



Inducing VET trainers with mentoring skills to boost entrepreneurial growth

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Date of Issue	30/09/2013		
Author(s)	M. Begoña Arenas		
Contributors			
Contact name	M. Begoña Arenas		
E-mail address	barenas@scienter.es		
Organisation	Scienter España		
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**Author: M. Begoña Arenas. Scienter España S.L.**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 The mENTERing project, WP3 and this document

The access to labor market is currently characterized by fast and unpredictable changes. VET trainers need to constantly update their skills and competences in order to effectively adopt new roles and support their learners. At present, a new role that emerges for VET trainers is that of the mentor of their trainees. Integrating mentoring principles in VET trainers' continuing education facilitates their acting as mentors. VET trainers who can act as mentors can significantly benefit their mentees since they are able to guide and council them, provide psychosocial support and act as role models. Mentoring skills and competences help them to respond better to mentees' learning needs and play an important role in the acquisition of new skills and competences.

**In this frame, the *mENTERing* project seeks to support the initial and continuous training of VET trainers and develop their skills and competences in order for them to cope with the future challenges and especially with the challenge of mentoring entrepreneurs.**

Work package 3, *Adaptation and Enrichment of Existing Content*, includes the following results (numbered as in proposal):

- 20: An **initial review report** describing the extent to which the Manual corresponds to the profile of the VET trainers identified in WP2; offering specific suggestions and steps to be taken for updates (adaptation, completion, localisation, translation):
- 21: An updated, localised, completed, and translated **Mentor's Training Manual for entrepreneurship** (EN, BG, EL) matching the profile of VET trainers in terms of relevance, quantity, level and structure. The Manual will be published on the project website in pdf format.
- 22: A **blended train-the-trainer methodology** developed for the delivery of the course to VET trainers.
- 23: One **e-book** containing the multilingual and updated Mentor's Training Manual and guidelines on how to implement the blended train-the-trainer course.
- 24: **USBs** containing the updated Mentor's Training Manual for entrepreneurship to be distributed to VET trainers in each target country (BG, EL).
- 25: A **final review report** depicting the updates implemented (localisation, completion, translation) to the Mentor's Training Manual so as to match the specific needs of VET trainers for mentoring skills and competences for entrepreneurship in the project countries (BG and EL), the development of the methodology and the building of the whole train-the-trainer course. **The present document does complement this deliverable.**

The **aim of this document is** to facilitate the adaptation of the manual to the trainers finally selected for the training. by including:

- A short tool to analyze the needs of the selected trainers
- Short guidelines to facilitate the adaptation of the manual with examples of platforms, webinars..etc to facilitate exchange of ideas and interaction

## 2. SIMPLIFIED EXERCISES TO ANALYZE THE NEEDS OF THE SELECTED TRAINERS

We hereby propose 2 exercises:

**EXERCISE 1:** This exercise will help you find helps fine tune the manual for a group of VET teachers.

**Difficulty:** Average

**Time Required:** Approximately 1-2 hours

**Who may participate:** the facilitator (or training coordinator) plus all the teachers who have been selected to participate in the mentor training

**What we need:** a conference/training room, printed map of competences (annex 1) white board or flip charts and markers, one laptop.

### Methodology proposed:

The facilitator gathers all VET teachers in a conference/training room with a white board or flip charts and markers. Then, the facilitator hands the map of competences (annex 1) to all the VET teachers and shortly explains them.

Ask each VET teacher to write down their ten most important training needs (according to the competencies presented) regarding entrepreneurship and their role as mentor of aspiring entrepreneurs. Emphasize that the VET teachers should write specific needs. Ask for a VET teacher volunteering to help writing down the learning needs.

Then, ask each person to list their ten training needs. As they list the training needs, the facilitator captures the training needs on the white board or flip chart. Don't write down duplicates but do confirm by questioning that the training need that on the surface appears to be a duplicate, really is an exact duplicate.

