



*Inviting Cultural Diversity in Volunteering*  
- An EMR HACC CALD Project -

# PILOT VOLUNTEER MENTOR PROGRAM

*Handbook for Mentors*



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**SECTION A:**

**PROGRAM  
INFORMATION**

# 1 Overview

*Inviting Cultural Diversity in Volunteering* is a project funded by the Home and Community Care (HACC) program (a joint Commonwealth and State Government funded program) and coordinated by the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne). One objective of this project is to pilot a volunteer mentor program with two or three HACC funded organisations in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR). This handbook was prepared by the **Project Worker, Sharon Porteous** and provides information for mentors about the program and their role.

## 1.1 Acknowledgements

This mentoring model was developed from a number of sources but in particular used Volunteering WA's **take2** program – Enhancing Access to Volunteering; the Side by Side Program of Bathurst Information and Neighbourhood Centre (BINC) and Jerry Sherk's Design Guide of Formal/Volunteer Mentor Programs. Special thanks to Volunteering WA and BINC for forwarding information about their programs on CD. A full list of references is at the end of this document.

## 1.2 Aim of the program

This program recognises the contribution that all people can make to volunteering. The aim of the volunteer mentor program is to assist people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to participate in volunteering in HACC services in the Eastern Metropolitan Region by providing a volunteer mentor to guide and support them in their volunteer placement.

This is an ideal way for people who may experience exclusion from volunteering due to factors such as low English proficiency and cultural difference to participate in volunteering in mainstream organisations. There are many benefits of participating in volunteering including increased participation in the broader community, feeling valued, experiencing Australian work culture, improving self confidence and self-esteem, learning new skills, gaining work experience and work references, and improving communication and social skills.

## 1.3 Objectives of the program

The Objectives of the volunteer mentor program are to:

- Match new culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) volunteers with suitable mentors;
- Provide appropriate training and orientation for the mentor and new CALD volunteer about the organisation and their volunteer role;
- Guide and support the new CALD volunteer in their volunteer placement in a HACC organisation;
- Assist the new CALD volunteer to set goals and identify ways to achieve them;
- Provide appropriate support and supervision to mentors.
- Evaluate the program.

## 1.4 Volunteering

Voluntary work is an important and valuable activity in Australia. In the most recent survey of voluntary work in Australia the Australian Bureau of Statistics found that 34% of the population aged over 18 years volunteer, contributing 713 million hours to the community (ABS 2006).

This project is focused on formal volunteering where the volunteer willingly gives their time and skills to a HACC funded organisation for no financial rewards. These volunteers are given positions that are not designated as paid positions such as delivering meals on wheels, visiting isolated people at home and going on outings with groups.

Volunteering provides an opportunity to become involved in the community. There are many benefits of volunteering and many reasons why people volunteer including: to meet new people, learn new skills, contribute to the community, help others and build self-confidence.

## 1.5 Definitions of terms used

**Mentor** – is the person who is doing the mentoring, i.e. supporting and encouraging another person. In this program the mentor is a volunteer but will be referred to as the *mentor*.

**Mentee** – is the person who is being mentored, i.e. being supported and encouraged by another person. Throughout this document this person may also be referred to as the *mentee*, *volunteer* or *new CALD volunteer*.

**Coordinator** – is the person at the organisation where the mentoring is happening who is responsible for the mentor program. This may be the manager of the organisation, volunteer coordinator or other paid worker but will be referred to as the *coordinator* throughout this document.

## 1.6 What is mentoring?

*“Mentoring is a mutually beneficial relationship which involves a more experienced person helping a less experienced person to achieve their goals.” (YMCA 2007)*

*“Mentoring is a formal voluntary arrangement where an experienced individual provides one-to-one support and encouragement over a period of time to another person in order to assist them set and achieve goals; develop their skills; manage their own learning and development; and maximise their potential to become the person they want to be.” (Courtney 2001, p.6)*

Mentoring:

- focuses on the needs of the mentee
- fosters a caring and supportive relationship
- encourages mentees to develop to their fullest potential
- is based on mutual respect and trust
- involves a two-way communication process
- provides an opportunity for sharing skills and experiences
- allows future potential to be nurtured

(YMCA 2007)

## 1.7 What are the benefits of being involved in mentoring?

For the mentor	For the mentee (person being mentored)
Provides an opportunity to share their knowledge and skills	Develops skills and knowledge, especially communication skills
Gives them recognition and respect for their knowledge	Provides a sounding board for their questions and ideas
Allows them to assist others – providing a sense of achievement and satisfaction from helping someone and giving something back to the community	Improves motivation and attitude to and acceptance of responsibility for their own learning
Improves their self-image and self-awareness – able to reflect on their own personal development, improving self-confidence,	Builds self-confidence & self-esteem
Develops and improves their skills such as communication, interpersonal skills, problem-solving and listening	Provides new experiences
Provides an opportunity to meet new people, bridge communities, give insight into issues facing people from CALD backgrounds, and inform about other cultures and the migration experience	Provides an opportunity to meet new people and share their own culture and experiences

(From YMCA 2007, Courtney 2001, Rogers 1997, Mentoring & Befriending Foundation no date, Time Bank no date)

## 2 Roles

This section outlines the roles of the mentor, mentee and coordinator.

### 2.1 ROLE OF THE MENTOR

#### **Purpose of role:**

The purpose of the VOLUNTEER MENTOR ROLE is to provide support and encouragement for a new volunteer from a culturally and linguistically diverse background to assist them to settle into their volunteer position.

