

# Mentor Manual

7 STEPS TO BECOMING  
A GREAT MENTOR

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*Queensland*  
AUSTRALIA



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# 01

## INTRODUCTION

What is a Mentor?

Getting started as a Mentor

# What is a Mentor?

**Mentors are the people who help bring the Guide to life for operators. They provide help and advice over a period of time.**

## Mentors:



Work closely with one or more operators to support them through thinking about the experiences they deliver and how to make them transformational



Share stories and best practices of what good looks like, as a way of inspiring operators



Help operators identify early signs of success



Provide ongoing support and encouragement, to help operators 'stay the course'

# Getting started as a Mentor

## Getting started as a Mentor requires some preparation.

This Manual has been designed to provide Mentors with tips and advice to enable them to support mentees in successfully using the Experience Guide to review and re-imagine their visitor experiences with the aim of exceeding their guest's expectations.

### The content addresses topics of:

- What makes a great mentor
- Getting to know your mentee
- Working with your mentee
- Additional support



# 02

## **WHAT MAKES A GREAT MENTOR?**

Seven qualities of a great Mentor

# Seven qualities of a great Mentor



## Listening

As a mentor, your job is to listen to the mentee, ask questions, explore issues, and provide insights from your personal experience that might help them along their journey.



## Mutual trust and respect

Mentoring is a relationship based on trust, and trust thrives when those involved in the relationship feel respected and valued.



## Willingness to learn and share knowledge

Keeping both parties energised about the relationship depends on mutual learning and knowledge sharing. It is important for mentors to be proactive about asking questions when they see the opportunity to learn from their mentees.



## Openness and supportiveness

The mentoring relationship should be a “safe place” where both mentor and mentee are able to be vulnerable. Vulnerability might be admitting things they don't know (especially on the mentor side) or skills they have difficulty with.



## Constructive feedback

Well-constructed feedback, that is not negative or confrontational, can be so useful and empowering for all involved. Experience gives mentors a different vantage point to see a lot of what a mentee may not.



## Empathy

For too long, empathy has been seen as the “warm and fluffy” stuff, yet science is now showing this is the hard part of relationships, and that people who are compassionate, who listen and who tailor their behaviour to support and inspire others make the best leaders.



## Enthusiasm

Mentors need to be enthusiastic and sincere in the way they present their desire to help. Good mentors are passionate about their yearning to help others and receive their rewards not in the form of material items or money, but in seeing the people they have helped become successful.

“

*A mentor is not someone who walks ahead of you to show you how they did it, they walk alongside you to show you what you can do.*

”

# DB

## **GETTING STARTED AS A MENTOR**

Getting to know the guide

# Getting to know the guide

**The first step for a Mentor is to become familiar with the Guide content.**

Mentors play an important role in working with operators to help them design and implement transformational experiences for their guests. Taking on the role of Mentor requires some preparation. The Guide introduces multiple new concepts.

**Mentors should spend time ensuring they understand:**

- ✓ What are Transformational Travel Experiences? Why do these matter to individual operators and to Queensland's tourism industry? (Guest Experience Guide, Section 01)
- ✓ What are the **Core Guest Expectations** to deliver these experiences? (Guest Experience Guide, Section 04)
- ✓ What are the **5 stages of Travel** from the perspective of our guests? (Guest Experience Guide, Section 05)
- ✓ How do the **Core Guest Expectations** apply across each of these 5 stages? (Guest Experience Guide, Section 05)
- ✓ What does **transformational** look like, based on best practices and stories? (Guest Experience Guide, Section 05 and 07)
- ✓ What are **early signs of success** for an operator? (Guest Experience Guide, Section 06)



04

## **GETTING TO KNOW YOUR MENTEE**

Getting to know your  
mentee's business

# Getting to know your mentee's business will give you insight to support and guide them effectively.

Before you start interacting with your mentee, become as familiar as you can with the public facing aspects of their business:



**Read through your mentee's website.** Get to know what services your mentee offers. Look at the imagery, tone, structure, and use of colour in the website. If you were a guest, would this website answer your questions easily? Would it inspire you to book with this operator? Consider how Queensland's travel for good brand principles and core guest expectations could be better reflected on their website.



