

# OPENING DOORS THROUGH MENTORSHIP

**OPENING DOORS:  
BUILDING A  
WORKPLACE  
FOR EVERYONE**



Estimated Time:  
**15 minutes max**



Audience:  
**All team members, new hires,  
apprentices, and early-career  
workers, students**

This Toolbox Talk is provided as a voluntary workforce development resource in support of Construction Inclusion Week. It does not impose or endorse any directives, quotas, or identity-based exclusions or preferences. The content reflects voluntary best practices and is designed to promote safety, opportunity, and inclusive team culture benefiting everyone across the construction industry, to help support, attract, and retain top talent. Construction Inclusion Week does not control or endorse the content of third-party links. Activities should be adapted to align with your company's legal policies and job-related criteria.

## **CONSTRUCTION INCLUSION WEEK 2025** TOOLBOX TALK



**CIW PILLAR**  
*Attract and Retain, Belonging  
& Workforce Culture,  
Commitment & Accountability*

**OCTOBER 13-17, 2025**

# TALK 1



# OPENING DOORS THROUGH MENTORSHIP



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This conversation introduces the power of mentorship and how it builds inclusion, confidence, and career development across the industry.

- Understand how mentorship improves retention and team culture.
- Learn small actions to build trust, signal support and inclusion.
- Spot teammates who may need encouragement or guidance.
- Learn how to practice every-day mentoring, even without a title.



## DEFINITIONS

### **Mentorship:**

A voluntary relationship where experience, encouragement, and insights are shared to support growth and not tied to employment decisions. Open to everyone, mentorship is separate from and not tied to employment decisions such as hiring, promotions, or compensation, which are based solely on job-related qualifications and performance.

### **Mentee:**

A person who receives guidance, feedback, and connection from someone more experienced (anyone can be a mentee).

### **Micro-Mentorship:**

Small acts, like offering advice or listening, build trust, confidence, and culture voluntarily without being tied to employment decisions. For example, taking 2 minutes to explain a task or checking in with a new team member.

### **Psychological Safety:**

The ability to speak up, ask questions, ask for help or admit mistakes without fear.



## KEY CONCEPTS

- Mentorship isn't a program, it's a habit.
- Starting in construction can be intimidating; especially for those new to the construction environment or entering from other industries. Mentorship helps someone feel seen, heard, and capable of growing in their role.

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## KEY CONCEPTS

- Mentorship builds belonging by strengthening team cohesion, psychological safety, and confidence at every level.
- You don't need a title to mentor, just the intention to support someone.
- Mentorship helps people stay, grow and feel safe on the team.



## CONTENT

Mentorship helps people feel supported, included, and more confident in their work. When someone takes time to show you the ropes, share advice, or simply check in, it builds trust and connection. Whether you're in the field, the office, or just starting your career, mentorship can help you feel like you belong.

You don't need a formal program or title to be a mentor. Every team member can make a difference by offering encouragement, sharing lessons learned, or checking in with someone new. These small actions build a stronger team and help others grow.







Mentorship is especially important in construction because many people are entering the industry for the first time. New workers may be nervous or unsure about how things work. A quick tip, a kind word, or a daily check-in can help someone feel welcomed and valued.

Mentorship is also good for business. It improves teamwork, supports learning, and helps people stay longer in their roles. When people feel seen and supported, they are more likely to stay, grow, and take pride in their work.

Opening doors through mentorship is one of the easiest and most powerful ways we can strengthen our workforce, today and into the future.





## ACTIVITY OPTIONS

**General Ask:** Think about the first person who helped you feel confident in your role. What did they do, and how can you pay that forward, today or this month?

The following page includes ways to practice mentorship, on site, in the office, or with community partners:



**JOBSITE  
ACTIVITIES**



**OFFICE  
ACTIVITIES**



**SCHOOL/  
COMMUNITY  
ACTIVITIES**



**GROUP  
ACTIVITY**





## JOBSITE ACTIVITIES

- Pair new workers with experienced teammates or peer mentor for informal daily check-ins.
- Inspire your team with a quick mentorship story during the morning huddle. Start a **"Mentor Minute"** during daily huddles, share a quick tip or lesson.
- Create a **Words to Build By wall** /platform for sharing the best mentor advice received.
- Feature a monthly **"Mentor Spotlight"** at your toolbox talk.
- Host rotating team-to-team check-ins for broader exposure and support.
- Collect anonymous **"First Week Advice"** slips and post on site board.



## OFFICE ACTIVITIES

- Host a day to sign up for Nationally Sponsored Mentorship Programs
- Launch **"Coffee & Questions"**, a 15-minute chat between a senior and junior staff.
- Start a digital **"Welcome Wisdom"** board with short advice tips from employees.
- Connect with new team members to understand needs, offer support, and build rapport.
- Start a "You Belong Here" welcome letter tradition from tenured staff.



## SCHOOL/COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

- Host a **"Meet a Mentor"** or **"Why I build"** panel.
- Invite students to write a note to someone who guided them.
- Connect emerging talent with students to share career paths in construction.



## GROUP ACTIVITY

- Hold small group discussions to reflect on one way mentorship made a difference in your own life. Share takeaways with the group.
- Create a team mentoring challenge, support one new person this month.
- Build a **"Mentorship Commitment Tree"** each person adds 1 thing they'll do.
- Share your most important career lesson with a teammate.
- In pairs, ask: "What do you wish someone told you earlier?"
- Host a Lunch & Learn to learn about the importance of Mentorship, especially in our industry.



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



1. What helped you feel supported as you entered the industry and/or role?
2. What does effective mentorship look like in the field or office?
3. How can mentorship forge bonds amongst teammates?
4. How can we build a culture where everyone is encouraged to mentor?
5. What tools or behaviors make it easier to offer support without formal programs?

*You don't need a title to make someone feel seen, supported, or encouraged.  
Look around. Who could use a quick word of support?*

*Who helped you when you started? **That's mentorship. Let's pass it on...***



## This Week:

- Offer advice or encouragement to someone new.
- Thank someone who supported your growth.
- Start a habit of daily check-ins with direct reports, apprentices, or interns.
- Share a story of mentorship on social media.
- Encourage your team to talk about what makes a great mentor.



## Post your impact

#ConstructionInclusionWeek  
#CIWOpeningDoors  
**#MentorshipMatters**

***Mentorship opens doors; and  
sometimes changes lives.***

### Resources:

[National Mentoring Partnership](#)

[ACE Mentor Program of America](#) or [ACE Mentorship Video \(Students\)](#)

[Build California - Mentorship Toolkit](#)

[Mentor Program | Construction Management Association of America](#)

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