The mentor will provide one-to-one support to the new CALD volunteer on a regular basis for at least the first four volunteer sessions of the new volunteer. The role is time limited. The general role of the mentor is to:

- Share knowledge, experience and skills
- Offer support and enthusiasm
- Provide guidance to enable the new volunteer to settle into their volunteer position

#### **Main activities/tasks**

The mentor will:

- Attend training about the program and the role of the mentor (1 hour)
- Welcome and orientate the new CALD volunteer to the organisation and their role;
- Share their knowledge, experience and skills in a supporting and encouraging way;
- Establish trust through genuine interest and concern for the new CALD volunteer;
- Work beside the new CALD volunteer in their placement, provide practical help and guidance with tasks and skills, and assist them to become familiar with their role and the organisation.
- Check frequently how things are going in their role and review the way the mentoring relationship is working;
- Listen to the new CALD volunteer, answer their questions, discuss their concerns and provide assistance if required;
- Identify the volunteer's strengths and praise their achievements;
- Keep in touch with other people in organisation that they are providing adequate support and recognition;
- Help the new CALD volunteer to set realistic goals and identify ways to achieve them;
- Participate in regular review meetings with the coordinator.
- Complete a log of contact with the mentee (see p.27) and assist the Project Worker to evaluate the program.

### Outline of tasks for each volunteer session:

Volunteer Session	Tasks of mentor
First volunteer session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome new CALD volunteer to organisation (with coordinator to make introductions)</li><li>• Introduce to key staff/volunteers</li><li>• Orientation to organisation</li><li>• Discuss position description and mentees support requirements</li></ul>
Second volunteer session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work beside new volunteer to answer questions and assist them to become familiar with their role</li><li>• Discuss progress of mentoring relationship with coordinator to ensure that the match is going well, the support is in place and that the experience of mentoring is as they expected (15 mins)</li></ul>
Third volunteer session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitor progress of new CALD volunteer</li><li>• Discuss the exit process for the mentoring relationship</li></ul>
Fourth volunteer session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final contact</li><li>• Monitor the progress of new CALD volunteer</li><li>• Complete the mentoring relationship (see p.14)</li></ul>
One month later	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make brief contact (15 mins) with CALD volunteer to monitor their progress and meet with coordinator to discuss/resolve any issues (15 mins)</li><li>• Attend an interview with Project Worker to evaluate the program (20 mins)</li></ul>

### What Kind of person is a mentor?

Naturally, there is no single profile of who can or should be a mentor. A mentor should have the following qualities, skills and experience:

#### Qualities/experience/skills sought:

- Ability to understand and empathise with the volunteer
- Be respectful of others and non-judgemental, aware of different cultures and life experiences
- Be a person who will enjoy helping the volunteer develop skills and knowledge and be able to share knowledge and experience openly and honestly
- Good communication skills including being an active listener
- Be able to see the volunteer as a separate person with different needs and goals, and must be comfortable with those differences

- Be able to set standards of performance, and have the ability to give the volunteer the assistance and confidence to reach them
- Trustworthy
- Be good with time -management and aware of their own limits
- Reliable and able to make a regular commitment
- Able to motivate others and act as a role model
- Approachable and responsive to the mentee's needs
- Honest and able to give constructive, positive advice
- Respect privacy and ensure all information remains confidential
- Be knowledgeable or able to gain information
- Flexible - willing to change and accept change and adapt to the mentee's needs
- Be aware of and work within the law

In addition, mentors should be existing volunteers at the organisation who are familiar with the organisation's philosophy and how it works. Mentors may be from a culturally and linguistically diverse background but this is not essential. Mentors should have an interest in assisting people from CALD backgrounds.

A MENTOR IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE TEACHER, PARENT, SOCIAL  
WORKER, COACH OR COUNSELLOR

## **2.2 ROLE OF THE MENTEE/NEW CALD VOLUNTEER**

The role of the mentee or new CALD volunteer is to:

- Listen carefully to the information and guidance provided by the mentor
- Undertake tasks as agreed to and directed by the coordinator
- Accept responsibility for their own decisions and actions
- Meet with the coordinator to discuss the mentoring relationship
- Be honest in the mentoring relationship
- Be aware that the mentor has other commitments and responsibilities
- Be open to new ideas, willing to change and accept change
- Behave respectfully to others
- Be aware of their rights and responsibilities and complaints procedures
- Keep a log of contact with mentors (see p.27)
- Behave respectfully towards the volunteer mentor

## **2.3 ROLE OF THE COORDINATOR**

The role of the coordinator is to:

- Promote the mentor program
- Recruit, interview, check and allocate specific tasks to new CALD volunteers
- Recruit mentors
- Provide orientation and training to the mentor & mentee
- Introduce the mentee to the mentor
- Assess and match mentors and mentees
- Provide direction and supervision to the mentor and mentee
- Review the progress of the volunteer and the mentoring relationship
- Draw up volunteer agreements and allocate position descriptions to clarify what the mentor and mentee will do, when and how and the boundaries of their roles
- Help with problems or concerns that may arise
- Keep volunteers, mentors and staff informed about the program
- Organise recognition activities
- Keep a log of contact with mentors and mentees (see p.27)

### 3 Participating in the Program

Participation in the Volunteer Mentor Program is voluntary for both mentors and mentees.

Mentors should complete the normal application process to be a volunteer at the organisation including completing an application, reference and police checks, consent and receipt of relevant information. As mentors are usually experienced volunteers these forms may have already been completed. The organisation should check that all documentation is up to date.

