



How Developing a Mentoring Culture helped drive an organization's staff to accomplish their Core Principles© and achieve Self-Determination

How would you like to have someone to help you in a difficult situation or with a certain skill?

How would you like to have someone just listen to you without criticizing or telling you what to do?

How would you like to have help and support all around you every day?

This is what is happening every day in the JEVS CLHS Mentoring Culture.

JEVS Human Services is a nonprofit, nonsectarian organization that benefits the community by enhancing the employability and self-sufficiency of the individuals it serves through a broad range of support programs. Community Living & Home Supports (CLHS) has the mission to empower individuals to make choices and take responsible risk in order to achieve their full potential for participation in everyday life in the community.

To the staff of CLHS, JEVS' Core Principles are more than just words on a plaque:

- *Commitment to Excellence*
- *Quality Customer Service*
- *Integrity*
- *Leadership at all Levels*
- *Collaboration*

The Core Principles represent how people in CLHS do their jobs. So what? Isn't that what core principles are supposed to do? The simple answer is, "Yes." The more complete answer lies in *how* the staff of CLHS is making Mentoring drive their Core Principles, Self-Determination and how they are responding to fee for services.

In September, 2007, CLHS began evolving into a Mentoring Culture to ensure that everyone's direct care support services were achieving the Core Principles. The staff also wanted to ensure that they were supporting each other and achieving their own personal and professional goals.

For the past year, all the members of the CLHS staff have been attending MentoringMEans®™ workshops: learning about mentoring and what it means to be a mentor and a protégé. They've been learning the history of mentoring, how mentoring has evolved, what essential skills are needed to be effective mentors and protégés and, most importantly, the CLHS staff has been experiencing how well they have been strengthening each other as they serve their consumers.

With today's dynamic and rapid-fire changes in how we do the business we do, organizations everywhere are working not only to keep up with the technological changes, but also, to keep in touch with the heart of their organizations...their people. Technology may change the tools with which we work, but it is our people, who sustain the substance of how we work, our core principles and values.

People are at the heart of making CLHS the premier provider of direct care services for the mentally challenged people who are supported by the CLHS staff. Sr. Executive Director, Clara Thompson wanted to ensure the same level of excellent support for her staff. And, not with just a training program! She wanted to develop a Mentoring Culture that is evolutionary and sustaining! With the help of Francis Group LLC, a global custom-design consulting company that specializes in developing mentoring cultures, CLHS has been learning essential skills to mentor each other with communication, trust and the desire to be the best.

Through energetic and interactive workshops, everyone is learning and verifying that they understand the essential mentoring skills and how to use them with each other. One year ago, about 30% of the staff thought they understood and used mentoring at work. A year later, a recent survey verified that over 70% of the staff not only understands mentoring, but also, that they are actively using mentoring skills in both their professional and personal lives. "We are being Mentoring Advocates."

Here are some comments from CLHS Mentoring Advocates:

"What would you say about the Mentoring Culture at CLHS?"

It helps me continue learning how to change.

I think it's great. I've already learned to look at situations evolving and, staff and consumers with an open mind.

This has enlightened me and I now see the big picture about change.

Our Mentoring Culture is growing rapidly. The progress we're making is a tremendous encouragement.

It is very helpful to me on my job and in my personal life.

It's a work in [continuous] progress and I'm happy to be part of the experience.

It's a strong company movement that JEVS has embraced to promote stronger working relationships.

It's taking shape. People are understanding and listening to others. People are helping and sharing ideas.

It's an awesome environment to work in because it is empowering people at all levels and incorporating the talents and perspectives of all team members.

Clara Thompson, Sr. Executive Director of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disabilities, is championing mentoring as the CLHS Way! *"The Mentoring Culture at CLHS is not a program, but rather a way for each of us to live each day in support of each other, our consumers and our Core Principles. Our Core Principles: Commitment to Excellence, Quality Customer Service, Integrity, Leadership at all Levels and Collaboration are what we check ourselves against everyday, in every thing we do and with everyone we touch. And when we find ways to improve ourselves and each other, we use our mentoring skills to connect, strengthen and be better than we were. Our JEVS way is mentoring."*

Mentoring began in ancient Greek mythology when Odysseus asked his friend "Mentor" to take care of Telemachus, Odysseus' young son. Over the next twenty years, Mentor helped Telemachus grow into a fine young man and the pride of his father. This selective, one-to-one, originally male-to-male, long-term relationship became the model that was followed through to modern organizations. Today's organizations need mentoring more than ever before, mentoring that reaches everyone, not just a select few people.

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