



# LEADING LIGHTS

How William Angliss Institute is leading the way with its industry mentoring program.

**M**entoring is a hot topic in the world of education. The William Angliss Institute 2017 Faculty of Higher Education Mentoring Program ran from April until October this year.

The program, established to support students' formal academic training by providing a link to the profession in a structured and tailored way, is now in its fourth year.

Associate Dean Higher Education Operations Andrew Dolphin says, "We are grateful for the commitment of these mentors as this program enables our students to connect with our industry partners and learn even more about the industry they are interested in.

"The program formally runs for eight months, however many mentors and mentees maintain an ongoing relationship after the program ends. The program is about personal and professional development, giving mentees the opportunity to broaden their knowledge on career options and gain career guidance from a mentor with professional experience.

"They meet once at the launch and close events and are required to have one more face-to-face interaction during the eight months. They have an option to communicate weekly, fortnightly or monthly based on an agreement made between the two at the launch. This can be face-to-face, over email or a phone conversation.

"Our mentors have included industry experts from Calibre Feasts, Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, Estelle by Scott Pickett, Melbourne Farmers Markets. The Langham Melbourne, Accor Hotels, Peter Rowland Catering and Ascott Limited.

"As much as we can, we find a mentor specifically for each mentee based around what industry and career aspirations they have," said Dolphin.

The mentees in the program were selected based on their drive and determination, their enthusiasm for the industry and obvious desire to succeed.

Bachelor of Tourism and Hospitality Management student Brian Chong was teamed up with hotel industry expert and founder of Minnett Consulting, Dean Minnett.

Meeting fortnightly, Chong said some of the activities he did with his mentor included resume checks, interview techniques and helping to identify interests including clarifying future potential roles.

"I learnt to be more confident and be bold. The thing I liked the best about the mentor program was being able to pick up a phone anytime and seek professional advice from Dean," said Chong.

Dean Minnett said he was involved with the mentoring program because most young employees and students didn't have the opportunity to seek feedback or have an experienced person to guide them.

"The most satisfying part of the program has been seeing my mentee move from being uncertain and unclear as to direction to now being much more focussed on what they can do and how to go about it. Brian has become more confident and passionate about the possibilities in our industry.

"In today's fast-paced environment, many middle-management roles have disappeared from the hotel industry and staff are being promoted sometimes beyond their experience level at which point they either flounder and get fired or else burn out trying to cope with the pressure.

"I think mentoring programs such as this one at William Angliss Institute are critical to helping young people learn from more experienced practitioners and have a sounding board for any challenges. They learn that they are not alone and can make contacts and networks to assist them," said Minnett. ■

## LEADERSHIP PROGRAM ESSENTIALS

Forget about what you think you need when it comes to developing a leadership program for your organisation. Giovanna Lever, Founder of Sparrowly Group, says that the main thing to consider when you launch a leadership program is to speak to your people and ask them what they need.

"There's no one size fits all. You need to get a good grip on what the issues are. Everyone can give you feedback and it's good to build engagement from the outset to get people's buy in," said Lever.

It usually comes down to one of two things: technical skills and soft skills. You need to identify where the shortfall is and go from there.

She also says that short-term leadership programs are just a stop gap.

"I call it the Tony Robbins effect. It's all high fives, green smoothies and egg white omelettes for the week afterward, and then it all falls over. It's about what you do day-to-day that really makes an impact," she said.

"It's all about the follow-up. Any leadership program should be followed up with one-on-one mentoring," said Lever.