

## **MENTORING**

What is mentoring?

Mentoring is a relationship between two people, one more experienced than the other. In this relationship, the experienced person, the mentor, helps the less experienced person, the mentee, work toward his or her goals for professional and personal growth. The mentor acts as an adviser, role model, and guide; the mentee acts as a student or protégé.

### ***What is the purpose of mentoring in the workplace?***

Implement organization strategies (employee retention, succession planning, talent spotting & training. Informal or formal – means of encouraging professional development in others.

### ***What is the job of a mentor?***

- Help mentee identify professional strengths and weaknesses, such as leadership skills or knowledge of business protocol.
- Mentors offer insight and knowledge useful to mentees and help set goals related to their professional and personal growth, build confidence and discover solutions to challenges.

Mentoring may involve:

- Coaching mentees involves helping them develop certain skills and providing feedback about their performance to help them achieve specific results.
- Shadowing teaches mentees skills by showing them tasks in your daily routine – provides hands-on experience about task performance, decision making and problem solving. Time consuming and expensive to implement- best used when preparing them for specific roles or assignments. Allow adequate time to explain tasks and decisions. Tasks best learned by shadowing :
  - Managerial tasks, giving presentations, crisis response
  - Manual tasks, preparing a budget
  - Cognitive tasks, -- decision making and problem solving

### ***How does a mentor differ from a coach?***

- Coaches deal with specific issues, such as competency development or skill acquisition
- Mentors deal with broader issues – career choices or overall professional development plan.
- Coaches can mentor and mentors can coach.

### *What competencies should I have as a mentor?*

- Able to use your extensive business and life experience to provide valuable feedback to your mentees about their plans and performance.
- Good interpersonal skills, such as proactive effective listening so you can develop an honest, trusting and confidential relationship with your mentees.
- Good analytical skills to help you identify your mentees strengths and weaknesses and facilitate appropriate goal setting – to provide mentees with useful information during decision making or problem solving.
- Avoid making decisions for your mentees – they need to assume primary responsibility for their own professional development.

### *How does being a mentor benefit me?*

- Gives you a sense of achievement, using your knowledge and experience to help others.
- Give you professional recognition for being an effective leader or manager and for demonstrating your expertise and organizational knowledge.

### **MENTORING DIMENSIONS:**

To be effective, you need to be aware of the six dimensions of mentoring.

#### **1. Interpersonal**

Represents the quality of the relationship and the level of trust. Emphasize the need to develop a positive relationship with mentees by being supportive and encouraging and by clarifying goals. Dimension represents the sharing, listening and understanding that takes place between mentors and mentees.

#### **2. Informational**

Represents how the mentor shares knowledge, information, resources and fact with mentee

#### **3. Facilitative**

Mentor's ability to explore the mentees interest and career alternatives. Also the ability to provide feedback an aid the mentee in effective goal setting, decision making, and problem solving.

#### **4. Confrontational**

Give candid, constructive feedback about the mentees plans or performance, especially when dealing with ineffective behavior or unrealistic goals.

#### **5. Motivational**

Responsibility to provide guidance and to encourage mentees to see beyond a given circumstance, take realistic risks and try new behaviors.

#### **6. Analytical**

Ability to think critically and to provide adequate guidance about the mentee's goals, strategies and learning potential.

***Four stages of a mentoring relationship:***

**1) Trust Development**

Mentor establishes credibility with the mentee. Learn about each other and establish trust and commitment. Once the mentee sees his or her mentor as experienced and trustworthy, the second stage can begin.

**2) Advising**

Mentor Guides, counsels, and coaches the mentee

**3) Challenging**

After building the mentees confidence during the second stage, the mentor helps the mentee handle complex situations that may demand a higher level of performance or new skills. Mentor may have to confront the mentee about his or her expectations or the effectiveness of his or her strategies.

**4) Motivation**

Mentor reinforces and encourages the mentee's self-direction by helping the mentee use the successes he or she has had in previous experiences. Although this is the last stage of relationship development, this is not the end of the mentoring relationship.

**MENTORING STYLES**

Effective mentors perceive mentoring as two-way communications process and expect mentees to participate equally in the relationships. Effective mentors also adjust their mentoring style to meet their mentees needs in order to build strong mentoring relationships.

***Four Mentoring styles you should avoid:***

**1) The Expert**

May be perceived as condescending (egotistical and self-centered). Attitude can intimidate mentees and make them feel inadequate about their skills and knowledge. Can hinder the mentees learning experience.