**Potential mentors** will be screened by the coordinator through an interview process. Suitability for the program will be identified through matching of skills and experience with the position description. Mentors should formally consent to their participation in the program by completing the consent form (see p.26).

#### 3.1 Before the match commences

Before the match actually begins, all potential **mentors** will have:

- Completed all requirements to be a volunteer with the organisation
- Indicated their interest in the program
- Undergone the Mentor Training
- Reviewed the Mentor Handbook
- Signed the Mentor Participation Agreement (after Training, see p. 26)
- Been told who their potential mentee is, and they will have approved the match.

Before the match actually begins, all potential **mentees** will have:

- Completed and submitted their volunteer application and met all requirements to be a volunteer
- Been given information about the volunteer mentor program
- Signed the Mentee Participation Agreement (see p.26)
- Been told who their mentor is, and they will have approved the match.

#### 3.2 Matching mentors and mentees

Matching mentors and mentees is the role of the coordinator. The coordinator will seek a range of information about the mentors and mentees at interview to ensure that the best possible match is achieved. The better the match, the more likely the mentor and mentee will have a positive experience. The following **criteria** will be used to match mentors with mentees:

- The type of support required as identified by the mentee and coordinator
- Similarity in interests, social activities and past work experience
- Potential for having a positive relationship
- Geographical proximity
- Similarity in volunteer roles
- Whether there are any types of people the mentor/mentee would prefer not to be matched with
- The primary motivations of the mentor, why they want to undertake the role and the potential of the mentoring relationship to fulfil these motives
- Similar cultural background

### 3.3 The mentoring relationship

It is important that the relationship between mentor and mentee get off to a good start:

- From the beginning, both parties should agree that either may end the arrangement at any time without fault.
- The volunteer and their mentor should recognise that they are two different people with different skills and abilities. In a respectful situation they can learn from each other.
- The volunteer and their mentor should really listen to each other. They should try to understand the other person's viewpoint. There is not always a right or wrong perspective, just different ones.
- The volunteer and their mentor should make sure they get things done to the best of their abilities. They should have fun doing things and remember to laugh and enjoy their time together.
- Remember that you are trying to build mutual trust and respect, and that usually takes some time.
- If problems arise in the mentoring relationship, the parties should talk the issues through. The coordinator may also be approached for advice. If the mentoring partners decide to end the arrangement, another mentor may need to be found.
- A successful mentoring partnership is an experience to be enjoyed.

### 3.4 Mentoring in an ethical way

Mentors have a responsibility to work in an ethical manner including:

- Working in accordance with the aims, objectives and job description of the mentor program.
- Working within the policies and procedures of the program and the volunteer organisation.
- Representing the program in a positive way.
- Not discussing confidential issues of the program with people outside the program.
- Treating all volunteers with respect, dignity and care at all times.
- Working in ways that promote the safety and well being of volunteers.
- Fulfilling the role of mentor whilst keeping within the boundaries of the relationship.
- Being honest, reliable and punctual.
- Being responsible and accepting responsibility.
- Valuing diverse racial, economic, cultural and religious traits of volunteers.

### 3.5 Confidentiality

It is important to remember that all people have the right to dignity and privacy and that this should be protected at all times. People coming in contact with other people will hear and see many things whilst completing their designated duties – whether in paid or volunteer work. All mentors, mentees and paid workers involved in the program must:

- Respect any discussions with others as **information given in confidence**. If information is of concern or requires further action it should be reported to the coordinator.
- Recognise that it is the coordinator's role to monitor and support the volunteer mentor program and that the mentor and mentee can discuss anything about the mentoring relationship with the coordinator. The coordinator is also bound by confidentiality requirements.

- Recognise that the focus of the mentoring relationship is to support the mentee in their volunteer placement. The mentoring relationship is not a place to discuss **personal issues**.
- Seek permission from the mentor or mentee to discuss confidential or personal information with a **third party** outside of the volunteer mentor program.

### 3.6 Boundaries

Boundaries are an important part of creating a life that works well for you. Boundaries are lines of protection that you draw in your life. You decide what is okay and what is not okay, and then hold other people and yourself to these boundaries. Developing boundaries can help you enjoy the activities you participate in. The first step in setting boundaries is to decide that you value yourself enough to draw these limits and the second is that you value others enough to teach them what your limits are.

All mentors, mentees and paid workers involved in the program must:

- Respect each other's time and keep to the guidelines regarding how long and how often mentors and mentees meet or contact each other.
- Respect each other's personal information and only share personal information where they feel comfortable or it is relevant to the mentoring relationship. If mentors or mentees are unclear then they should discuss this further with their mentoring partner to come to an agreement.
- Not lend or give money, gifts or favours to mentors, mentees or paid workers.

#### How to set boundaries

Once you have decided what your boundaries are, you can follow these steps:

- Inform the person you have a boundary
- Explain what the boundary is
- Request that the boundary be respected

**For example**, your boundary might be that you are available to provide mentoring on Mondays and Fridays but are not available on other days. You could explain to the volunteer that these are the only days you are available to provide mentoring. Another example might be that you are available to take phone messages regarding any changes (ie if they are sick and won't be volunteering that week etc). You should let them know that you do not want any phone calls after a certain time at night (for example after 8pm). This gives the volunteer boundaries so that they know what you find acceptable.

