



For business by business support

Introduction

This business to business toolkit was commissioned by the Partnership on Health and Safety in Scotland - a body set up by the Health and Safety Executive as a forum for key stakeholders in workplace health and safety in Scotland, including the Scottish Government.

The purpose of the toolkit is to:

- * Provide guidance on business to business mentoring models
- * Provide a source of reference material for mentors and mentees
- * Encourage and support professionals within 'higher performing' organizations to act as mentors to others

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Background

It is widely regarded that the first written instance of mentoring was in ancient Greek mythology. Around 1200 B.C. Odysseus was leaving for the siege of Troy when he appointed his friend, Mentor, as a surrogate father to his son, Telemachus. Historical records show that skills, culture, and values in preparation for manhood were learned in this paired relationship.

In reality mentoring has occurred to help develop mankind since the stone-age cavemen and women passed on their hunter gathering and domestic skills. Today in many third world countries where formal educational qualifications are regarded as being only for the privileged few mentoring occurs because of skills attained through life long learning, with the use of experiential skills being used to develop the learner.

Mentoring is an all-embracing form of educational support and development mechanism. Business to business mentoring in relation to health and safety has significant potential, the 'higher performer' providing information and support to assist the development/evolution and implementation of another organisations systems and procedures. The success of the mentoring relationship is founded upon the link forged between two individuals, the mentor and mentee.

In promoting the advance of civilisation, mentors are not just used to help develop business skills nor is it confined to adult learning experiences. Many governments have adopted social mentoring schemes. The use of mentors with positive attitudes and behavioural traits are being utilised to help develop those who may not have the same socially beneficial skills.

In many countries juvenile mentors are used to help those who have been subject to abuse, bullying or harassment. In the USA the JUMP programme receives state funding to help young people to gain skills and confidence to allow them to become beneficial members of society. In California this type of mentoring scheme has not only received positive feedback from the Youth Justice system workforce but also from those who were at first on the "wrong side", the beneficial and positive aspects has promoted many to become mentors themselves.

In Australia the White Lion scheme helps remove young people overcome many types of problems
Whitelion supports young people to build better lives for themselves and helps make our community a more inclusive and safer place. Anon 2008.

There is also evidence to support the argument that mentees passing through a positive mentoring programme, learn the skills to become good mentors thereby providing a means of sustainable development.

As with all good relationships the passage of knowledge is not solely confined in a one way street, the thoroughfare can become bi directional - the transfer of knowledge and skills improvement can be a two way street, thereby the mentor can also develop and enhance skills through the mentoring relationship.

What is a mentor?

Within the context of 'for business by business' support, mentors will be empathetic and experienced health and safety practitioners who are prepared to assist small businesses within or out-with their supply chain to develop and evolve their health and safety management systems. They will have experience of implementing best practice and can offer valuable advice and guidance. Their role will be to support, develop, stimulate, and challenge the mentee.

Becoming a mentor depends on the personal attributes, characteristics', and knowledge of the individual, and the characteristics and knowledge of the person they are proposing to mentor. Within a

business context emphasis may also be placed on commonalities between organisations, their willingness to share and the pace at which they may embrace change.

