

# Criteria 5: Mentoring for Professional Development

This chapter contains:

- Overview
- How [your](#) organisation can benefit from Mentoring
- Evidence Required for Accreditation
- Guidance for established a Mentoring scheme
- [Adding Value: The range of Good Practices](#)

## Overview

Although it is only since the early 1970s that mentoring became a formal component of many development programmes, the concept of experienced individuals handing down their wisdom to their young protégés is centuries old. The term comes from Greek mythology – Mentor being the friend to whom Ulysses entrusted the education of his son before he went off on his odyssey. Historically, the relationship between master and apprentice has strong mentoring characteristics. There are plenty of modern day examples of strong Mentor-Mentee relationships:

- Business: **Freddie Laker** (airline entrepreneur) mentored **Richard Branson** (Virgin Group)
- Politics: **Aristotle** mentored **Alexander the Great**
- Film: **Martin Scorsese** mentored **Oliver Stone** at the New York University
- Music: **Johann Christian Bach** (son of JS Bach) mentored **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**
- Cycling: **Eddy Merckx** (five-time Tour de France winner) mentored **Lance Armstrong** (seven-time Tour de France winner).
- Soccer: **Bobby Charlton** mentored **David Beckham**

Mentoring has always been an important factor in developing people in leading organisations, but not always in a formalised manner like some other HR processes such as employee induction, performance management etc. Experienced employees in your organisation have a wealth of knowledge, experience and wisdom acquired over time. It is important for the good of the organisation that this resource is shared.

Essentially, Mentoring can assist anyone who is on a significant 'learning curve' i.e. undergoing induction, career progression, new projects, new job transitions, within change programmes.

*“Mentoring is a supportive learning relationship between a caring individual who shares his/her knowledge, experience, and wisdom with another individual who is ready, willing and able to benefit from this exchange to enrich their professional journey”* Suzanne Faure

## **PURPOSE OF MENTORING**

Mentoring is important to the organisation and the individual for a number of reasons:

### **Benefits to the organisation:**

- research highlights significant impact upon recruitment and retention: of both Mentor and Mentee
- very effective in Talent Management
- useful in building a cohort of Chartered Engineers
- increased productivity through better engagement and job satisfaction.

### **Benefits to the mentored person (the Mentee) are:**

- development outcomes which may include, knowledge, technical and behavioural improvements
- better management of career goals
- developing wider network of influence
- increased confidence and self awareness which helps build performance and contribution
- line managers and HR also benefit from better employee focus and engagement.

### **Benefits to the Mentor are:**

- the satisfaction of developing their colleagues and of passing on their knowledge, skills and behaviour-styles
- acquiring knowledge from the mentee (typically their junior) regarding latest codes, standards, styles and techniques
- The mentor's image can receive a boost: they are perceived as someone who invests in the future of the organisation

The mentor-mentee relationship allows the senior manager to ask for feedback about how their leadership is perceived. This kind of honest feedback would not otherwise be easy to obtain.

## EVIDENCE FOR ACCREDITATION

### **5.1. The need for Mentoring, for professional development, is assessed at all levels**

- In the context of structured professional development, staff should undergo an Induction / Orientation programme, where the concept of Mentoring can be introduced

#### HOW CAN YOU DO THIS IN PRACTICE?

### **5.1 The need for Mentoring, for professional development, is assessed at all levels**

- As part of the Performance Review process, ask the question whether the employee would like to avail of a Mentor or would like to become a Mentor
- When staff are promoted or move to significantly different roles, they should also be offered Mentoring as they get to grips with their new 'learning curve'
- Many CPD ACCREDITED EMPLOYERS have relationships with very senior, often retired, engineers who can act as Senior Mentors for top management within the organisation.
- Engineers who are working towards becoming Chartered will benefit immensely from having a Mentor.

### **5.2. Experienced staff are trained to mentor less experienced engineers and technicians**

- Mentors should be trained in their role.
- Mentees too should receive guidance on how the Mentoring relationship will function and what to expect from it

#### HOW CAN YOU DO THIS IN PRACTICE?

### **5.2 Experienced staff are trained to mentor less experienced engineers and technicians**

- The launch of any mentoring scheme should include training sessions for both mentors and mentees. Mentors need to understand the primary aim of the programme and the implications this has for the type of guidance they should offer.
- Mentees require briefings on the objectives of the scheme and the nature of the mentoring relationship. It is important, for example, to avoid misunderstandings about the purpose of a relationship, and to explain that decisions about job changes and promotions will be made through the normal channels and do not lie with the mentor.