#### Mentors must not:

- Physically, sexually, emotionally, verbally or financially abuse any volunteers associated with the program
- Form inappropriate relationships with volunteers in the program
- Impose their religious beliefs or political persuasions on any volunteers within the program
- Condone, utter or practice any racist, sexist or other discriminatory remarks or actions
- Conduct, participate or be involved in any activity that would bring the volunteer program into disrepute

Any breaches of these conditions should be reported immediately to the coordinator. Breaches may result in termination from the program or disciplinary action.

### 3.7 When to ask for help

It is the role of the coordinator to:

- Meet with both the mentor and mentee to discuss their experiences and monitor their progress

- Resolve issues as they arise
- Reinforce information provided at training
- Be available for mentors or mentees to discuss the mentoring relationship and any concerns they have.

The bottom line is to **ask for help at anytime** that you feel uncomfortable about what is going on in the match. Contact the coordinator:

- If the dynamics of the match are strained
- If your mentee is not keeping appointments
- If the mentee tries to take advantage of you by taking up too much of your time or by asking for favours
- If the mentee breaks confidentiality
- If you have any question or concerns about rules, policies and procedures of the program
- If your mentee is breaking any of the program's rules
- Anytime you feel uncomfortable about anything going on with your mentee, or if you have questions or concerns about the program.

### 3.8 Discrimination

Discrimination is treating someone unfairly or inequitably because they belong to a particular group. This is against the law. It is unlawful to discriminate against people on the grounds of their race, colour, nationality, descent, ethnic or ethno-religious background or because of the race, colour, nationality, descent, ethnic or ethno-religious background of their relatives, friends or work colleagues.

Discrimination takes two forms, *direct* and *indirect*. Both are against the law. Direct discrimination means treatment that is obviously unfair. Indirect discrimination means rules, policies or practices that are the 'same' for everyone but have an unfair effect on a particular group.

Harassment is a form of discrimination. Harassment is defined as unwelcome or unreciprocated behaviour that makes an employee, volunteer or customer feel belittled, intimidated, offended or apprehensive.

### 3.9 Making a complaint

It's okay if you (or your mentoring partner) wish to make a complaint. You can complain about:

- Something you think is unfair
- Something that is making you unhappy
- Being treated unreasonably
- If the organisation, the coordinator or your mentoring partner is not doing something they should.

It can be difficult and nerve-wracking to make a complaint, but there are some things you can do to help your complaint be dealt with quickly and efficiently. One thing you can do is to act sooner rather than later. Problems tend to get worse and become harder to deal with if they are left unresolved. If you think there is a problem it is best to raise the issue straight away and try to resolve it quickly. You can make a verbal complaint to the person who is causing you a concern. If that doesn't work you can complain to someone else.

The organisation has a complaints policy and procedure (or grievance procedure). You can ask to see it, and you can ask for someone to help you to follow the steps set out in the procedure if you wish.

### **3.10 Ending the mentoring relationship**

#### Ending the mentoring relationship

This volunteer mentor program is time limited and all parties should be made aware of this prior to being matched. The following points can be used as a guide to ending the mentoring relationship:

- The mentor should discuss the exit process for the mentoring relationship at their third meeting and advise that the relationship will cease after the fourth (next) meeting.
- The mentoring relationship should be completed at the fourth meeting with the mentor discussing the following:
  - That this is the last meeting of the mentor relationship in the program.
  - Whether there are any questions or concerns that need to be followed up.
  - Who the volunteer should talk to if they have any questions or concerns in the future.
  - Congratulate them on participating in the program and praise the developments that have occurred so far.
- The mentor can request an extension of time to meet with the mentee if they believe the mentee would benefit. Only a two meeting extension will be granted after it is discussed with and deemed necessary by the coordinator.

#### No-fault policy

In some cases the mentoring relationship may not continue for as long as it should and may be ended early. If the mentoring relationship does not seem to be working, participants need to initially try to work through any issues. If they are unable to do so, they should be able to terminate the match without blame or guilt or needing to show “due cause”.

#### The process for ending the mentoring relationship early

The procedure for terminating the match before the commitment is concluded is as follows:

1. The concerned mentor or mentee contacts the coordinator with an issue that is causing them to consider early termination of the match.
2. If a remedy seems possible, the coordinator will discuss the situation with both parties and try to help them resolve the issue.
3. If necessary, the coordinator will deem the match terminated, and they will do so without placing fault on any individual.
4. All appropriate parties will be notified that the match has been terminated.
5. If the coordinator believes it is appropriate, the mentor or mentee could be reassigned to another counterpart if they wish (usually after a brief break from mentoring).

### **3.11 Monitoring and evaluation**

As the volunteer mentor program is a pilot project it is important for mentors to write down the contact they have with the new volunteer and with the coordinator or anyone else regarding the mentoring relationship. A form has been designed to make this easier and is attached in the Appendix.

In addition, mentors will meet with the coordinator at least twice throughout the mentoring relationship to discuss the relationship and the progress of the new volunteer.

After the mentoring relationship has finished the Project Worker will interview mentors and mentees about the mentor relationship and whether the aims of the program were achieved.