When all training needs have been listed, use a weighted voting process to prioritize the training needs across the group. In a weighted voting process, you use sticky dots to vote on and prioritize the list of training needs. Assign a large dot 25 points and smaller dots five points each (use different colors or sizes of sticky dots). Distribute them. Tell needs assessment participants to place their dots on the chart to vote on their priorities.

List the training needs in order of importance, with the number of points assigned as votes determining priority, as determined by the sticky dot voting process. Make sure you have notes (taken by the teacher volunteering on a laptop while the process is underway) and the flip chart pages to maintain a record of the training needs assessment session.

You can schedule more brainstorming later, ask for feedback after the first training session and depending on their feedback, you can schedule other sessions.

Note the number one or two needs of each teacher that may not have become the priorities for the group. Try to build that training opportunity into the teachers' development plan.

You can then organize the training using the manual prioritizing the learning sessions according to the results of this session.

Tips:

- Training Needs Assessment can be, and often needs to be, much more complicated than this. But, this is a terrific process for a simple training needs assessment.
- Make sure you keep the commitments generated by the training needs assessment process. VET teachers will expect to receive their key identified training sessions with the brainstormed objectives met.
- Make sure you receive regular feedback after each training session so that you can adapt the methodology used and the contents to what the teachers tell you.

## EXERCISE 2:

*Taken from:*

### **A Practical Guide - Methods for general guidance and orientation in the labor market**

PROSPERITY Project (PROfeSsion – PERspective-Quality)

*Source:*

**Müller-Harju, 2001, Page 105**

**Difficulty:** Average

**Time Required:** Approximately 2 hours

**Who may participate:** the facilitator (or training coordinator) plus all the teachers who have been selected to participate in the mentor training

**What we need:** a conference/training room, sheets with the picture of a tree.

### **Methodology proposed:**

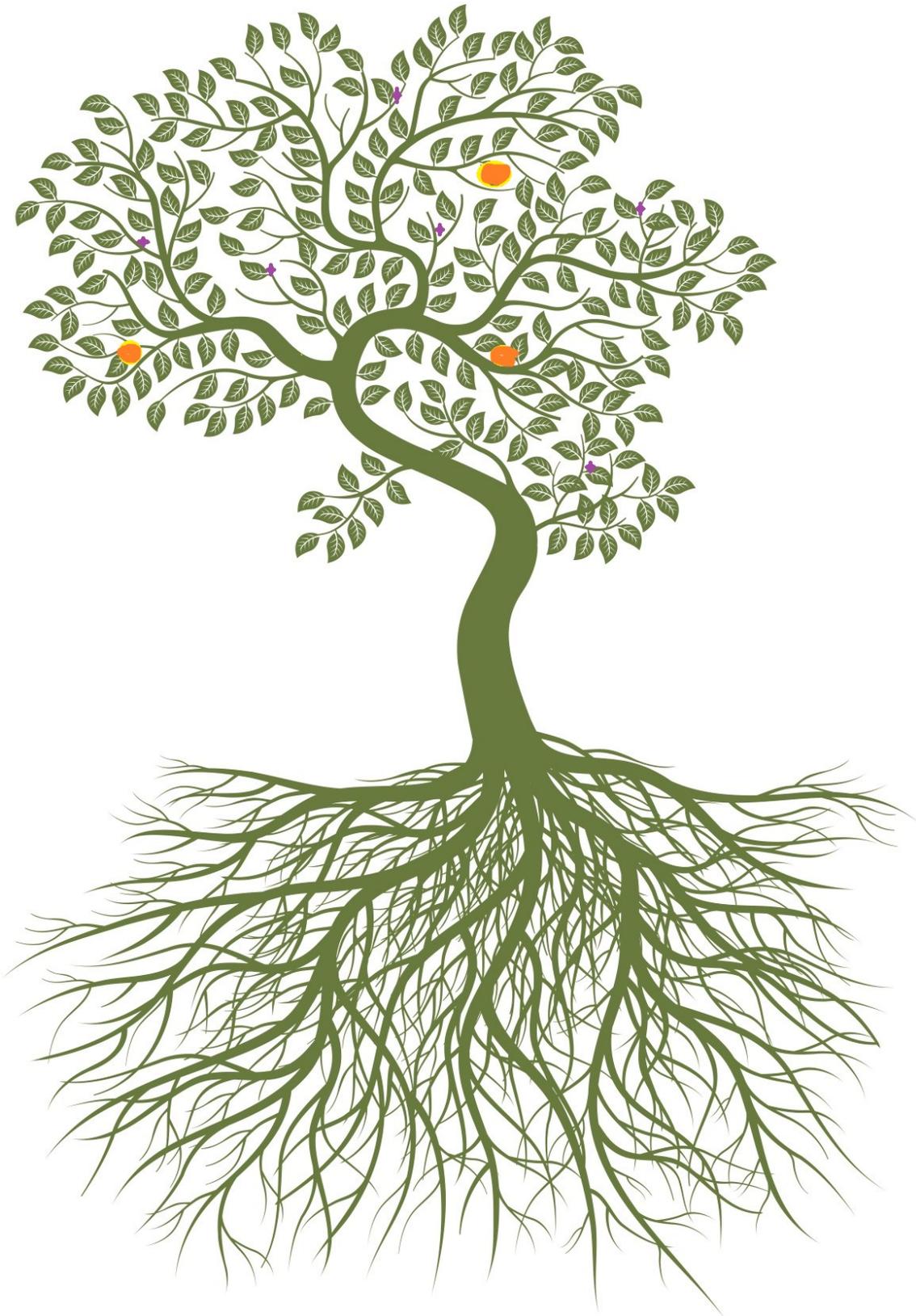
The participants are given sheets with the picture of a tree. Every participant have to answer the following questions and to write down the answers at the responding part of the tree, related to the function of this part of the tree:

