



Australian Women in Resources Alliance
Strength through workforce diversity

AWRA e-Mentoring Case Study: Jenet Hwende & Joanne den Engelse

Being more than 2,500km apart was no obstacle for mentee Jenet and mentor Joanne, both professionals in quality control. They each gained a rewarding AWRA e-Mentoring experience due to the flexible structure of the program and a mutual commitment to learn and grow from this unique professional development opportunity.



MENTEE - Jenet Hwende

Based: Adelaide, SA

Role: Technical Quality Manager

As a technical quality manager with testing and inspection services provider Bureau Veritas Minerals Australia, Jenet provides technical support to a minerals lab to minimize and mitigate risks and keep customer satisfaction high. Jenet was looking for a professional development opportunity that would hone her skills in a number of areas and fit around her busy schedule.

Why did AWRA e-Mentoring appeal to you?

As a working mum who sometimes works long hours, I needed something flexible, so the fact that the program could be face-to-face or conducted over different communication channels was quite appealing. My mentor and I used mostly phone and email.

How did you go about working towards your goals?

It began with an initial group webinar that detailed the structure of the program. This gave direction on how I could define my goals. Hearing that the other mentees were in the same boat - wanting career growth but not knowing how to approach, it made me comfortable to share information with my mentor.

In the initial stages my mentor was patient in guiding me without telling me what my goals should be. I learnt that it is important to have a baseline of goals to build on, and our fortnightly conversations helped me achieve key milestones.

I found myself looking forward to our meetings

and the challenges that each week would bring.

What are your top tips for other mentees?

Be open and honest with your mentor while also respecting their opinion. Being open minded and willing to learn will make your journey more enjoyable. Stay focused on your goals and don't be afraid to ask questions.

What key lesson have you taken away from your e-mentoring experience?

I really appreciate all I have learnt from my mentor. Joanne showed me that when I see a roadblock in my career, there will be a way around it. There is always a potential positive if you analyse a situation with the right approach. I've come away from this experience knowing that it's all up to me to achieve my career goals and I now have the tools to do it.

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MENTOR - Joanne den Engelse

Based: Perth, WA

Role: Quality Director – Regional Centre Australia & NZ

As an experienced quality director with Alstom Signalling Solutions, Joanne is involved in the creation and deployment of quality management processes for use in engineering solutions for rail transportation. Believing there is always opportunity to learn and grow, Joanne is passionate about sharing her experiences through mentoring to help develop others.

What drew you to AWRA e-Mentoring?

Having been mentored early in my career, I treasured the time my mentor spent with me, guiding me through tough situations and helping me see things from a different perspective.

I was interested in joining AWRA e-Mentoring so I could share my experiences, knowledge and information on quality assurance and how to manage being a mother, sister and daughter, and still have a career!

The program was well structured and has a great induction program with valuable advice for the mentor and mentee. I am located in Perth and my mentee lives in Adelaide so the flexibility to be able to participate in a communication method that suited us both was ideal. It meant we could both keep our life/work balance in check.

How did you get the most out of your mentoring partnership?

Jenet and I spent the first two meetings talking about what we both wanted from the program rather than rushing in and setting goals, which I think was an excellent strategy. We also set small tasks to be completed after the goals were achieved to keep the interest in the relationship and to advance our skills.

The AWRA Mentor/Mentee Handbook gives excellent guidance to ensure the goals set are achievable, add value and are not just to 'tick the box'.

In your opinion, what qualities make a good mentor?

The first important quality is to be a good listener. While as mentors we are keen to share our advice, you need to listen to first understand what is required. You must also be honest in your feedback and challenge the mentee to take chances and embrace their new-found confidence.

I like to be enthusiastic and encourage my mentee to think outside the square. Storytelling is a big part of my mentoring; sharing experiences which provide learnings and also the humorous side to situations.

What does a mentor get out of the experience?

Mentoring can establish a great relationship that expands the horizons and networks of both participants. It is extremely rewarding to guide another individual by providing them with an outside perspective on a variety of issues, and to be a sounding board for ideas that they may not have the confidence to explore in the business world. Ultimately, it is up to both individuals to build the relationship and enjoy the experience.

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