### 3.12 What Happens Next

- You will be linked with a volunteer
- You will be linked with a volunteer organisation (Boroondara VRC mentors only)

The name of your **volunteer** is: \_\_\_\_\_

The name of your **volunteer organisation** is: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone of your volunteer organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of your volunteer organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

These are the best times to contact your volunteer organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your **coordinator** is: \_\_\_\_\_

Located at: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone of your coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **About your volunteer mentoring**

The date you start your mentor role is: \_\_\_\_\_

The days you will be a mentor are: \_\_\_\_\_

The time you start is: \_\_\_\_\_

The time you finish is: \_\_\_\_\_

Other special information you need to know is: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION B:**  
**SKILLS FOR MENTORS**

## 4 Communication Skills

One of the main factors in a successful mentoring relationship is good communication. It is important to keep the lines of communication open - this means speaking in a way that keeps the communication flowing, and doesn't cause others to close off or become defensive.

### Communication works best when you:

- Really listen to other people
- Avoid making judgements
- Remain flexible
- Try to work together

### Communication can be influenced by a number of factors such as:

- The relationship between the volunteer and others
- The physical environment where you are communicating
- The events that led to the present interaction
- The emotional state of the people communicating
- The functional skills of the person (for example level of English skills)

### 4.1 Tips for good communication

- Use clear and concise language
- Choose an appropriate time and place to communicate
- Use appropriate tone and manner to communicate as well as words – non-verbal communication is as important as verbal communication
- Let people finish what they are saying
- Do not speak for the person unless they have specifically asked you to
- Respond with empathy, respect and genuineness
- Give people time to respond to you
- If you are not sure what someone has said, ask them to explain it
- Be assertive, rather than passive or aggressive – say what you want in a firm but pleasant manner
- Use “I” statements – focus on communicating how you feel, for eg. “I’ve noticed that you have been late meeting me, is there a problem?”
- Avoid using emotional or exaggerated language and blaming words
- If you are unhappy with how someone does something, don't criticise, tell them how you feel and what you would like to be different.

## 4.2 Listening

One of the most important parts of communicating is listening. Listening can be a very difficult thing to do and requires skill. How you feel about the person you are talking with has a great influence upon your ability to hear what is being said. With a proper listening attitude you will be able to show the person that you accept them as they are, and that they are a person of worth in whom you are genuinely interested.

Some tips for good listening skills include:

- Being attentive – actively listen to the person you are talking with and ‘listen’ for the non-verbal message
- Always allow time for the person to respond
- Let people finish what they are saying
- Give yourself time to reflect - good listeners don’t immediately leap in as soon as the other person pauses
- Respond frequently - don’t save up your understanding and deliver it all at once
- Don’t anticipate the person’s response
- If you are not sure what someone has said, ask them to explain it
- Use positive body language – show you are listening
- Never walk away while someone is talking to you.