- **Roots:** Where do I get my energy? What talents do I have?
- **Stem:** What place I stand on? How do I treat myself? What gives support to me?
- **Bark:** What gives me protection? What hurts me? What would hurt me?
- **Branches:** How do I represent myself? How much space do I need?  
What is my attitude toward myself and toward the others?
- **Young sprouts:** What talents and abilities do I have? What talents and abilities I would like to develop?
- **Dried branches:** What I didn't develop and consequently what was impossible to develop? What should I refuse?
- **Leaves:** What moves me? What excites me, what concerns me?
- **Blossoms:** What am I expecting? What do I crave?
- **Fruits:** What can I do? What can I give to the others, therefore share with them?
- **Fallen leaves:** What was important to me in the past? What lost its meaning?  
What gave I up?
- **Harvest:** What kind of fruits can I collect? Which became good and which didn't? What didn't go well? (Why?) What gives me satisfaction?
- **Crown:** What is my life mission? What professional and life goals I want to achieve, what goals do I have? Are my career and life goals in harmony?



Subsequently, participants are asked to develop on the basis of their answers their own personal development model.

Models should be presented and discussed in small groups (3 to 6 participants).



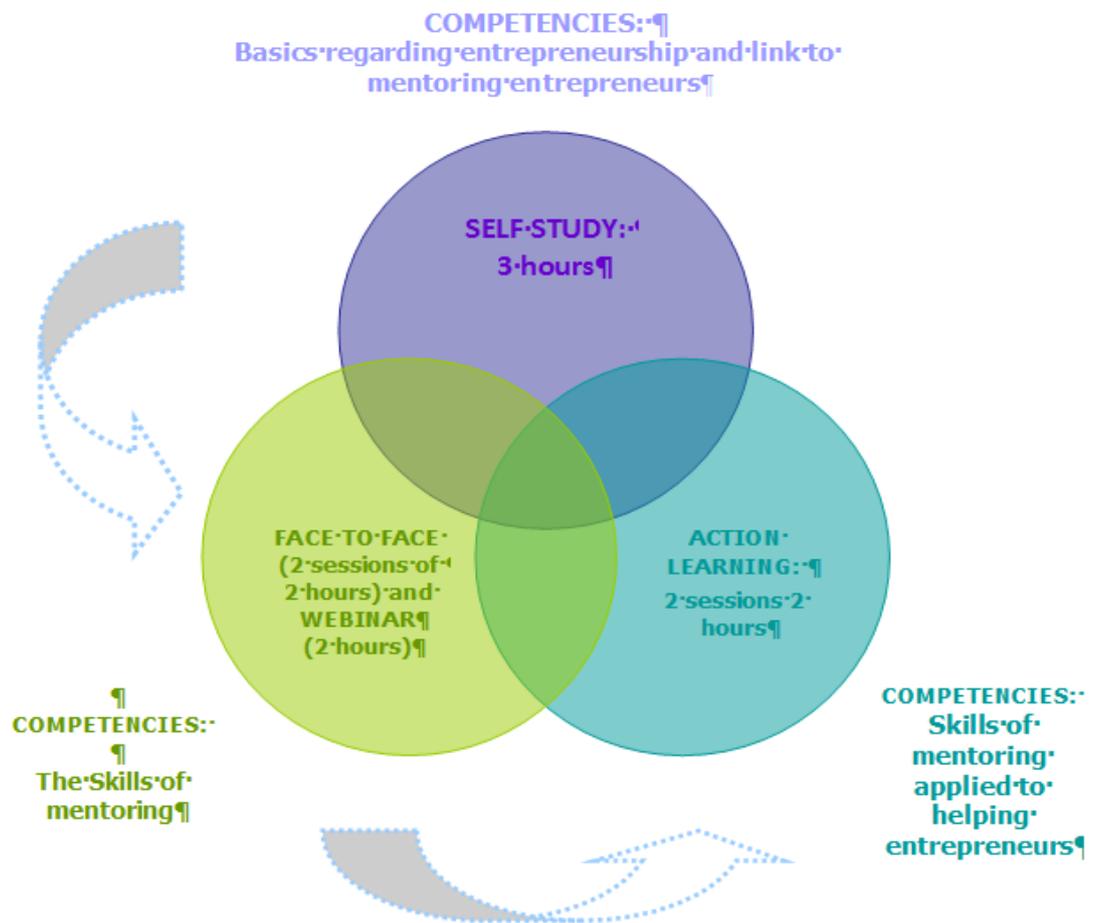
