

Training mentors to support early career teachers

The need

The dropout rate of newly qualified teachers can be as high as 40-50% in some school systems. South Australia Department of Education chose to invest in setting up graduate teachers for success by building a comprehensive training program for teacher mentors. Mentors are appointed in every school, awarded release time to spend with their new teacher(s) and given the opportunity to engage in professional learning – both online modules and workshop days - to strengthen the effectiveness of their mentoring.

Our solution

BTS Spark custom-designed a workshop for new mentors, aimed at providing them with a foundational set of mentoring skills. A needs analysis and discovery interviews revealed that mentors most needed help with two critical areas – how to give developmental feedback on their teaching practice in a non-judgemental way, and how to support teachers through the emotional rollercoaster of their first year. Over 40 workshops were then delivered, led by professional coach facilitators who could model how to build trust and engage in developmental conversations. Strong participant feedback resulted in BTS Spark being invited to develop a second workshop for more experienced mentors.



Mentors are introduced to a ‘toolkit’ of mentoring conversation scaffolds in each workshop. They really enjoy these practical tools that can strengthen their mentoring conversations.

Impact



Average rating by participants of workshop learning



“I feel confident and ready to have those conversations with my early career teacher.”

98%

Of mentors say they can apply the program content to improve their practice