- The fourth person, aside from the Line Manager, in the mentoring relationship, of course, is the **Human Resources/Training Professional**. **Human Resources** Department will usually design the scheme, secure top management backing, administer the selection and matching process, provide the necessary training, deal with any individual problems that may arise and monitor the impact of the scheme.

## WHAT IS MENTORING?

One of the biggest problems in trying to understand and implement a Mentoring practice is pinning down exactly what is meant by the term. We have chosen the definition at the start of this chapter as it focuses on a ‘learning relationship’ and ‘a professional journey’.

There are other forms of one-to-one developmental help, such as coaching and buddying. In terms of understanding the spectrum of one-to-one developmental supports, the following methods are common place:

1. **Buddying** - can be part of the Induction process to ‘settle someone in’
2. **On-the-job coach (Line)** - focused on immediate work issues
3. **Mentoring** (non-line) - focused on Professional Development and career advancement. Fosters and develops talent. Helps retention.
4. **Executive Coaching** - using an external coach, working with an individual or a complete team to improve effectiveness through questioning and analysis.
5. **Counselling** (remedial/medical) - assistance in dealing with personal and interpersonal conflicts with the aim of promoting personal well-being.

Given the frequent confusion between the terms coaching and Mentoring, it may be helpful to set out the differences. (Source: Zachary, 2005)

Characteristics	MENTORING	ON-THE-JOB COACHING
<b>Objective</b>	Facilitate learning, support Mentee’s personal and professional growth. Answer the “WHY” question.	Correct less appropriate behaviour, teach skills and increase performance. Answer the “WHAT” and “HOW” question.
<b>Responsibility</b>	The mentee is responsible for their learning	The coach directs the learning and gives instructions.
<b>Free Will</b>	Mentor and Mentee are in the relationship of their own free will.	Although acceptance of the coach is important, the relationship is more determined by contract.
<b>Focus</b>	Long-term development as a person within a professional context	Immediate problems and learning opportunities

<b>Roles</b>	The Mentor functions as a role model, providing a bigger picture. A Mentor's personal commitment is more than that of a coach. The mentor works from the Mentee's perspective.	The coach gives the example, provides feedback on performance and acts as a critic. More service than process driven.
<b>Timing</b>	Long term focus: The continuity of the relationship of the Mentor and the Mentee. It can ultimately become a friendship	Mostly aimed at short-term needs. Usually starts from an "as needed" basis.
<b>Relation</b>	Advisable the mentor is at least two hierarchical levels above the mentee, and not the line-manager.	The coach can be a direct superior or an outside executive, depending on the topic.

NOTE: Executive Coaching differs greatly from On-the-Job Coaching. It is often linked to Leadership Development programmes (and 360° feedback) with specific parameters and objectives. Executive Coaches, are external, and are valued for bringing new approaches to executives who may be engaged in stretch assignments or getting to grips with a new role.

## OBJECTIVES OF MENTORING

Organisations wishing to introduce a mentoring scheme first need to consider its main aims. They then have to decide

1. how to select Mentors and Mentees and how to pair them up
2. what level of training Mentors will receive and what level of guidance Mentees will get
3. the level of ongoing support they need
4. the type of relationship required between the mentor, mentee and the mentee's manager and
5. finally, how will the mentoring programme be assessed, reviewed, evaluated and improved.

It is generally accepted that the mentors should not be the mentees' line managers. This is important when we reflect again on the purpose of Mentoring. It is in the realm of professional development, transfer of expertise and career progression. Mentees, for example, are clearly less likely to 'open up' about their desire to progress to management level with their own manager. That said, in some leading organisations, it is actually the responsibility of the line manager to ensure that his/her potential successor (or successors) are in place and ready to fill the position should he/she move onwards and upwards.

It is important to be clear however that the mentoring relationship differs from that between individuals and their line managers. A common approach is for a mentor to be one or two hierarchical levels above the mentee, however the final decision must be made based on your organisation's needs and your resources.