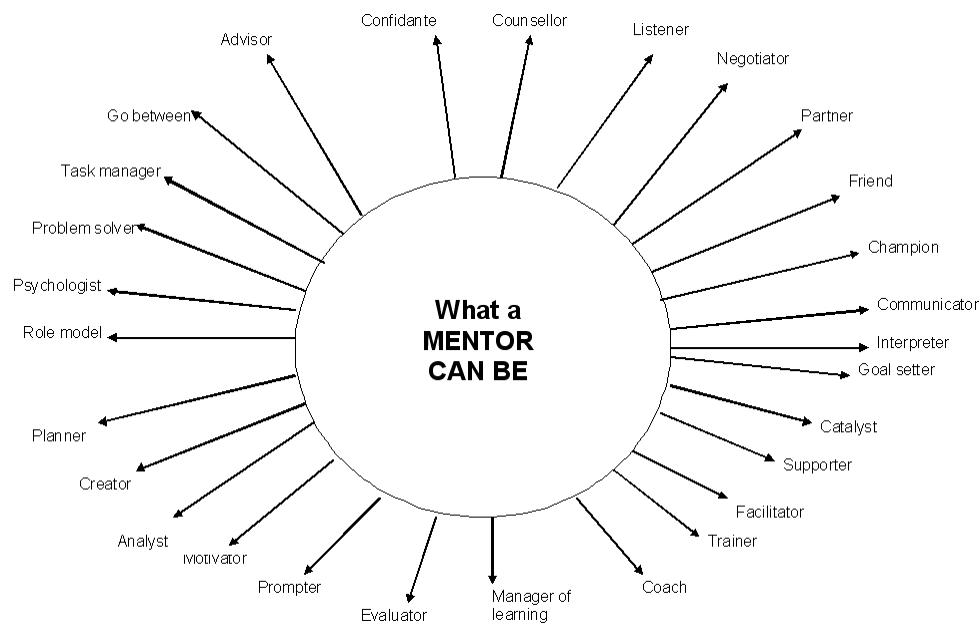


Fig. 1. What a mentor can be to be effective. (Briggs 2000).

What is mentoring?

The goal of the mentor is to assist the mentee in attaining, as well as maintaining, the skills and confidence needed to become competent in relation to the topic (s) under consideration eg MORR. Mentoring is personally rewarding for the mentor, you are contributing to the development and learning, of both the mentee and their organisation. Within the context of the Scottish Higher Performers Forum you are 'meeting the challenge' and contributing to an improvement in health and safety standards within Scotland.

This process of building the effective learning relationship if undertaken correctly will culminate in the evolution/development of knowledge and understanding of the mentee and their safety management system.

What makes a good mentor?

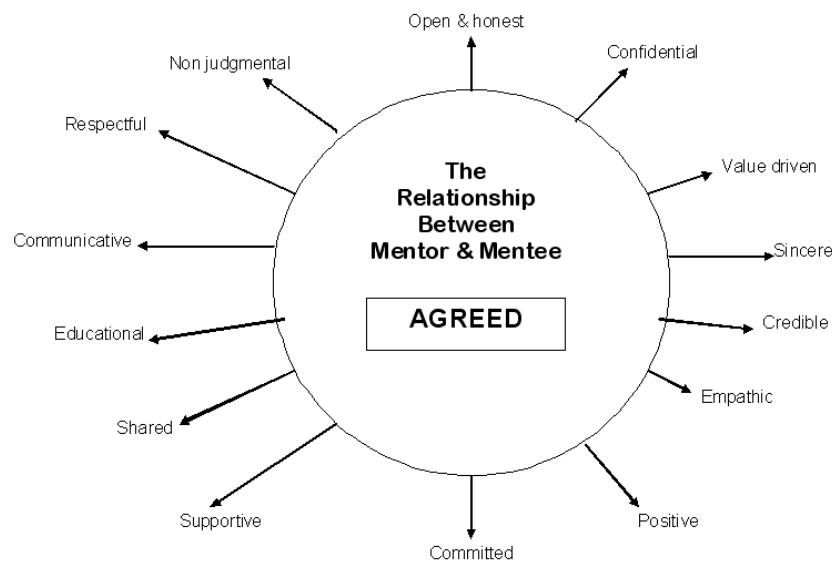


Fig 2. Skills needed by successful mentors (not exhaustive). (Briggs. 2000)

A good mentor will display the skills listed above and have a sound underpinning knowledge of health and safety including implementation of systems within their own organisation.

Experience shows that a mentor must want to give their knowledge and experiences freely, that a mentor must be committed improving both the mentee and their business.