**Final recommendation: if the VET teachers have spotted competencies that do not fit with those included in the manual, do not hesitate and email us! We can help you!**

**[barenas@scienter.es](mailto:barenas@scienter.es)**

### 3. SHORT GUIDELINES TO FACILITATE THE ADAPTATION OF THE MANUAL

#### Structure of the mENTERing manual

The following diagram shows the relationship between competencies and training units:



The contents proposed for the mENTERing handbook are **STRUCTURED IN 3 PARTS** by competencies. The numbering follows the list of competencies of the MAITRE project which is included as annex to this report (please note that we have taken off the competencies we are not focusing on in the proposed training):

- **SELF STUDY** (3 hours): COMPETENCE:
  - 32. Basic Knowledge on entrepreneurship
  
- **FACE TO FACE** (6 hours) and webinar (2 hours). COMPETENCES:
  - 2: Understanding the role of mentor – with focus on entrepreneurship;
  - 3. Understanding the stages of the mentoring relationship
  - 7. Understanding boundaries and confidentiality
  - 12. Action planning and goal setting
  - 15. Use of technology 2 (e-mentoring)
  - 17. Listening skills
  - 19. Non-verbal communication
  - 20. Questioning skills
  - 22. Giving and receiving feedback
  
- **ACTION LEARNING** (proposal by Inova: 2 sessions of 2 hours each). COMPETENCES:
  - 33. Creativity skills
  - 34. Solution focused thinking
  - 35. Contracting skills
  - 36. Group process skills

## TRAINING CONTENTS:

### SELF STUDY (3 HOURS):

- COMPETENCY: 32. Basic Knowledge on entrepreneurship

Contents: What is entrepreneurship? Basic contents and why mentoring is important to help new entrepreneurs?