**2) The Comedian**

This is not about being liked or perceived as fun. Being funny is not inappropriate, but don't spend an excessive amount of valuable time entertaining the mentees – decreases effectiveness of meetings.

**3) The Promoter**

Use motivation to make the mentees feel like they can conquer the world, but fail to explain the potential downfalls that are part of the mentees' reality. May unintentionally instigate rushed and uniformed decisions by creating a false sense of security.

**4) The Director**

Tell mentee how, when and what they should do. Authoritarian and like mentees to comply with their ideas. Don't encourage creativity or new behaviors.

***Three Ways in which mentoring can take place***

**1) One-on-one**

Secure a private place. At first meeting, establish the frequency and duration of your meetings, as well as where they will take place. Develop a system for tracking and recording mentee information so you can remember the particulars of each meeting and avoid confusion.

**2) In Groups – 2 or more mentees at a time**

Besides when, where and how long the group will meet, create the agenda to guide and keep track of meetings. Should have basic guidelines, -- how to offer constructive criticism to their peers, and participation guidelines. During meetings, allow time for answering questions, and ask participants to suggest new topics and ways to improve group meetings.

**3) Mentoring electronically, through telephone, email or private chat rooms.**

Does everyone have access to chosen technology (group and/or one-on-one)? Follow guidelines for one-on-one and group meetings – be clear as possible during online discussions.

***Steps for determining which way to mentor:***

- 1) Define your purpose for becoming a mentor
  - a. What do you expect to gain
  - b. Why do you want to share your experience with others
  - c. Why is becoming a mentor important to me?
- 2) Calculate time available for mentoring  
If time is limiting, consider alternatives, such as e-mentoring or don't make the commitment

- 3) Determine available resources  
Is E-mentoring available – rooms available for groups? Should you do a combination of all three?

***Why is it important to choose the right person as mentee?***

Even if you are an excellent mentor, you will be successful if your mentees don't possess certain qualities – candidates are open to change and are willing to commit their time and effort to mentoring relationships.

***Desirable qualities in Mentees:***

1. Ability to use and receive feedback
2. Strong motivation to develop professionally
3. Ability to use the mentor's resources
4. Willingness to take risks
5. Ability to honor the privacy of the relationship
6. Initiative to lead their own learning and follow through on learning objectives.

***Steps for choosing a mentee:***

1. Determine your purpose for becoming a mentor
  - a. Do you want to change employees' perception of you as a manager?
  - b. Do you want to promote better understanding of organization's culture?
  - c. Helping a promising employee or colleague?
2. Establish a desired mentee profile  
Based on your purpose for becoming a mentor, as well as your preferred and required competencies for mentees.
3. Identify potential candidates
4. Select mentees – based on the number, your reasons and your available time and resources.
5. Develop documents to track mentees information  
Background information reasons for wanting a mentor, professional goals.

***Confidentially is important to building strong mentoring relationships.***

- Respect confidentially boundaries. Mentees should feel comfortable confiding their professional and personal goals to you. As a mentor, you need to know their goals so you can give them appropriate guidance. Confidentiality allows both mentors and mentees to pen up in ways that are not customary in supervisory relationships.

- Mentee must also understand the boundaries so they know the limits of what can be shared. If there is no trust, they may not be honest about their motivations or professional goals. They may avoid talking about how they really feel when experiencing a problem.

***Benefits of strong mentoring relationships:***

1. Benefits to Mentees:
  - Ensures their mentors interest in helping them
  - More likely to learn faster from mentors in whom they have confidence.
  - Maximize their learning experience and career networking.
  - Increased visibility to upper management since mentors are likely to offer them opportunities for demonstrating their potential
2. Benefits to Mentors:
  - More likely to help them accomplish specific goals and resolve issues.
  - Able to help mentees through difficult situations, facilitate change and build the confidence of their mentees.

***Guidelines for developing strong mentoring relationships with mentees:***

1. Build Trust
  - a. Share and learn likes and dislikes.
  - b. Build credibility by giving examples of your expertise and how it benefited others.
  - c. Give full attention, be open, and be realistic about goal setting.
  - d. Explain the role of confidentiality and its boundaries and consequences of breaking those guidelines.
  - e. Build rapport – ask about interests, look for common interests to accelerate rapport and learning about each other. See challenges from their points of view, respect their skills, and acknowledge past successes.
2. Ask Questions
  - a. Allows mentee to become self-aware by encouraging them to think about past experiences. This prevents mentors from being viewed as answer-givers and allows mentees to learn how to answer their own questions.
  - b. Ask open ended questions to clarify expectations and learn about each other. Also shows that you are interested in learning more about them.
  - c. Probing questions about background and professional goals. Help to learn their strengths and weaknesses, learning styles and past successes. Also help to establish how your mentees react to change, challenges and opportunities.