A good mentor:

- Will value the organisation, its mission and its work.
- Can identify potential failing and have strategies in place to minimise or eliminate them.
- Will care about others and treats everyone with respect.
- Is tolerant, non-judgmental, and accepts personal differences.
- Is confident and secure with self.
- Is able to establish a comfortable environment for discussions.
- Enjoys watching a mentee develop.
- Demonstrates sensitivity to mentee's needs.
- Trusted others and can be trusted.

A mentor coaches through comments, support, encouragement and even criticism about the skills, talents, behaviour and career of the mentee, counsels with wisdom and sound advice on how to confront difficult situations, ways to advance, and other approaches to improving professional skills.

Skills and knowledge requirements for a mentor in the professional field of health and safety;

Health and safety knowledge and experience

Experience of work and life balance

Experience of creating supportive networks

Experience in advancing others careers

Knowledge of planning to achieve goals

Organising and planning for success

Business etiquette

Bridging cultural barriers

Creating and delivering presentations

Interviewing tips and techniques

Motivation of teams and individuals

A good level of questioning skills

Problem solving skills

Negotiating skills

Networking

Running effective meetings

Dealing with difficult people

Mentor:mentee – the exchange of ideas.

There must be agreement of what the mentee expects and what realistically can be provided. No mentor can be everything to a mentee. The mentee must be encouraged to retain and adhere to realistic expectations, and must also be made aware of the fact that mentors are all volunteers.

In an ideal world all mentees would have the following characteristics

Be eager to learn and open to new ideas.

Be willing to take risks, so long as safety is not compromised.

Have or develop a positive attitude.

Will be open to receiving feedback about skills and behaviour.

Is able to integrate feedback and act on it.

Can take the initiative and demonstrates resourcefulness.

Mentee's may start with some of the above characteristics, those that they do not possess may have to be cultivated and developed. If mentors adopt the same characteristics they too can benefit from the experience.

Characteristics of Successful Mentoring Relationships

Both mentor and mentee are open to change, willing to explore possibilities, and are willing to help and learn from each other.

Both make a commitment to advancing the professional development of the mentee.

The relationship is a healthy one from which both individuals gain personal and professional satisfaction.

Both are capable of confronting and constructively resolving conflicts.

Mentee recognise the mentor's effect on their professional development.

The relationship evolves and changes with time as:

- the needs of the mentor change or are met,
- the needs of the mentee have been met or change
- may end as result of the natural process
- result of irreconcilable differences

Benefits : Mentee

Focussed career development

Improved self-confidence

Advice and guidance

Access to networks and contacts

Management development

Benefits: Mentor

Personal development

Job satisfaction

Developed interpersonal skills

Discovering talent

Professional status

Benefits: Organisation

Development of skills bank

Focused employees

Planned work programmes

Increased efficiency

Improved staff morale

Low cost and sustainable career development

Can help diminish poor quality advice

Can be used to combat negative perceptions of organisation and health and safety

Annexe 1 Guidelines for mentoring

1. Entering mentoring relationships is voluntary.
2. Either party has the right to withdraw from the mentoring contract if, after genuinely trying, the relationship is not satisfactory.
3. While often the mentor will have more experience of life or an aspect of work, the relationship is one of partners who jointly make decisions.
4. Meetings should be held in a quiet environment (or environments for telephone meetings) where both parties feel they can speak freely without being overheard.
5. Meetings should be long enough and paced so as to allow the two people to get to know and feel comfortable with each other.
6. Information shared in mentoring meetings is subject to standard rules of professional confidence. (see below)
7. Any notes made about mentoring meetings should be kept in confidence.
8. Commitments made should be honoured. If meetings are cancelled or delayed adequate warning of non-availability or delay should be given. Postponed meeting should be re-booked promptly.
9. Either party has the right to ask for a review of how the mentoring is progressing or for agreements or plans made at an earlier stage to be reviewed.
10. If either party feels that unclear about what the current status of the mentoring is, that party should seek to clarify the views and wishes of the other party.
11. Mentees should not expect mentors to deal with long standing issues or major emotional events that are more properly the province of professional counsellors and psychotherapists.
12. Mentors should recognise their limitations and avoid working with the mentee in ways that exceed those limitations.
13. Should a mentor sense there is a conflict of interest between the mentoring and any other role, the mentor should make this conflict known to the mentee as soon as is practicable. They must also inform SHPF.
14. Mentors must not exploit mentees in financial, sexual or other ways.
15. Notice to end the mentoring should allow for at least one meeting where a final review and proper closure can take place.
16. Both parties accept that mentoring is for a limited period and that it is entirely optional as to whether any other form of relationship takes place after the mentoring.

