

## **Mentors wanted! Assist tomorrow's plumbers and gas fitters today**

Are you a plumber or a gas fitter, run your own business, perhaps are retired, or are a trade industry teacher? Whatever your background, your knowledge and experiences are invaluable in helping those just starting out in their career – and we want your help.

Rheem Australia is calling for mentors in the plumbing and gas fitting industries for an exciting new pilot e-mentoring initiative developed in partnership with Campbell Page, one of Australia's leading not-for-profit community services organisations.

The Rheem Apprenticeships and Youth Scheme (RAYS) links mentors and mentees using Campbell Page's e-mentoring suite. The pilot program will begin in February 2013 (in time for the new TAFE year), and using a sophisticated website, links your experience with that of the mentees (or indeed, their aspirations), so there is a common ground of mutual respect and understanding.

"E-mentoring allows mentors and mentees to collaborate wherever they are in the country, work around any time restrictions they may have, not to mention facilitating ongoing conversations in a secure online environment – all of which can have a lasting effect on an apprentice's or young tradesperson's career," says Gareth Jennings, Rheem Australia's public affairs manager.

Each mentor can select the number of mentees they would like to work with (a maximum of six), and to ensure maximum value from the initiative, a 12-month commitment is recommended.

### **What you can expect:**

- **Training:** All RAYS mentors will receive online and over-the-phone training, which takes up to two hours
- **Tips and hints:** Campbell Page will provide useful tips for mentors on how to engage with mentees, and will be taught questioning techniques
- **Careful matching:** Mentors will be matched as closely as possible with the profiles of mentees and will assist by being a positive role model
- **Setting goals:** Mentees will be asked to nominate a particular goal they want to reach with their mentor
- **Setting expectations:** One of the mentors' roles will be to temper mentees' expectations of the industry and to be a trusted sounding board
- **Support:** Mentors will encourage and support mentees and offer advice and guidance
- **Time commitment:** Mentors will need to invest just an hour per week (approximately)

Lack of support is a key reason why many plumbing apprentices drop out, so get involved and be part of this hugely rewarding program.

**Any plumbers and gas fitters who are interested in becoming a RAYS mentor should email [mentorME@eMentoring.org.au](mailto:mentorME@eMentoring.org.au) for further information.**