Mentoring

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What is mentoring?

- “Off-line help by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking”
  - Megginson and Clutterbuck from “Mentoring in Action”

  Offline: Not in the normal day-to-day job
  Help: from direction to advice to simply listening
  One person to another: doesn't have to be a more senior person but usually more experienced person
  Significant transitions: Not about significant transfer of knowledge, work or thinking - but about helping the mentee develop so that they make significant transitions in these areas
### Is mentoring like teaching?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership of Goal</th>
<th>Teaching</th>
<th>Mentoring</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Externally set standard. e.g. pass exam</td>
<td>Goals set by person receiving mentoring</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Teaching</th>
<th>Mentoring</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imparting understanding knowledge, skills and information</td>
<td>Growing capability and self-reliance</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Teaching</th>
<th>Mentoring</th>
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<tr>
<td>Instructing and explaining</td>
<td>Listening, questioning and giving impartial advice</td>
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Mentoring isn't

- For dealing with underperforming individuals
- Taking on the problems or work of the mentee
- Promoting/sponsoring/protecting the mentee
- Carried out secretly – though it is confidential
- Intended to deal with personal issues though sometimes these are relevant to the workplace
- Therapy
- Allowing people to moan (except maybe sometimes...)

Trinity College Dublin, The University of Dublin
Getting off to a good start

- Rapport
- Ground rules
- Practicalities
Rapport builds a positive partnership

- **Trust:** Can you both speak openly? Are you willing to share some of your fears, weaknesses and mistakes? Are you confident that you will both do what you say you will do? Will you both respect confidentiality?

- **Focus:** Is your attention fully on your mentee? Are you listening openly without making judgements?

- **Empathy:** Are you making it clear that you respect and understand (or are trying to understand) your mentee's point of view?

- **Congruence:** Do you have similar values? e.g. do you share similar levels of career ambition, interest in subject matter, treatment of others, etc.

- **Empowerment:** Is the mentee walking out the door at the end of the session feeling more capable or less capable?
Ground rules to address up-front

- What do we mean by confidentiality? Usually everything is confidential except for an intention to break the law or harm themselves or others.

- What are our expectations of each other?

- What will make this a satisfying and useful relationship for both of us?

- When and how do we review how the mentoring is going?

- Are some subjects out of bounds?

- What will success look like for the mentor and the mentee?
Practicalities

- How often are we going to meet?...and for how long? suggest 6-8 weeks for 45mins
- Which of us is going to contact the other to set up meetings? The mentee – good idea to diary in the next two meetings
- How do we contact each other? Phone, email, calling in?
- Where will we meet? Quiet space without interruption
- Will the mentee tell the mentor in advance what they want to talk about (how?)
- Is it okay to take notes during the sessions?
- Would it be useful to see each other's CV's?
**INTRODUCTION: Your continuing professional development**

**Mentorship Discussion template**

Your first meeting with a new mentor will set the tone for the relationship. Carefully prepare your CV and development plan and forward these to the mentor ahead of time. Your mentor may also send their CV back to you for review. This provides a helpful summary of you both and gets the discussion going.

In preparation for the meeting, consider the following questions and then explore them with your mentor. This will offer a clear understanding across both parties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are you hoping to gain from this mentoring relationship?</td>
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<td>Are there particular challenges you would like to explore with your mentor?</td>
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<td>What role might the mentor play? Are there specific areas of expertise you hope they might be willing to offer?</td>
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<td>How long do you see this relationship spanning? Perhaps six months? (It may be longer, but this could be by mutual agreement. You might consider having a review at the end of six months to see how you are both progressing.)</td>
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<td>How will you manage the process of setting appointments / ensuring regular meetings? Where should they occur? What is the best time to meet?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What are your mutual expectations as to confidentiality, IP, respect, honesty and trust?</td>
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Beginning questions

- What outcome would you like from today’s session?
- How would you like to use our time today?
- What exactly do you want to achieve (short / long term)?
- How can you break down the goal into manageable / realistic goals for this particular session?
- What words would you use to describe (1) where you are now and (2) where you want to be?
- Which of these would you like to focus on now?
- Which is the most urgent or important right now?
- Of those issues, which is your top priority?
Middle questions

• What is the present situation? background, When does the problem occur? What would be the one thing you would change about the current situation?

• Who else is involved and how do they see the situation? What feedback have you had about this issue already?

• What obstacles are in your way? What have you tried already? What have you learned?

• What options do you have? what else could you do? What are the advantages/disadvantages of each option? How could you find out more about these options?

• What have you seen that works for others?

• What are your one or two distinctive strengths that account for your success to date? How could more use be made of these?
End questions

- As a result of this conversation, what are you going to do differently?
- What are your next steps? When, specifically, will you complete each of these steps?
- How will you know that you have been successful?
- What obstacles do you expect to meet?
- What support do you need? Who do you need to support you?
- Is there anything else you need from me?
- Are you satisfied that we have achieved your objective for this session?
- What was good about this session and what could I do differently the next time to be more effective?
Receiving feedback

**listen**
- you cannot judge the validity of feedback if you have not clearly understood what is being said

**suspend judgment**
- try not to immediately react defensively but let the person finish what they have to say

**let others finish talking**
- do not jump in, wait until the feedback is finished and you have the full picture

**paraphrase**
- summarise what you think you have heard to be sure you have heard it correctly and with the proper emphasis

**prompt specifics**
- not everyone gives feedback well, prompt for specific examples of behavior and impact as appropriate

**avoid arguing, denying, justifying or minimizing**
- it is the other’s point of view; you, however, can decide what to do with the information; if you believe the information incorrect then you can present contrary evidence

**gather additional information from other sources**
- is the feedback confirmed or at odds with previous feedback
Tips for being a good Mentee

Remember your mentor is a Volunteer

Take responsibility for your own learning

Develop Trust

Be respectful of you mentor’s time

Set realistic expectations

Prepare for each meeting (goals, agenda)

Be flexible, have an open mind
Tips for being a good Mentee

The most important characteristic of a mentee is that s/he is willing to commit the time and energy to grow and learn from a mentor in order to receive maximum benefits.
## WHAT MAKES A GOOD MENTOR?

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<tr>
<th>Mentors listen.</th>
<th>They maintain eye contact and give mentees their full attention.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mentors guide.</td>
<td>Mentors are there to help their mentees find direction, never to push them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentors are practical.</td>
<td>They give insights about keeping on task and setting goals and priorities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentors provide insight</td>
<td>Mentors use their personal experience to help their mentees avoid mistakes and learn from good decisions.</td>
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<td>Mentors are accessible.</td>
<td>Mentors are available as a resource and a sounding board.</td>
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<td>Mentors criticize constructively</td>
<td>When necessary, mentors point out areas that need improvement, always focusing on the mentee’s behaviour, never his/her character.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentors are supportive.</td>
<td>No matter how painful the mentee’s experience, mentors continue to encourage them to learn and improve.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentors are specific.</td>
<td>Mentors give specific advice on what was done well or could be corrected, what was achieved and the benefits of various actions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentors give good example</td>
<td>Mentors are usually well respected in their organizations and in the community</td>
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Thank you