### 4.3 Four communication tools to help you establish trust and respect in the mentoring relationship:

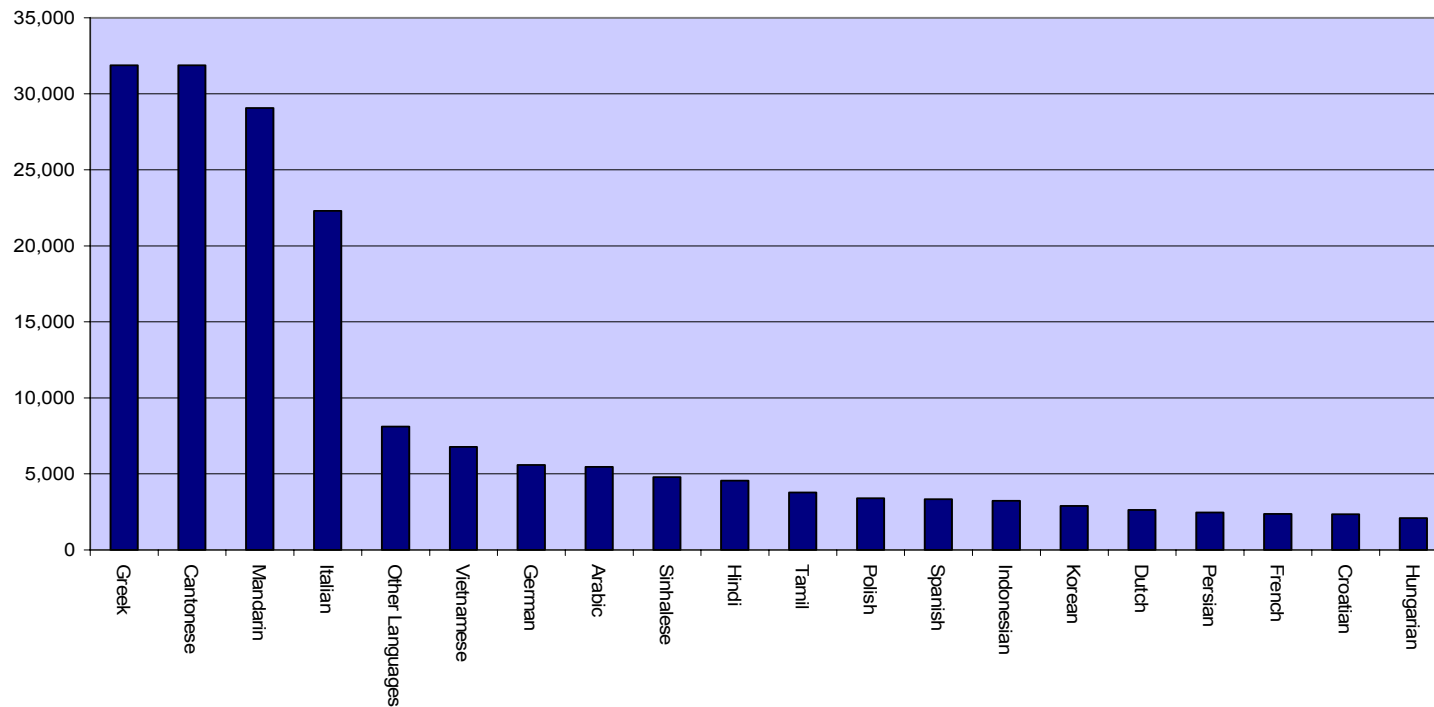
Communication Tool # 1: Active Listening	Communication Tool # 2: Non-Directive Approach	Communication Tool # 3: Open-Ended Questions	Communication Tool # 4: Paraphrasing
<p>Active listening means that you make a special effort to genuinely hear what the mentee is saying</p>	<p>In the non-directive approach, you do a great deal of listening and asking questions, and you spend only minimal time giving advice.</p>	<p>Using open-ended questions is a good way to get the mentee to talk and to (sometimes) subtly direct them to consider issues or options.</p>	<p>Paraphrasing is the process of repeating what you just heard the mentee say, but in a little different wording.</p>
<p><b>Receive rather than transmit.</b> A good listener usually receives (listens) before they transmit (talks). Remember that the relationship is about the mentee, not the mentor.</p> <p><b>Bring your full attention to the conversation.</b> Good listeners are able to bring themselves fully to the moment. If you are having a bad day, the best thing to do is to try to change your frame of mind and focus on the mentee. If you are having a terrible day and are unable to focus, you should consider asking the mentee (or mentor) if you might reschedule the contact.</p>	<p><b>A successful mentor places the growth and development of the mentee above helping them solve a particular problem.</b> If you continually tell the mentee what to do, you are failing to create an environment where the mentee can feel empowered. The mentor must have faith that the mentee will eventually make the right decision, even though the "right" answers to a problem may not be immediately apparent.</p>	<p><b>Open-ended questions</b> have nice soft beginnings:</p> <p>"I'm wondering if you are doing things this way because that's the way you did them on your last job? Please tell me about...?"</p> <p>"I'm not sure, but it occurs to me that you might be feeling overwhelmed. If you don't mind, please give me your thoughts about..."</p> <p>"Do you have any ideas why...?"</p> <p>"Could you please give me your thoughts and ideas that you may have on the subject of..."</p> <p>Open questions "invite" the mentee to talk about what's going on. As they begin to talk they will understand more about what they need to do to make improvements.</p>	<p><b>Examples</b> of paraphrasing:</p> <p>"It seems to me..."</p> <p>"It sounds like..."</p> <p>"I wonder if what you're are saying is..."</p> <p>"Correct me if I'm wrong, but what I think I'm hearing you say is that you've always done it this way in the past, and it's always worked out okay. Is that on target?"</p>
<p><b>Pay attention to the little things.</b> The mentor should try to discern if there is anything unusual in the mentee's conversation. Is their voice tense? Do they use words out of context that might give you a clue as to what is going on with them? Does the mentee keep coming back to a specific issue? How is their mood as they attempt to tackle a particular task? Is your mentee a focused individual, or do they often go off on tangents?</p>	<p><i>Real motivation comes from within. People have to be given the freedom to succeed or fail.</i></p> <p>—Gordon Forward, CEO Chaparral Steel</p>	<p><b>Closed Questions:</b> The opposite of an open question is a closed, painfully direct, and even critical question. Examples:</p> <p>"Why do you insist on doing it this way?"</p> <p>"What were you thinking when you made out this report?"</p> <p>"Do you like being wrong all the time?"</p> <p>"Do you or do you not want to become a good worker?"</p>	<p>The act of paraphrasing is a demonstration of your respect for the mentee. Paraphrasing shows your mentee that you are taking the time and effort to understand exactly what they are trying to get across.</p>
<p>As a mentor, you are not expected to be a psychologist or a counsellor, but it certainly does not hurt to use your own knowledge and your intuition to assess the situation.</p>	<p>One of the definitions of "mentor" is a person who helps the mentee make up his or her mind; instead of you being so direct that you make up his or her mind for them.</p>	<p>Although the technical definition of an open-ended question is one that can't be answered with a "yes" or "no" and a closed-ended question is the opposite, we believe that it is more about the questioner's attitude than anything else.</p> <p>For instance, even though the question, "Do you have any ideas about...?" can technically be answered with a "yes" or "no," the spirit of such a question will generally be enough to inspire the mentee to answer in length.</p>	