**FACE TO FACE (6 hours) and webinar (2 hours):** divided into learning units in 3 parts: the basics, the skills for entrepreneurship and the mentoring relationship:

### COMPETENCIES:

- 2: Understanding the role of mentor – with focus on entrepreneurship;
- 3. Understanding the stages of the mentoring relationship
- 7. Understanding boundaries and confidentiality
- 12. Action planning and goal setting
- 15. Use of technology 2 (e-mentoring)
- 17. Listening skills
- 19. Non-verbal communication
- 20. Questioning skills
- 22. Giving and receiving feedback

CONTENTS: Module I: The Basics, with the following learning units:

1. What is a mentor? (Competency 2 – understanding the role of mentor and 3 - Understanding the stages of the mentoring relationship)
2. What are the do's and don'ts of mentoring? What are the boundaries? (Competency 7 – understanding boundaries and confidentiality)

Module II: The skills of mentoring for entrepreneurship, with the following learning units:

3. What is active listening? Why are listening skills important for mentors? (Competency 17 – listening skills)
4. Why are questioning skills important for mentors and for them to help entrepreneurs? (Competency 19 and 20: Non-verbal communication and Questioning skills)
5. The importance of giving and receiving feedback (Competency 22: Giving and receiving feedback)
6. How can e-mentors communicate effectively online through expressing emotions? (Competency 15 – use of technology 2 (e-mentoring))

Module III: The mentoring relationship

7. How can mentors help set goals and action plan for entrepreneurs? (Competency 12 – action planning and goal setting)

**ACTION LEARNING (2 sessions of 2 hours each): Contents designed by INOVA.**

COMPETENCIES

- 33.Creativity skills
- 34.Solution focused thinking
- 35.Contracting skills
- 36.Group process skills

CONTENTS

8. Developing Creative Thinking Skills as a Mentor (Competency 33 – Creativity)
9. What is a solution-focused approach to mentoring? (Competency 34 - Solution focused thinking)
10. Developing Contracting Skills (Competency 35 - Contracting skills)
11. Developing Awareness of Group Dynamics and Group Processes as a Mentor (competency 36 - Group process skills).

You can adapt the whole manual to the preferences and priorities of the VET teachers and even the methodology: as you have self-learning, face to face learning and webinars, you can adapt the training units to the methodology you find most suitable according to the priorities mentioned by the VET teachers.

## Annex 1: mentor competencies for mENTERing

Please note that some numbers of competencies are missing as from the whole list of competencies identified for the mentor, we are only using some of them:

COMPETENCIES	ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCY	RATIONALE
<b>2. Understanding the role of mentor</b>	<p>Organising and following a specific mentoring methodology, i.e. the mentoring is based on a particular theory of change in human behaviour (Carrying out the mentoring process according to a previously defined schema or method)</p> <p>Ongoing management of own resources necessary for the mentoring methodology being applied.</p> <p>Understanding the differences between the role of mentor, supervisor, coach, counsellor, tutor and teacher</p>	<p><b>It is important that mentors understand the theory upon which the practice of mentoring is based and the evidence base underpinning the theory (could be simple problem-solving model)</b></p> <p><b>Mentors should understand where they are straying out of the mentor role into a related helping relationship</b></p> <p><b>Mentors need to be well organised to plan their mentoring meetings so that the agreed methodology is followed</b></p>
<b>3. Understanding the stages of the mentoring relationship</b>	<p>Theoretical model of stages</p> <p>Ways of building rapport</p> <p>Knowing which stage you have reached</p> <p>Understanding how to end the relationship</p> <p>Planning and developing your own mentoring path</p>	<p><b>Mentors need a mental map of the stages that effective mentoring relationships pass through in order to help progress their own relationship</b></p> <p><b>Mentors to need a plan to guide their own progress through the mentoring relationship</b></p> <p><b>Mentors need to handle endings sensitively</b></p>
<b>7. Understanding boundaries and confidentiality</b>	<p>Boundaries include the role of the mentor and what mentors should not do (e.g. in terms of giving advice)</p> <p>Boundaries also includes understanding ethical issues and child protection issues, e.g. inappropriate touching, rules re-location of meetings and confidentiality rules relating to disclosure</p>	<p><b>Mentors need to understand the rules of the programme concerning ethical behaviour towards mentees given the potential power they could exercise</b></p>
<b>15. Use of technology 2 (e-mentoring)</b>	<p>The ability to use technology in a way that allows detailed, and expressive way.</p> <p>Ability to use e-mail language (e.g. LOL – Laughing out loud, BRB – Be right back).</p>	<p><b>Makes the most effective use of the technology. Allows the mentoring relationship to achieve all that it can.</b></p>
<b>17. Listening skills (can be seen as part of EI – establishing empathy)</b>	<p>Active listening is listening and letting the mentee know you are listening</p> <p>Recording – in terms of remembering what has been said (Carter &amp; Lewis 1994)</p>	<p><b>Mentors must be able to listen and hear what their mentee is telling them</b></p> <p><b>Mentors must be able to listen in order to respond and encourage the mentee to talk and open up</b></p>
<b>19. Non-verbal communication</b>	<p><b>It is arguably part of EI for mentors to be able to pick up messages about their mentee’s mood from NVC, and also to be aware of what they communicate from their own NVC (Using ‘non-rationalising’ acceptance techniques).</b></p>	<p><b>NVC is an important part of any mentoring (or other) relationship</b></p> <p><b>Good open NVC will help establish trust and rapport</b></p>