# ESTABLISHING SUCCESSFUL RELATIONSHIPS

## The Selection of Mentors

There are several criteria for selecting mentors. In addition to having specific, job-related skills, they need to be fully committed to the role and they should always be volunteers. They need time, firstly. Excellent communication skills are vital, but mentors must also be patient and avoid offering solutions too readily. The role is most effective when people are encouraged to form their own solutions and reflect upon them with their Mentor. Mentors should recognise that they too can learn from the process and treat it as part of their own continuous professional development.

The qualities of an effective mentor include:

**- A DESIRE TO HELP**

Individuals who are interested in and willing to help others.

**- HAVE HAD POSITIVE EXPERIENCES**

Individuals who have had positive formal or informal experiences with a mentor tend to be good mentors themselves.

**- GOOD REPUTATION FOR DEVELOPING OTHERS**

Experienced people who have a good reputation for helping others develop their skills.

**- TIME & ENERGY**

People who have the time and mental energy to devote to the relationship.

**- UP-TO-DATE KNOWLEDGE**

Individuals who have maintained current, up-to-date technological knowledge and/or skills.

**- LEARNING ATTITUDE**

Individuals who are still willing and able to learn and who see the potential benefits of a mentoring relationship.

**- DEMONSTRATED EFFECTIVE MANAGERIAL (MENTORING) SKILLS**

Individuals who have demonstrated effective facilitating and networking skills.

## Reciprocal Recipe

For a mentoring relationship to be successful, both individuals need to possess certain personal qualities. Mentees must be honest, open-minded and willing to learn. They should also be prepared to consider their weaknesses and be able to develop a high level of

self-awareness. But they should not be reluctant to challenge their mentor's views.

Matching mentor to mentee is critical, as the relationship is a personal one.

It might be thought that the best match is one in which both parties have similar personalities, but experience has shown that this is not the case.

Indeed, if the individuals are too similar, they may avoid discussing issues they both feel uncomfortable about and the mentor may not be able to bring new insights to bear. There must, of course, be mutual respect and confidence. Mentors have to be able to identify with their mentees, while mentees should feel that their mentors really have valuable know-how and experience that they can tap. *But some of the most effective relationships can be between two people with very different personalities who can gain insights from each other's different perspectives.*

### **Failure to establish rapport**

In general, if two people do not 'click' over the course of the first two meetings, the relationship is unlikely to develop the depth of trust and confidence that allows mentor and mentee to address key issues. If this happens, it is always better to dissolve the relationship and help the mentee to find someone with whom he or she is more compatible.

## **Roles & Responsibilities: Involving Line Managers**

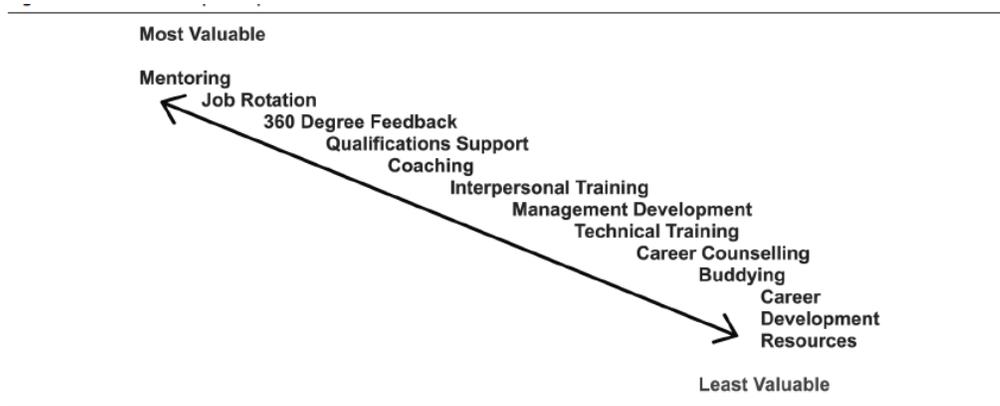
There is a tendency to think of mentoring as involving only two people, but successful arrangements also recognise the involvement of line managers. Problems are likely to arise if managers think that mentors are undermining their authority, perhaps if mentees are given advice that they see as conflicting with the needs of their department. They may also be suspicious that mentees are telling mentors about their shortcomings, and that these "tales out of school" will adversely affect their relationships with senior management. This is a particular risk when the mentor is more senior in the hierarchy than the manager, but the dangers are reduced by the organisation clearly defining the objectives of the mentoring programme and distinguishing the role of the mentor from that of the line manager.

