

Mentoring Guidelines and Sample Agreement

Introduction

Mentoring is essentially about helping people to develop more effectively. It is a relationship designed to build confidence and support the mentee so they can take control of their own development and work

Why Mentoring?

- It has flexibility – mentoring can happen in so many ways and under lots of different circumstances
- It is individual – each relationship will be unique to those two individuals involved
- It is people centred
- It provides a feedback system- feedback is central to mentoring and is a great tool to enhance and embed learning
- It is broad in focus – it should meet the needs of the mentee and mentor
- It is not exclusive – but complements other methods of learning

What is a Mentor?

A mentor is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as an “experienced and trusted advisor”

Your role as mentor will cover at least some of the following:

- Listen
- Ask questions to help develop the mentee’s understanding of a situation or problem, as well as your own understanding of the mentee and their context
- Provide information and knowledge and share informal networks
- Provide advice on career development
- Offer guidance and advice in regards to qualifications and continuing professional development
- Offer different perspectives
- Provide an insight into your work and career
- Provide support and encouragement
- Be a sounding board
- Be a critical friend
- Encourage self-reflection and proactive action
- Help mentees identify areas for development



The Mentoring Process

The Mentoring Process



Different Roles a Mentor may be required to take

Networking	<p>Core skills needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to define and understand networks, what adds value and why • Understanding key areas you need to influence and who are the key individuals • Creating opportunities for mentees to meet others who will help provide information or opportunities to help develop gaps in the mentee's knowledge
Facilitating	<p>Core skills needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being clear about what needs to happen and why • Recognising potential barriers and what causes them • Provides advice and guidance on ways to overcome barriers • An understanding of the politics of management • Smoothing the path for mentees for example by providing introductions, backing ideas and spreading the word on projects the mentee is working on
Coaching	<p>Core skills needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening with an open mind and suspending judgements • Being able to see the issue from a different perspective, that of the mentee • Identifying behaviour that needs to change • Helping mentees to recognise their own individual strengths and areas of weakness • Providing constructive feedback • Setting projects that will stretch the mentee • Ability to clarify so both parties have a shared understanding • Being able to take a mentee back through and experience, to help them to evaluate it and to recognise what could have been done differently.
Counselling	<p>Core skills needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening – withholding comments unless it helps the mentee to clarify their thoughts • Focusing on observable behaviours rather than personality traits • The ability to handle negative information without driving the mentee into an emotional corner • Avoiding unconstructive arguments • Being able to help move the mentee into constructive problem solving mode • Knowing when to call in specialist advice.

Mentoring using the GROW model

The GROW model is a good way to structure a meeting with your mentee. You can either start with the goal or work logically through the model or you can move the model around, starting with the reality and then the goal, if this works best. Remember to always finish with the way forward and ensure that this is set and owned by the mentee

Goal – Get the mentee to focus on the future and on what **THEY** want to achieve as an individual. It is not where you think they should be aiming.

Reality – Ask questions to help the mentee establish where they are now. If you work with the individual directly you may need to give feedback on actual performance. Encourage the individual to get feedback on their performance from their direct line manager if you do not work with them directly as this will help them to identify their current reality.

Options – help the mentee to identify what different options are open to them and ask questions to help them explore the reality of each of these options. Share your own experiences if the mentee is struggling to identify sufficient options and beware of being too directive.

Way Forward – Encourage the mentee to design an action plan which they have set and encourage them to set SMART objectives, objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable and realistic for the mentee in their current position and that have clear timescales attached.

Managing the Meetings

The mentor should take on the role of a facilitator during the meetings using questions and a non-directive, non-judgemental approach. Following the GROW model will be helpful during the meetings. The purpose of the meetings could be for some or all the following reasons:

- Reviewing and identifying the mentee's experience
- Helping the mentee to identify individual strengths and areas for development
- Discussing professional and work issues
- Agreeing what support is required
- Exploring the options open to the mentee
- Coaching on specific skills
- Supporting the mentee to set achievable realistic and stretching action plans

Remember meetings will not be the only form of contact with your mentee. Telephone calls and emails will also be a part of the process, but you should have an agreed number of scheduled meetings with your mentee set to fit around the action plan of the mentee, and around specific points in their development.

Making the Meetings Work

- Have a clear structure and purpose. Before the meeting consider the structure and the time parameters. These should be agreed during the initial meeting when you are contracting with the mentee. Having a clear structure and purpose in mind will be the best and most effective use of your time and their time.
- Think about the content of the meetings. There should be a balance of looking back and reviewing the mentee experiences and reviewing if objectives set have been met or, if not, why not? There should also be a balance of discussing current issues and thinking about the future and ensuring the mentee sets realistic objectives for their action plan.
- Keep to dates and times set. It is easy to let the day job get in the way but try to focus on the benefits to everyone (including the organisation) of engaging in this process. Give it the priority it requires to be successful.
- Enjoy the experience!

Mentoring Agreement Template

Mentor name:	
Mentee name:	

Our goals for this mentoring relationship are:
Our expectations of how we will achieve these goals are:
Meeting times (frequency and duration) and other means of communication (Face-to-face/Zoom/Skype/Teams/Meet/Email/Telephone):
We will record and monitor our progress by:

Confidentiality

We agree to keep everything that is said within the mentoring relationship confidential. We will make specific agreements about what aspects of the mentoring can be shared. The mentor may wish to share their experience of being a mentor using the real experience and context of current/ live mentoring as part of their learning process. This may take place in other learning spaces, such as ambassador pods or mentoring supervision groups, where there is further contracting on confidentiality. It is a valuable exercise for mentor and mentee to discuss and clarify their understanding of what can be shared and what needs to be kept strictly private.

Mentor		Mentee	
Date		Date	