COMPETENCIES – Cont.	ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCY	RATIONALE
<b>20. Questioning skills (including review)</b>	<p>The ability to understand different sorts of questions, i.e. open and closed</p> <p>The ability to phrase to encourage reflection, analysis, generalisation and application (experiential learning cycle)</p> <p>The ability to phrase questions that act as a catalyst to help the mentee think through issues/change and generate alternatives</p> <p>The ability to know when to use and how to phrase confrontation questions that challenge the mentee</p>	<p><b>Mentors need to be skilled in knowing when and how to ask the right questions to encourage their mentees to think and to talk through issues and options</b></p>
<b>22. Giving and receiving feedback</b>	<p><b>Well-established ground rules for giving and receiving feedback as an interpersonal or social skill</b></p>	<p><b>Mentors have to give sensitive feedback to their mentee on performance and they also must learn to listen to feedback from their mentee – if mentoring is to be a two-way relationship</b></p>

**Mentor competencies specific to help mentees to become entrepreneurs:**

COMPETENCIES	ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCY	RATIONALE
<b>32. Basic Knowledge on entrepreneurship</b>	<p>Understanding the process of entrepreneurship and the main functions of a business</p>	<p><b>VET trainers who wish to become mentors of entrepreneurs need to have adequate knowledge of the processes and functions of entrepreneurship so that they can guide and advise their mentees. Such knowledge can help them offer practical advice and create insights for the entrepreneur.</b></p>
<b>33. Creativity skills</b>	<p>Understanding the benefits of creative thinking for entrepreneurship</p> <p>-Understanding different models of developing creative thinking for problem solving in business</p>	<p><b>Mentors need to be able to support mentees with creative strategies at different stages of the mentoring relationship e.g. supporting with creative thinking for problem solving in business developments --</b></p> <p><b>Mentors need to support mentees to turn creative ideas into practical reality, looking at problems in novel ways so that mentee can come up with more creative solutions.</b></p>
<b>34. Solution focused thinking</b>	<p>Understanding how to focus on solutions instead of problems</p>	<p><b>Mentors need to be able to support mentees with focusing on the future and solutions and to support mentees to predict possible outcomes and consider options</b></p>
<b>35. Contracting skills</b>	<p>Understanding how to set up individual or group contracts with mentees</p>	<p><b>Mentors need to contract with mentees in order to define roles and responsibilities</b></p>

<b>COMPETENCIES. Cont-</b>	<b>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCY</b>	<b>RATIONALE</b>
<b>36.Group process skills</b>	<b>Understanding the role of group dynamics and group processes in group mentoring</b>	<b>Mentors need to understand and react appropriately to differing group dynamics when working with a group of mentees</b>