## 5 Cultural Awareness

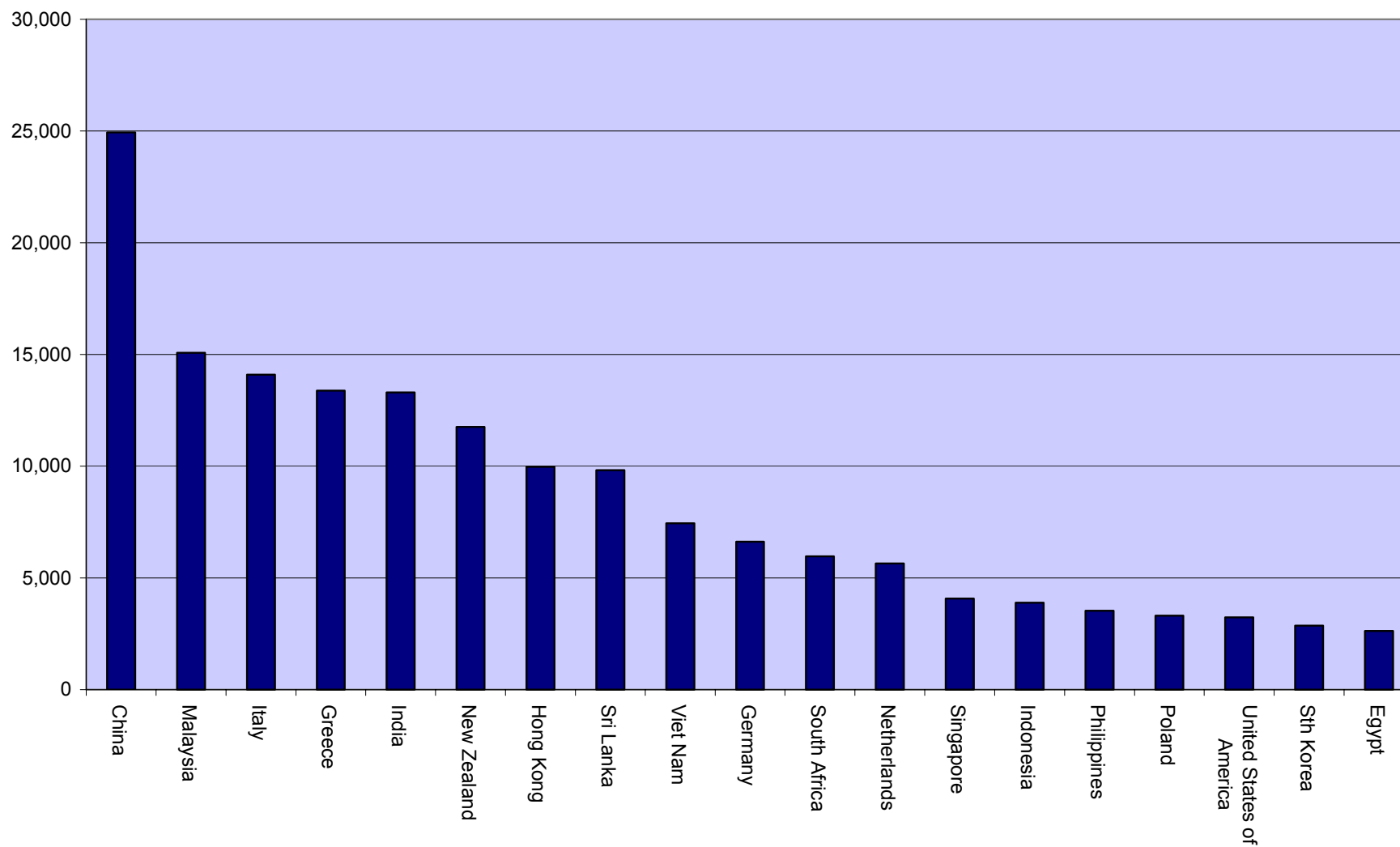
This volunteer mentor program is aimed at matching mentors with new volunteers who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. An awareness of other cultures and what culture means is useful for mentors in this program.

Australia is a country made up of people from a diverse range of backgrounds. According to the Census in 2006, 20.5 % of people in the Eastern Region of Melbourne were born in a non-English speaking country and 22 % speak a language other than English. This percentage varies for each local government area in the Eastern Region. For example, in Monash 38 % of people speak a language other than English. The graphs below and over the page highlight the top 20 languages and countries of birth in the Eastern Metropolitan Region.

### 5.1 Top 20 languages other than English in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (ABS Census 2006):



## 5.2 Top 20 countries of birth in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (ABS Census 2006):



### 5.3 What is culture?

Culture refers to:

- A way of life and world views of particular groups of people
- ...Groups or communities that share common experiences which shape the way members of that group see the world – groups we are born to and groups we may join
- A system of beliefs and understandings which give meaning to life and influence our behaviour and the way we interact with others
- Even though culture relates to membership of groups it is also developed individually – based on our own individual experiences of those groups – each person is unique
- Culture is not stagnant – it is changing constantly, it is dynamic

#### Examples of visible cultural practice

The foods we eat, music we listen to, type of clothes we wear, religious practices, art, literature are visible cultural practices. These are usually within our awareness.

#### Examples of less visible cultural practices

- Family structure, roles of men and women, assumptions about the right and wrong ways to do things, who we respect and levels of modesty. These types of things are often out of our awareness.

### 5.4 What impacts on our culture?

- Ethnicity
- Socio economic status
- Work place
- Level of Education
- Time of arrival in Australia
- Language, dialect, English proficiency
- Religion, age & gender
- Family
- The migration experience

Cultural awareness is not simply about taking these things into account at a visible level. For example we can provide food from a particular culture but culture also impacts on the food experience – how is it prepared? How is it enjoyed in that culture? What is the symbolism of meal time in that culture?

### 5.5 Being aware of our own culture

Culture is just as important for Australians from Anglo-Celtic background but it is less obvious because we live in a country where Anglo-Australian culture is the main culture. This allows Anglo-Australians to fit more easily into established services, work places, education or health organisations. It's important to be aware of our own culture such as our values and beliefs and how these affect the things we do and how we do them.

For example, volunteering is a well-known activity in Australia but not necessarily in other cultures. Some languages do not have a direct translation for the term 'volunteer'. In some cultures people are forced to participate in government activities through threats and coercion which are called 'volunteering'.