**Read through social media and travel platform reviews for your mentee.** What is the overall feedback? Is it consistent? What are the positives? What is only lukewarm or even negative? How well does your mentee respond to reviews, both positive and negative?



**Seek case studies and best practices in operations relevant to your mentee.** Refer to the Guest Experience Guide best practice case studies as well as best practice operators that you're personally familiar with. These are the stories you can share to help inspire your mentee.



**If you are able, try to experience your mentee's services or visit their location.** (This may be something you arrange to do after meeting your mentee.) In addition to understanding the physical experience, look for how well digital promise (website, social media) and physical experience align.

# 05

## **WORKING WITH YOUR MENTEE**

7 steps to create change

Where your mentee starts  
depends on their operations

Improving the experience

**Change doesn't happen overnight.  
Take a steady approach to encourage  
your mentee to 'focus-do-reap-repeat'.**



# Seven steps to create change

## Step 1

**Get to know your mentee(s) as a person/people.** You've spent some time getting to know your mentee's business. Get to know your mentee as a person. It's important to understand:

- How did they get started in the tourism industry?
- What do they love about it?
- What would they change if they could?
- Why are they interested in Transformational Travel? What do they hope to gain from working with a mentor through this process?
- Reinforce the benefits of transformational travel for operators. Share success stories from other operators.

## Step 2

**Before diving into the guide, help your mentee expand their perspective.**

Your mentee spends much of their life thinking about business operations from their perspective, as the business owner/manager/team member. Here are some ideas to help them see tourism and their business differently:

- Read [this blog](#) by a Londoner who travelled to Antarctica
- Read [this article](#) from a travel journalist about her best trips
- Explore one of the case studies available in the Guest Experience Guide. Read customer reviews for that company
- Ask your mentee, if they could share one thing they are passionate about with their guests, what would it be?

### Step 3

**Introduce the guide.** The guide introduces many new concepts. Start by talking to your mentee about how guests' needs, desires, and motivations are changing. Is this something they've noticed?

### Step 4

**Introduce transformational travel experiences** and what they are: travelling with the deliberate desire to stretch, learn and grow into new ways of being and engaging with the world. Talk about the difference between good experiences and transformational experiences. Ask your mentee if they've ever experienced transformational travel, and if so, have them tell you about it. What made it transformational?

### Step 5

**Walk through the core guest expectations.** Discuss the difference between the "basic must-haves" and the transformative expectations. The transformative expectations are a process the guest goes through, deliberately designed and orchestrated by the operator.

### Step 6

**Introduce the 5 stages of travel.** Share the 5 stages of travel with your mentee. Talk about what each stage is. Ask your mentee, "How do you think guests feel during each stage? What do you think has to happen for a guest to move to the next stage?" Discuss the importance of Sharing and how it supports the other stages.

### Step 7

#### **Discuss the experience your mentee delivers.**

Encourage your mentee to see the guest's perspective. You can also leverage the Experience Self-Assessment tool (p. 25 of the Guide). Does your mentee meet basic must-haves? Do they offer a good experience? Is it a transformational experience? Decide a few changes to get started. Reference the chart on the following page for further tips.

- In general, fix basic must-haves first.
- Identify the highlights of the guest's experience. Capitalise on these through supporting guests' ability to share, their own social media sharing, and their website. These activities will build a stronger business for your mentee - and build trust in your relationship with your mentee.
- Transformational experiences require careful design and orchestration. See the Deep Dive for more.