Confidentiality Exceptions

There are special circumstances where, for example, professional counsellors do break confidentiality. Mentors should be aware of these circumstances and rather than give blanket guarantees of confidentiality make clear the exceptions. In counselling the exceptions are:

The mentor believes a mentee is a risk to self or others (e.g. unfit for role such that this may contribute to an accident)

A legal requirement (e.g. when a crime has been committed or young people in particular may be at high risk of injury)

Professional supervision (as part of their ethical commitment counsellors review aspects of their work with their mentoring supervisor).

Annexe 2 Mentoring Agreement

The purpose of this agreement is to inform both the Mentee and the Mentor of the nature of the mentoring relationship.

The Mentoring Agreement is entered into by (*Insert Name*) the Mentee, and (*Insert name*) the Mentor, as a completely informal and voluntary arrangement.

For this agreement to be of value to both Mentor and Mentee, both parties agree to be open and honest during the relationship.

It is recognised by both the Mentor and Mentee that each must contribute and respond responsibly and appropriately for the relationship to prosper and be effective.

At the first time of contact, agreed boundaries of the relationship will be set by the Mentor and Mentee especially in relation to:

The scope of the relationship – what is and is not within the boundaries that can be discussed

Methods of, means of, and times of communication are agreed

How to judge when the objectives of the relationship have been met, thereby dissolving the relationship

How feedback to each party will be affected

Issues of professional conduct

It is Agreed and Accepted That the Mentor will:

Not financially exploit the mentee

Act in accordance with the Professional Code of Conduct that governs how IOSH members act and behave

Not give advice or opinion on matters they have neither qualifications in or experience in – if these circumstances arise the mentor will seek the help of an appropriately qualified or experienced mentor

Will act and advise the mentee aiming to satisfy the needs/requirements of the mentee

Will limit the relationship to the agreed boundaries agreed at the beginning of the relationship

Will have the right to be directive instead of guiding if in the professional opinion consequences of the matter under discussion may give serious concerns for the safety of others, or may give rise to situations of serious and imminent danger

Will respect any personal and business confidentiality asked by the mentee as long as this does not pose risk of injury or danger to individuals

Have the right to withdraw from the relationship at any time, especially if:

The mentee consistently assumes unnecessarily unrealistic expectations

The mentee consistently behaves outside of the limits initially set without re-negotiation

The mentee continually fails to communicate with the mentor

have implications

If circumstances or situations arise in relation to point 6 above.

If, in the professional opinion of the mentor, consequences of the relationship may prejudice or affect their professional standing, ethics or integrity

It is Agreed and Accepted That the Mentee will:

Act in accordance with the Professional Code of Conduct that governs how IOSH members act and behave

Will limit (unless previously agreed or re-negotiated) the advice being sought to that agreed between the mentor and the mentee

Will act and make decisions based upon advice or suggestions offered by the mentor

Not make unreasonable demands or harbour unreasonable expectation of the mentor

Use contact methods and contact times agreed with the mentor

Respect the mentors time

Be truthful open and honest

The mentee can end the mentoring relationship at any time, especially if:

The behaviour and demands of the mentor are felt to be unreasonable

The mentor fails to communicate with the mentee

The goals and objectives of the relationship are met

The Mentor and the Mentee agree to give SHPF feedback upon the process of the mentoring scheme for the purpose of continual improvement.

If in the unlikely event of any dissatisfaction either the Mentee or the Mentor can feedback to SHPF at any time their grievance.

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