## 6 Information about Learning

### 6.1 Influences on learning

When providing mentoring and instruction for your mentee, it is important to remember that everyone is different. Their learning can be influenced by many things, including:

- Background
- Attitudes
- Needs
- Experiences
- Disability
- Characteristics
- Motivation

### 6.2 Learning styles

There are a number of different learning styles, including:

- Visual
- Auditory
- Kinaesthetic

#### Visual

Visual learners learn best by looking or watching. This could include someone demonstrating how to undertake a task, by reading instructions, watching a video, reading handouts or by picture cues.

#### Auditory

Auditory learners learn best by listening to instructions. This could include someone explaining the task, questions and answers, or by listening to a tape recording.

#### Kinaesthetic

Kinaesthetic learners learn best by participating. This could include following instructions whilst undertaking a task or practical exercises.

Some learners will learn by a mixture of each of the learning styles listed above. It is important to try to determine which learning style your mentee has so that you can help them learn their new skills for volunteering. For example, if your mentee learns best by visual instruction, you would generally try the strategies listed above such as demonstration, reading instructions etc.

### 6.3 Helpful hints for explaining new skills

- Use concrete examples
- Ensure that tasks and instructions are clear and specific
- Provide as many 'hands on' experiences as possible
- Provide logical, clear instructions
- Slow down the pace when necessary
- Complete one step at a time before moving to the next step
- Consider providing handouts or simple written instructions to reinforce steps in instructions
- Provide enough time for volunteers to communicate
- Be prepared to explore alternative methods of communication
- Encourage volunteers to ask questions
- Provide information in small chunks

- Use Plain English
- Break task into small achievable jobs
- Give praise often and genuinely

## 6.4 Strategies for empowering

Part of being a mentor is having the ability to empower the new volunteer or mentee to take on their new volunteer role confidently. To empower the mentee you should:

1. Understand yourself and be clear about your own values and attitudes
2. Value yourself and other people
3. Accept people as they are with the right to make their own decisions and choices.

On a practical level you can:

- Focus on the strengths, not the weaknesses, of the volunteer.
- Provide information and feedback to help the volunteer make decisions and have access to options and choices.
- Help the volunteer to develop skills (for example, communication, negotiation, advocacy etc), to enable them to more effectively take control of their lives.
- Encourage independence.

## 6.5 Problem-solving

Give the mentee every opportunity to solve their own problems. In assisting a mentee with difficulties, it is best to help them come up with their own answers. It's the mentor's responsibility to ask questions that helps them to focus on the problem, but handing them the solution outright is usually counterproductive. If you give them the right answer and it works for them, they will know that it was someone else who solved the problem, and they will miss a chance of becoming empowered. If you give them a strategy that doesn't work, they can rationalize that it was someone else's mistake, not their own.

Problem-Solving Model

Here is a simple problem solving model that you could consider when assisting your mentee. Ask the Mentee:

1. What is your specific problem, concern or issue?
2. What remedies have you tried so far, and how have they worked?
3. Have you ever encountered a similar problem? What did you do to try to solve it? How did that work out that time?
4. Do you know of anyone else who has encountered a similar situation? How did they attempt to solve the problem?
5. What do you think you should do?

If the mentee has no viable strategies:

1. Give them more time to come up with a strategy.
2. Provide them with examples about what others (or you) did in a similar situation. Sometimes stories are great tools; they not only help to paint a picture, but they can give your mentee hope when struggling with an extremely difficult situation.
3. Make concrete suggestions. As previously stated, in a crisis situation it's okay to be direct.

Dealing with difficult problems

If the mentee describes a problem for which you have no suggestions, be honest. Tell them that you will give the problem some more thought, and that you will try to get more information from other sources to help the two of you.

## 7 Conflict Management

From time to time you may experience conflict between you and your mentee or coordinator.

A useful model for managing conflict is:

1. Treat the person with respect
2. Listen until you 'experience the other side'
3. State your views, needs and feelings

Guidelines for constructive confrontation:

- Be non-blaming, non-judgemental
- Use 'I' messages
- Be honest
- Provide specific (not general) feedback
- Take into account the needs of the volunteer
- Use good timing
- Make sure your own verbal and non-verbal messages are consistent

## 8 Anger Management

Different things can make different people feel angry. If the volunteer you work with is feeling angry ask them to try the following strategies:

- Take some deep breaths
- Go for a walk
- Go outside for a some fresh air
- Talk calmly to another person
- Think about a happy time
- Relax

Also, suggest that is a good idea to talk to you or their coordinator about what made them feel angry and how this could be avoided in the future.

# *Inviting Cultural Diversity in Volunteering*

*- An EMR HACC CALD Project -*

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## **Pilot Volunteer Mentor Program Participation Agreement**

**This agreement relates to participation in the pilot volunteer mentor program as part of the Inviting Cultural Diversity in Volunteering Project.**

Name of organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of volunteer: \_\_\_\_\_

Position (please tick):       Mentor                       New Volunteer

**I understand and accept that my participation in the pilot volunteer mentor program includes:**

- Specific responsibilities in addition to my usual volunteer role.
- Being bound by the confidentiality requirements of the program.
- Being involved in the evaluation of the program including participating in an interview or survey about the program.

**Volunteer:**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Coordinator:**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Inviting Cultural Diversity in Volunteering*  
**VOLUNTEER MENTOR PROGRAM - Log of contacts**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role: \_\_\_\_\_ Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Type of contact (eg.phone, meet)	Who contact was with & their role	Nature of contact (eg. regular meeting, issue concerned about, )	Outcome/plan	Time Spent

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