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RESEARCH

# Mentorship in the Workplace: Employee Participation and Perspectives

**Partners** Environics Institute Diversity Institute

## Locations Across Canada

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Project: [Survey on Employment and Skills](#)

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### TOPICS IN THIS PROJECT

Labour Market Information    Quality of Work

Workplace mentorship programs can have numerous benefits for both participants and employers. There is evidence that [having a career mentor](#) can lead to greater compensation, more frequent promotions, higher employee engagement and retention, and improved overall job satisfaction. Existing literature on workplace mentorship primarily examines the benefits to mentees' career outcomes and makes recommendations for mentorship best practices. However, there has been less research examining workplace mentorship across different demographic groups and occupations, although this issue was recently the focus of a study by the Diversity Institute, highlighting the [critical role that mentorship plays in advancement opportunities for diverse workers](#).

The [Survey on Employment and Skills](#) aims to fill this knowledge gap by examining how workers perceive the value of workplace mentorship programs (breaking down results by factors including gender, age, racial and ethnic background, and occupation). Specifically, the survey asks whether individuals have a mentor, and if so, whether they perceive that relationship to be helpful in four different dimensions: overall job satisfaction; career advancement; management of workplace conflict; and development of new skills.

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## **Key Insights**

Most employees with a mentor find that the relationship has been either very or somewhat helpful to them in advancing their careers (83%), in helping them manage difficult situations at work (89%), in learning new skills (89%), and in improving their job satisfaction (90%). But perceptions of the extent of these benefits vary among different groups.

The survey finds that 38 percent of those identifying as Black report having a mentor at work, the same proportion as the average for all workers. But Black employees with a mentor are the most likely, among all groups in the survey, to say that having a mentor has been very helpful for them when it comes to managing difficult situations at work (64%).

Findings underscore the importance of culturally relevant and inclusive mentorship programs, particularly for underrepresented groups such as Indigenous employees, who report the highest engagement and benefits. While younger workers and those in entry-level positions are more likely to have mentors and benefit from these relationships, older employees and those of certain ethnic backgrounds are less engaged, highlighting a need for tailored approaches to mentorship.

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The Future Skills Centre acknowledges that the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas and Haudenosaunee share a special relationship to the 'Dish With One Spoon Territory,' where our office is located, bound to share and protect the land. As a pan-Canadian initiative, FSC operates on the traditional territory of many Indigenous nations across Turtle Island, the name given to the North American continent by some Indigenous peoples. We are grateful for the opportunity to work in this territory and commit ourselves to learning about our shared history and doing our part towards reconciliation.

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