

providing training to school counselors and providing training to workplace mentors. Nevertheless, we think these activities should be secondary to the first two priorities, although in some cases, interactions with apprentices may identify an immediate need to provide support to a mentor to improve the apprenticeship experience.

Priority 1 – Supporting Sponsors

The ITA shifted much of the responsibility for reporting and recording information to both sponsors and apprentices. In our view, this has imposed an additional burden on employers and may have deterred interest, as there is a general resistance in the business community to what is derisively called “Red Tape.”

As well, and perhaps more importantly, it is well recognized that any group seeking sponsorship of any kind needs to establish a strong relationship with sponsors, and we believe this is best done by developing one-on-one relationships – a role we would expect the AAs to play as part of a broader effort to market sponsorship and maintain it. An employer should have a specific individual advisor they can turn to when they need advice about any aspect of sponsorship.

The AAs should also play a role in mediating and resolving conflict between apprentices and sponsors, as we believe that, unattended, these conflicts can have an adverse effect on willingness to continue sponsorship.

Priority 2 – Supporting Completion

Low completion rates are a problem for everyone in the system, and we believe AAs can play a role in improving completion rates.

An apprenticeship is a long-term commitment, and the literature suggests that the needs of apprentices change as training progresses, and the support that is required changes over time.