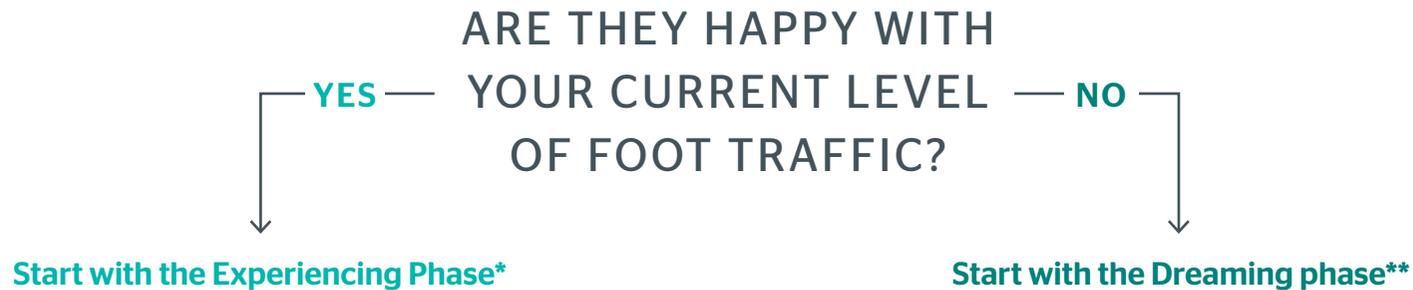
### Where to next?

**Now that you've taken your mentee through the Seven steps, now it's time to identify key actions for them to bring this to life.**

**Identify 1-3 actions** your mentee will take to get started. Follow-up on a weekly basis with your mentee to encourage them. After 4-6 weeks, meet with your mentee to talk through what they did and what results they saw. Has it made a difference in guest inquiries or spoken or written feedback?

**Identify the next actions** and arrange to follow-up again in 4-6 weeks.

# Where your mentee starts depends on their operations



1. Ensure the Experience meets basic must-haves.
2. Ensure your mentee supports guests' ability to capture and post the highlights of their experience.
3. Ensure your mentee actively responds to reviews.
4. Ensure the website meets basic must-haves, e.g., tone, info, structure, easy Booking.
5. Ensure your mentee actively shares highlights on social media.
6. Ensure the website uses great imagery and inspires potential guests.
7. Ensure your mentee is incorporating appropriate brand principles and core guest expectations into the visitor experience.
8. Step by step, discuss, design and trial changes to make the experience transformational. See worksheets, pp. 17-20.

1. Ensure the website meets basic must-haves, e.g., tone, info, structure, easy Booking.
2. Ensure your mentee actively shares highlights on social media.
3. Ensure the website uses great imagery and inspires potential guests.
4. Prepare now to ensure the Experience meets basic must-haves.
5. Discuss, design and prepare to trial changes to make the experience transformational. See worksheets, pp. 17-20.

\*Remember to reinforce the 5 stages of travel and have the Guest Experience Guide opened to the 'Experiencing' section.

\*\*Remember to reinforce the 5 stages of travel and have the Guest Experience Guide opened to the 'Dreaming' section.

# Improving the experience



**Have your mentee think through the actual experience “on the day” from a guest’s perspective.** Start with their guests mindset and how they transitioned from where they were to their operation and how the welcome works, and step through the entire experience from welcome to close and what they do afterwards. Your mentee should take notes (use the template, next page), documenting what the guest experiences through their senses, what the guest does and does next, how the guest feels each step of the way, and what the guest might say.



**Rate each step of the experience from the guest’s perspective.**



**Encourage your mentee to identify a few things they can do differently to improve the experience and/or drive a transformational experience (see worksheets, pp. 18-20).**



**Talk through these things and choose 1-3 specific actions they will try consistently over the next few weeks.**



**Follow-up on a weekly basis with your mentee to encourage them.**



**After 4-6 weeks, meet with your mentee to talk through what they did and what results they saw. Has it made a difference in guest spoken or written feedback?**

# WORKSHEET

Your mentee should use this template to document their guests' current experiences with them.

Instructions: Pretend you are one of your guests. What do you do? What do you sense? What do you feel? What do you say? After you have completed the full experience for a guest, go back to the beginning and consider the "from the operator's perspective" section.

	Pre-Experience	Welcome	The Experience	Farewell
What do you do?				
What do you sense (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch)?				
What do you feel?				
What (if anything) do you say?				
Was this a positive part of the experience?				
From the operator's perspective				
How (if at all) does this contribute to transformational travel?				
What could you change to make it more positive?				

# Deep dive: designing and delivering transformational experiences



Share  
your story

**I feel more  
connected.**



Take them  
on a journey

**I feel inspired.**



Inspire them to  
make a difference

**I feel empowered!**

**Transformational experiences start with your mentee's passions and values.**

- The first step is to identify what your mentee cares about enough to want to talk about it day in and day out, to have the passion that translates into energy that attracts similarly minded employees and/or inspires others.

