

Mentorship and OSH Training

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**NIEHS WTP Spring
Workshop
April 22, 2021**



Background

- Emerged from separate exploratory evaluation discussions with union and worker center training programs
- Each suggested that mentorship programs could help them achieve their training goals
- We aimed to better understand how each
 - defined mentorship
 - felt it would contribute to their program

Mentorship examples

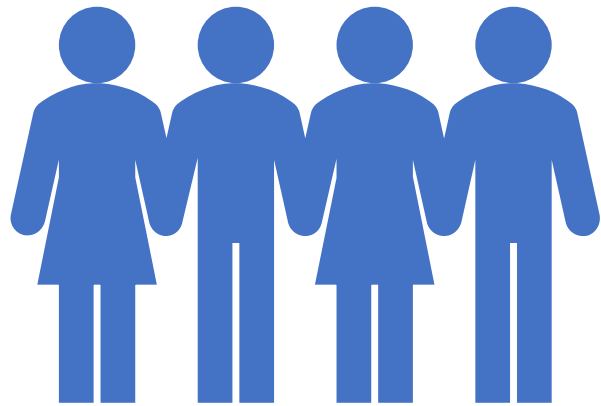
Union-Based

- Trainer-leaders will mentor newer trainers or H&S activists in the same plant
- Experienced program leaders will mentor newer leaders in other plants

Worker Center-Based

- Trainers or staff will mentor trainees to become leaders
- Experienced WC program leaders will mentor other WCs to develop H&S leadership programs

Methods: Semi-structured interviews in 2019



- Union respondents all part of a negotiated company-funded and union staffed program in 29 sites N=11 interviews
- WC respondents from a collaborative of 13 WCs in NY/NJ region all providing training N=11 interviews
- Initial analysis followed by presentations and feedback from organizations

Mentorship
Definitions:
Union-based &
Worker Center
Trainers:

Which is Which?

The process of ongoing guidance, support, and sharing of knowledge to help someone accomplish their goals and grow professionally

A willing exchange between peers of information, guidance, and care that is based on trust and generally built over time

Definitions of mentorship:

Worker Centers

The process of ongoing guidance, support, and sharing of knowledge to help someone accomplish their goals and grow professionally

Union

A willing exchange between peers of information, guidance, and care that is based on trust and generally built over time

What makes a good mentor?

Personal characteristics

- Trustworthy
- Admirable
- Patient
- Passionate

Capacities

- Has knowledge and experience
- Committed to building leaders or future mentors
- Helps the mentee find resources or looks for answers if mentor does not know
- Makes themselves available

BENEFITS:

Mentorship can improve H&S training

Improves **credibility and dynamism** to increase worker and trainer engagement

- Input into how to improve curriculum and update technical content
- Allows for retraining and updating skills as needed
- Allows for real-time/real-world examples
 - Union: Can carry learning onto the shop floor and ID "root causes"

BENEFITS

Mentorship can
build leadership

Creating a mentorship program would be part of the infrastructure **to help develop leaders/ trainers**

- Help improve technical OSH skills
- Help develop mentorship skills
- Help form leaders that can actively participate in organizations

BENEFITS

Mentorship
builds community

Reduces isolation

- Promotes contact between trainers across different workplaces
- For WCs this is especially important since there is no common workplace

Reciprocal learning between mentors and mentees

- Dual learning promotes peer camaraderie

Building H&S
leaders for
worker power

WCs

Building power is
about creating a
movement

*GOAL: Creating action to
improve overall rights for
immigrant and all worker
communities*

Union

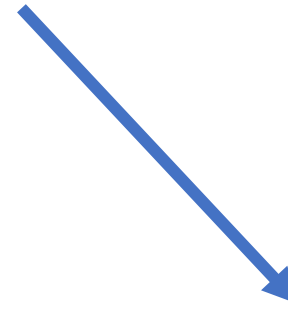
Workers need to feel
empowered to create
safe and healthy
workplaces to reduce
incidences at their
own workplaces

*GOAL: Creating action
on the shop floor to
strengthen a union
H&S program*

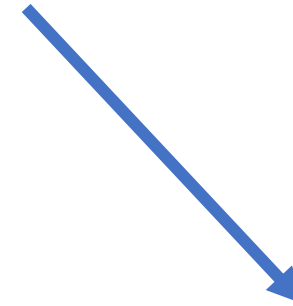
“Mentorship training would both create technical knowledge as well as skills to be good advocates.”

-WC interviewee

H&S training programs



Mentorship programs



Workers taking action

Challenges of a mentorship program

- Adequate funding for both the mentors and mentees. Relationships take time!
 - Time commitment for mentors and mentees and compensation required
- Make it a rigorous program for engagement and commitment
 - Mentors need skills and knowledge and adequate technical resources
- Needs to be dynamic to meet changing needs of training field

Thanks!

We would enjoy hearing your experiences and insights with mentorship.