

## Mentoring at *The Greenhouse*

Congrats – you're going to be mentoring at *The Greenhouse* this year! As you will no doubt have noticed, the role of mentor is a new one. And the first thing I would say is – don't worry about it. It isn't necessarily a process of 'imparting knowledge'. In that you don't need to be super wise (although, of course, you are all super wise). The mentor is more just a person to be their point of contact. A sounding board, someone to listen, and to help your mentees progress in their careers as much as you can. Essentially, mentors have three functions:

- **Inductions** – You will induct the mentee into The Greenhouse, giving them all the knowledge they need about joining us, and what their time with us will mean.
- **Check-Ins** – At least every two months, you will be responsible for doing a one-to-one check in with your mentee. This is just to see how they are doing, and to provide career support as much as possible.
- **Wellbeing contact** – It's really important that, as a mentor, you make yourself available to your mentees. They should know that you are the person they come to if they are having any issues, wellbeing or otherwise. **Whilst you only have to meet your mentees once every two months, please send them a message or an email at least once a month, just asking them how they are doing and if they need help with anything.**

### Induction Process

As a mentor, you will be responsible for inducting your mentees in to *The Greenhouse*. This is an exciting opportunity to get to know them, and to help them progress on their career journey. The induction should take approximately an hour – and let them know that you will be sharing some bits of it with Oli and Sarah, just for the sake of transparency. In it, you should cover the following sections:

#### **Their role (15 mins)**

Go through the information pack that was circulated to your mentee either before applying to join the company, or just after joining. Talk them through what their role entails and what it means for them, and discuss any questions they may have. Importantly, if you feel that you can't answer any questions, that's really okay – you don't have to know everything! Just say that you'll get back to them, and shoot Sarah or Oli a message to ask.

#### **Policies (15 mins)**

We have a load of policies now! From Health and Safety to Child safeguarding. Hopefully, by the time we actually get to inductions, we'll have written a zero-waste and sustainability policy for all employees. As part of the induction, read through the policies with your mentees, and take them through any questions they may have. Again, don't feel like you need to answer questions if you can't (and definitely don't guess)! Just say you'll get back to them, and drop Sarah or Oli an email to clarify.

#### **Access (15 mins)**

This is quite a simple one – just ask them if they have any needs (not even necessarily access needs, just needs) that it's important we are aware of. This could range from needing level access to the performance space to having a small bladder, and so needing frequent toilet

breaks at rehearsals and performances. It should have an access lens, but really, this is about finding out what we need to do to make everyone involved in the project as comfortable as they can be! If they have any requirements, make a note of them and pass that on to Sarah and Oli.

### **Get to know them (15 mins)**

Finally (and this is just as important as the other sections, if not more so) get to know them – both as people, and in terms of their careers. I'd recommend using the following 7 questions as guides, but you're all perfectly capable social beings, so you do you!

- Do you have any training in performing at all?
- What kind of experience do you have?
- What is your favourite piece of work you've ever done, and why?
- What exactly do you want to do in your career? If an actor, what kind of acting, etc.
- What is your biggest dream for your career?
- What are some of the skills or talents you want to develop to help you progress your career?
- What are your main hobbies and interests, outside of theatre?

This is not a Q+A session – relate to them and have a chat! But also, make a note of their career background, ambitions, and things they want to work on, just so, in personnel check-ins, you are sure to be helping them in the most useful way possible.

### **Induction Notes (10 mins)**

Once the induction has finished, you need to make a document and answer the following questions:

1. *Did the mentee share any access requirements or needs with you (no matter how big or small)? If so, what were they?*
2. *What is the mentee's background as a performer? Any training, or notable experience?*
3. *What do they want to do/be in their career?*
4. *What are the main skills/talents they want to develop to progress their career?*

Notes on these do not have to be particularly detailed in any way. Just a couple of sentences under each – it will just help us keep track of everything!

### **Personnel Check-Ins**

Although you will be reminded, it is ultimately up to you to schedule your regular personnel check-ins with your mentees. This is a really important process, and part of what makes the company special and unique, so make sure you do it. The check-ins should last around 30 minutes and, as you can see by the questions below, they should involve you bringing at least one educational opportunity, based on what you know about your mentee and their career goals. Below are the questions you should ask at each check in. For each check in, you should make notes under each of these questions. They don't have to be hugely detailed – they can just be a few words! Then, you will need to submit the resulting document to Sarah.

1. *Are you satisfied in your role?*



2. *Do you feel well supported and looked after in your role? If no, why, and how can we help you to feel better supported?*
3. *Are there any issues you are having that you would like to bring to my attention at the moment?*
4. *Is there any specific feedback you would like to offer on any aspect of your role at the moment?*
5. *Is there any particular skill or experience that you would like to build on at the moment, to help you achieve your career goals?*
6. *Did I bring at least one educational opportunity to this meeting to help you develop skills and experience that you want to develop?*
7. *Are your hours okay – do you feel like you have a good amount of work?*
8. *Are there any other issues personal or otherwise that you'd like to discuss that may affect your work over the next three months?*
9. *Is there anything else that you would like to bring up or discuss?*

### General Wellbeing

There is not much to say here really! Other than making sure you contact each of your mentees via email or a message at least once a month to see how they are doing, this is not a particularly active part of the role. However, you will need to make yourselves available to provide wellbeing support as needed. This means always saying yes if a mentee gets in touch asking if you can talk (about anything), and setting up a meeting with 72 hours.

In a meeting such as this, use your discretion. Try to prioritise listening and empathising over offering potential 'solutions' or suggested actions. After the meeting, jot down a few notes on what the meeting was about, and send that over to Oli and Sarah, who will work out the next steps from there!

One thing that's REALLY important to note with stuff like this. For various reasons, if your mentee **ever asks you to keep something they tell you a secret, you have to say no**. Even if it seems that means they may not tell you about it (the likelihood is they will tell you anyway). Promising this can get us in to all sorts of legal trouble. It's best to say that you can't keep anything a secret, but that you will only tell the people who you think it is necessary to help the situation.

### Conclusion

Yay! You're a mentor! We hope you find this super rewarding and you're happy with taking it on. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please raise them with Oli and Sarah whenever. Otherwise, good luck – you're going to smash it!