**What is the bigger picture for this? Who does it impact?  
How are they impacted?**

- These questions are the first to work through and answer. The answers to these questions build the foundations for the stories that will connect travellers.

**Why does it matter?**

- Answering this question, with stories that dive deeper and build on the connection element above, will build inspiration.
- To make this resonate more, help guests explore and discover using their own five senses.

**What is the call to action? What do you want the guest to do/change/contribute?**

- Having a small action that the guest can do as part of the experience will help build their own identity and self-narrative about who they are (now).
- If you want the guest to do more, make sure you give them access or opportunity to do this while they are still engaged from their experience with you.

Continuing the guest's connection through a sense of belonging to a community and through ongoing interactions (with you or with other community members) will help sustain the transformation.

# WORKSHEET

**Your mentee should use this worksheet to think through designing and delivering a transformational experience.**

The elements designed here then need to be incorporated into the guest's journey. Once implemented, your mentee should actively request feedback from guests and monitor reviews to understand what resonates and what could be better.

## If I could change the world...

If you could convince people to do or feel differently about something, in a way that enriches them and/or brings positive change for others, what would it be?

**Why do you feel strongly about this?  
What are the experiences you have or have had that relate?**



Share your story

**How might the experiences your guests have with you showcase the impact or value of this change?**



Take them on a journey

**What is the first step to change?  
What is something your guests could do as part of their experience with you that sets them on those first steps?**



Take them on a journey



Inspire them to make a difference

**What might they do after their experience with you, to continue down that path?**



Inspire them to make a difference

# Learning from feedback

- Encourage your mentee to gather feedback from their guests - what was good, what could be better, any suggestions for improvements.
- Respond constructively to all feedback, especially negative feedback.
- Monitor and leverage reviews for insights. Look for themes across what guests are saying.
- Not all feedback will be positive or constructive. Try to keep a balanced perspective - look for the essence of the feedback and value it for what you can learn from it.
- Be less concerned about a single review; instead, look for trends and root causes across reviews (e.g., bad weather, a new hire, an off day OR a particularly compelling employee, an extra touch, an additional story that resonates).
- Look at reviews for competitors/similar operators: learn what they are doing well, and use them as a source for ideas.



06

**HOW THIS RELATES TO  
THE BEST OF QUEENSLAND  
EXPERIENCES PROGRAM**

# What is BOQEP and how is it related?

## Best of Queensland Experiences Program

The **Best of Queensland Experiences Program** is designed to guide the Queensland tourism industry to deliver **exceptional guest experiences** and create **positive word of mouth** to grow **consumer demand** for Queensland experiences.

This will ensure Queensland remains **top of mind** for potential travellers, leading to **more visitors, greater expenditure** and **increased market share**.

## Criteria

The program is based on a **robust** and **independent** set of criteria that respond to the evolving expectations of global travellers, acknowledge **online consumer reviews**, and reflect **best practice** industry standards.

As such, the program is driven by **consumer sentiment** and expectations, **setting a measurable benchmark** for the tourism industry on what constitutes an **exceptional guest experience**.

## Operator Benefits

Operators are provided with an **individual report** which contains **valuable consumer insights** to **enhance business performance**, and benefit from **consumer advocacy**, and **marketing prioritisation** opportunities.

## Measurement

The **Best of Queensland Experiences Program** is **one of the key ways** operators and RTOs can **monitor performance** and **measure the impact** of changes implemented to enhance their experience, in **alignment** with **best practice** and the **evolving Queensland brand**.

07

## GETTING HELP

For further support

# Change is challenging, and mentoring change can be difficult.

## For further support...

Over time the intention is to establish a mentoring support network. In the interim if you have any queries, please contact the Experience Design Team at TEQ: David Morgans [david.morgans@queensland.com](mailto:david.morgans@queensland.com) or Alex Perpich [alex.perpich@queensland.com](mailto:alex.perpich@queensland.com)



# Queensland

AUSTRALIA

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