



BRIEFING

Mentoring circles for unemployed youth

The Race at Work Charter has five calls to action. This briefing supports action five - Take action that supports ethnic minority career progression. Actions can include embedding mentoring, reverse mentoring and sponsorship into the organisation

This document outlines a simple mentoring model that has been rolled out across the 20 UK areas identified by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), as part of their examination of race disparities experienced by those looking for work. Organisations who are members of Business in the Community's race equality campaign and more widely have been working with DWP Jobcentre Plus mentoring jobseekers who are unemployed and aged between 18-24 years.

Why do we need mentoring for unemployed youth?

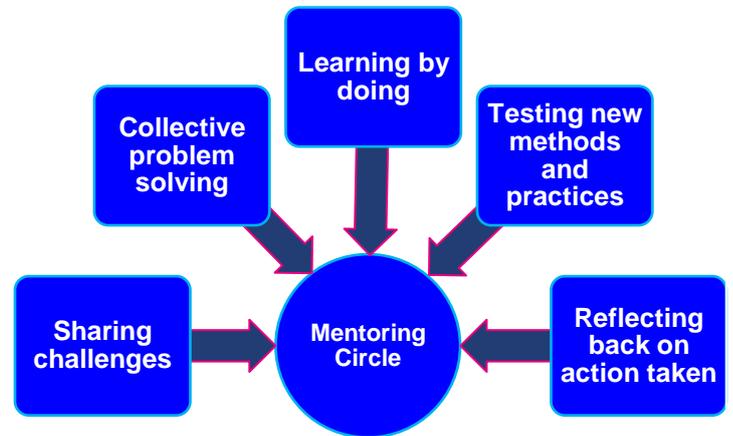
In 2013 Business in the Community hosted its flagship Seeing is Believing visit for employers focussing on young unemployed people from BAME backgrounds. The visit highlighted to the employers the need for young ethnic minority job seekers to increase their connectivity and engagement with employers, and for employers to be clear and transparent about their expectations in the quality of applications as well as gain insight into barriers and challenges faced by BAME jobseekers.

The importance of mentoring in achieving race diversity cannot be underestimated. Our Race at Work survey has highlighted this in 2015 and 2018 as something highly desired by BAME employees and jobseekers. Studies published in journals as revered as the Harvard Business Review confirm this. The plain fact is ethnic minorities who advance the furthest in their career all share one characteristic—a strong network of mentors and corporate sponsors who nurture their professional development. We currently have a mentoring portal platform with information available from various mentoring organisations and networks dispersed across the internet into one place – please visit: https://race.bitc.org.uk/issues_overview/mentoring-and-sponsorship



What is mentoring?

Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximize their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be. **Eric Parsloe, the Oxford School of**



What are mentoring circles?

A mentoring circle is a type of action learning set which focuses on the personal development of those involved.

We recommend a cycle of 3 mentoring circle meetings with suggested topics which will enable you as an employer to share:

- **Session 1:** Insight about your organisation and walk through and practice your application process, building a personal profile and completing applications
- **Session 2:** Walk through and practice your interview process, your selection criteria
- **Session 3:** Information on different routes into your organisation, sector and partners

What will be expected of organisations?

In order to benefit fully from participating in a mentoring circle, we recommend the following:

A mentoring circle comprises of a senior leader, employee and BITC and/or DWP personnel to deliver three structured 2-hour sessions. This will be a commitment for a 3 week period with interactions on the mentoring weeks. The sessions will be delivered at Jobcentre Plus offices or other suitable premises with an on-site visit to your business site if this is feasible.

We recommend 6-8 mentees for a circle to enable group and some 1-2-1 sessions for those who may want specific support.