is also lack of communication. So how do we overcome it is really the answer. And I'm going to bring it back to that. It's engagement and the relationship deepening; right? And the reason that I really hold value and I hold this to a pedestal is because, if we can engage and if we can build that constant communication – and what I'm very proud to say here is in – as far as our New Jersey consortiums and the leadership that we have, is that we've established monthly and weekly calls to have with our New Jersey success coaches as well as our employer partners, is that this ensures that; right?

So and for instance, let's say – and I'm going to say as an example, CVS, since they're such a large employer that's nationwide. They have so much workforce situations and challenges that might come – arise; right? So if – let's – as a situation, I'm going to say Joe didn't show up, and perhaps Joe was afraid to say this or the reason of why he didn't show up to work to his direct manager. Well, because we've developed those relationships, perhaps Joe might not be afraid in speaking with us; right, the success coach team?

So because we've developed these strategies and this is also – again, it's a tool that we sharpen; right? So through these weekly meetings that we have with our success coach team, we're able to really say, hey, these are the challenges that we have this month. So you know what? Let's focus on a solution.

Now, once we focus on a solution, we've actually have – not only do we share it with this team, but this helps us forecast in the future. So if another colleague in another part of the states has a similar solution, at this point we are ready to determine an answer. So these situations keep us grounded.

But going back to that point of resistance and how to overcome it, again, it is really the relationship, and the better relationship we can have, the better outcomes we will definitely have long term.

MR. CHAMPION: Just to add to that as well – that's really great – (inaudible). One of the things I found right – not just here but all over the world where we have mentors and stuff, somebody gets appointed as a mentor. They've been a supervisor for a long time. They get as a mentor to an apprentice, and they go, me? A mentor? What do I know? So I mean, how – what can I pass on? Do you know what I mean?

And these are people who have been in a job forever. So sometimes people just don't realize – they don't have any idea what a mentor is. Oh, I've been a supervisor, and they've probably been mentoring their people that they work with forever. They just don't understand that, when you put a formal word around it, it becomes something that they go, hang on a second. What can I pass on?

So I think it's important to remember that mentors really can't – we can't ask employers to allocate mentors to apprenticeships without doing some training. There has to be a structured training program. It can be in a team talk about there – out there training. We have training programs.

But if you are just – if you're just sort of saying – you're just putting apprenticeships in employers and saying, it's okay, so, can you tell us who the members are going to be without doing any training, and I think it has to be – and pardon. This might be a bit sort of controversial, but I think it's our responsibility as those people that are supporting the rollout of next bunch of apprenticeships to build and offer that training to employers and their mentors I think because we have to professionalize that part because, if we don't do that, apprentices will leave. Apprentices will be dissatisfied. The apprenticeship model will then be not seen as something that's effective.

So I really believe that this engagement that Jaime talks about, this part of the process of the apprenticeship is one of the key things that will enable us to have successful apprenticeship models and continue to expand them moving forward, not just in the industries that we are but in the industries that they will roll into in the future.

And as to go to the how much time does it take, I think for me it's how long is a piece of string? You may have an apprenticeship who just gets on with the job and understands it and really good. We always have our mentors have a regular weekly check in, but we find some mentors – (inaudible) – coming off the job. We generally find the best mentoring programs is where the supervisor is – if you look at IT where the supervisor is more – (inaudible) – his desk and he sits down and he goes, how's it going? What you been up to today? Anything I can help you with? Did you watch the game last night? Do you know what I mean? I mean, mentoring is about building that rapport.

But then you could have an apprentice who's maybe become homeless or doesn't understand the concept that the – (inaudible) – and not being to simulate the learning and skills and knowledge. So it just depends a lot – (inaudible) – string. And that's where we are talking about that the mentor in the early years have got to be able to understand that this is not just at 1:00 o'clock on a Tuesday, every Tuesday, but you wanted to. You will be a mentor – (inaudible).

This is about building that understanding and that training and then skills and that sort of – the tactics, if you like, to be a great mentor for an apprenticeship.

MR. SPENCE: Thanks, Paul. All right. So we have about four minutes left. I'm going to – so, Paul, I'm going to – this is going to be the biggest challenge that you have all day, to try to answer your one more question in 30 seconds. And then – and then also very quickly plug the materials that are in the file share.

So I'm going to pose this first question to you. How do you – how is the quality of mentorship monitored, measured, and managed? 30 seconds.

MR. CHAMPION: Thirty seconds. OK. So I think what you have to do is you have to document it really well. The training will give clear measures. One of the ways that I think whether it's working or not is how the apprenticeship is when you check in at review. Is the apprenticeship – is the apprentice – is he progressing – (inaudible) – progression? Is the employer happy with the apprentice? I think that's the pith and the problem is that, is the apprentice getting better at a job, learning the skills, and progressing on time? Was that 30 seconds?

MR. SPENCE: Yeah. That's great. That was like the rapid talk at the end of a commercial.

MR. CHAMPION: Cool. Great.

MR. SPENCE: Yeah. OK. So we'll start transition out there. We plugged the resources that are in the file share?

MR. CHAMPION: Yeah. Yeah. I just pulled a few resources from various places. I pulled a couple from the U.K. The – (inaudible) – one – the healthcare one is a great – it's a great training program. It's run by the – (inaudible) – P. Associates in Pennsylvania mainly.

These are just training programs that are – that have been tested and structured and has all of the key elements that you'd like to see in a program. They might not be exactly what you need and exactly the type of what you want, but those are good to look at.

I put the one in that we developed and that we use for – (inaudible). But I don't think it's been added to the downloads. But then there's a couple of others – there's a couple other things that research from the U.K. about how impactful mentoring can be and why it's so important. And that framework, which is a coaching and mentoring framework, that was developed by the British government a few years ago. That looks at – it's got a really great diagram and a really great table in there about what skills are important and how those can impact learning, not just with apprentices, but with individuals.

MR. SPENCE: Great. Thanks. OK. So I'll hand it back to Jon in just a second.

I have the panelists' contact information up on the slide here currently. They're all open and ready for people to reach out to them and ask more questions or engage in further conversation.

(Inaudible) – to download any of the resources that are available in the file share, and thank you to Paul, Chris, Andrea, and Jaime for your thoughtfulness and prep for today.

OK. And so, I'll wrap it up and hand it back to Jon for closeout.

(END)