## MAKING MENTORING WORK

### *Three elements that make mentoring work:*

- 1) **Rapport**
  - Open, honest about issues and can engage in effective communication.
  - Encourages trust in each others opinions
- 2) **Responsiveness**
  - Mentor needs to be responsive to development needs and learning styles.
  - Mentees need to be responsive to their mentor's guidance, advice and availability.
- 3) **Accountability**
  - Both need to be aware of responsibilities and goals, and consequences for failing to meet the expectations of the mentoring relationship.
  - Create mentor-mentee agreements that specify level of commitment, responsibilities, expectations, boundaries and duration of the mentoring relationship.

### *Behaviors mentors should avoid:*

- 1) **Criticizing mentees**
  - Involves judgment and may damage relationship. Instead provide feedback that is effective and constructive by telling your mentees how to fill in their performance gaps. Ask if feedback was useful.
- 2) **Making decisions for mentees**
  - Makes them overly dependent on you. Instead provide information and alternative options that help mentees explore the advantages and disadvantages of each – helps them make informed decisions by themselves. Also helps build confidence.
- 3) **Solving Problems for Mentees**
  - Rescuing may be heroic, but fosters co-dependency. Help mentees solve problems by teaching them how to develop effective solutions and how to objectively evaluate those solutions.

## UNDERSTANDING LEARNING STYLES

People learn differently – what are different learning styles?

- 1) **Authority-Oriented**
  - Generally follow suggestions without questioning.
  - Generally show little initiative.

- Help them see benefits of taking ownership of their learning, and question suggestions or add some of their own.
- 2) **Logic-oriented**
- Learn by looking at facts and making deductions.
  - Like descriptions of how and why things are done.
  - Patiently provide them thorough and in-depth explanations and they'll be ready to go.
- 3) **Experience-Oriented**
- Rely on their senses to absorb information and need to explore what they are learning.
  - Allow to perform tasks to get “hand on” experience.
  - Afterward ask them about the steps they used to perform the task and provide feedback.
- 4) **Emotion-oriented**
- Learn when they perceive experience as positive. If not, their motivation suffers and affects performance.
  - Ask what motivates emotion-oriented mentees – such as need to be appreciated or recognized.
  - Give positive feedback and reassurance that they are capable of achieving results in task.
- 5) **Analysis-oriented**
- Learn by dissecting information and formulating their own ideas about a task.
  - Tend to be methodical in processing information and prefer to develop their own conclusions.
  - Give them plenty of time to analyze and formulate their own ideas. Ask them to share their conclusions to clarify any misconceptions.

### ***Maximizing Learning Potential***

Ask how they learn new tasks. How did they learn best in school or on previous new experiences?

### ***Ask Questions***

What helps you learn easily – what things are the hardest for you to learn. How can you accelerate your learning?

### ***After teaching a task or skill, ask the following:***

- Did you have difficulties learning the task? Why
- What would you do differently?
- What parts of the task did you like the best? Why?
- What can I do to facilitate your learning experience?
- Did the way I explain the task make sense? Why?



### ***Always ask for Feedback***

Helps to determine whether your teaching is effective and whether they are aware of factors and techniques that facilitate their progress.

### ***Identifying Learning Opportunities by knowing your mentees goals and interests.***

Take time to find out whether their interest or goals have changed over time. Any new professional development goals?

## **MANAGING MENTEES**

### ***Track their Progress***

- Maintain records of their goals and objectives, your mentoring sessions and their progress toward achieving goals.

### ***Request feedback about your performance***

- Use this to identify your own strengths and weaknesses.

### ***Cross-culturing mentoring***

- Acknowledge differences and ask them to tell you if miss something. Cultural background can affect how people perceive time, risk, authority and formality. It can also affect how people communicate, perceive rewards and collaborate.
- It can also affect how people perceive competitiveness, directness, relationship with authority and the need for recognition. Some cultures have a negative perception of what other cultures view as positive. Acknowledge your own lack of experience and ask mentee to share their culture with you.

### ***When should I end the relationship?***

- Depends on purpose and whether it is formal or informal.
- Most mentoring programs have a at time limit – informal can continue over time if both parties want it to
- Important to talk through the change so there is mutual agreement about changing relationships – friendship with informal mentoring.
- If mentee wants a more formal relationship, refer them to a colleague who can help them enhance the skills and meet their goals.