Mentors should also never arrange for the mentee to be away from the workplace – for example, to accompany them to a meeting – without first seeking the consent of the line manager. It is essential for mentors to make it clear that a key aspect of the whole process is to assist, not undermine, the mentees' relationships with their line managers.

## Mentoring for the Experienced Employee and for “High Potentials”

As employees become more experienced within an organisation, the need for a regular mentor will decrease. However, there are key transition points in an employee’s career when mentoring should again be made available i.e. moving to a new role, moving to a new department or business unit, joining a new project team. There is a joint responsibility on both the line manager and the employee to highlight the need for a mentor and to put the system in place. External mentoring can also be considered for more senior executives.

Mentoring has also been identified as *the* practical development tool of choice when it comes to “high potentials” – those with strong leadership potential i.e. your next generation of managers. Mentoring for High Potentials can work very effectively when linked with a clearly defined set of competencies and career ladders.

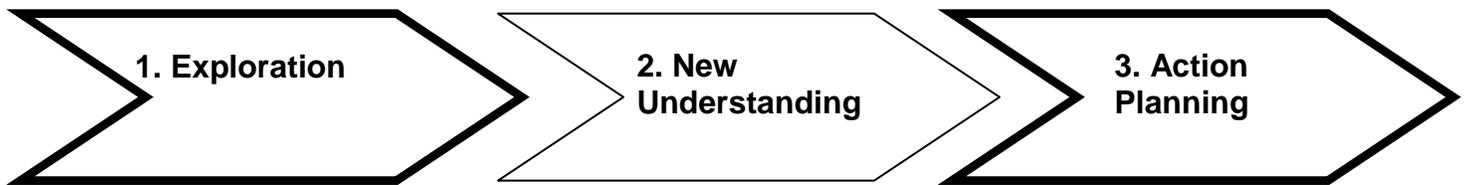


Galpin & Skinner: Helping High Flyers Fly High

## The Mentoring Process

Different Mentors have different strengths and work in different ways. Whatever approach you use, working with a well-thought out, robust and flexible framework will ensure you are most effective in helping your mentee.

A useful framework is a 3-stage model



<p><b>1. Exploration</b></p>	<p>If it is something <b>significant</b>, related to changes in personal or professional attitudes and behaviours, you may find that you need to explore an issue on and off for some time.</p> <p>If it is a <b>practical</b> topic, related to knowledge or skills, it may take a few minutes or a few hours</p> <p>Create rapport and allow the Mentee to arrive at their own answers.</p> <p><i>A Mentor might say: “Tell me about your experience of...”</i></p>
<p><b>2. New understanding</b></p>	<p>Stage 2 is the turning point in the process.</p> <p>New understanding often release energy, it can be exciting. Offer encouragement but don't rush, although reaching a new understanding can happen quite spontaneously during a Stage 1 discussion.</p> <p>Be ready to return to Stage 1: “Now that you appreciate better the impact of X, perhaps you'd like to look again at your thoughts on Y.”</p> <p>Challenge positively - referring to achievements, positive qualities and potential.</p> <p>List Pluses and Minuses. Taking a 'helicopter view' of an issue can be helpful in coming up with Creative Solutions.</p>
<p><b>3. Action Planning</b></p>	<p>When Stages 1 and 2 are done thoroughly, Stage 3 is usually straightforward and uses familiar people management and development skills.</p> <p>Plans are followed through when the mentee owns the solution. Give advice and direction sparingly as a Mentor. Enhance commitment to change by clear agreements and targets setting.</p> <p>Don't expect every meeting to end in an action plan. Sometimes the action will be to</p>

	<p>meet again and that will be progress enough. Affirm and celebrate progress.</p> <p>As Mentor, you might say: “Now that you’ve settled on doing Y, is there a first step you need to take?”</p>
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## Good Practices

### Standard Good Practices

A clear and well-communicated Mentoring policy  
The need for formal mentoring is assessed at all levels

Mentoring is linked to Performance Management and PDPs

Trained mentors work with more junior colleagues, aiding career progression and the achievement of a Professional Title e.g. Chartered Engineer

### Advanced Good Practices

Mentoring is linked to Talent Management

Mentoring is cross-functional and can be cross-campus e.g. via Web conferencing

Mentoring is linked to 360° feedback for senior management