



Manchester
Metropolitan
University

Human Resources

Organisational Development Training and Diversity

Mentoring Guidelines



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What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is essentially about helping people to develop more effectively. It is a relationship designed to build confidence and support the mentee so they are able to take control of their own development and work.

Mentoring is not the same as training, teaching or coaching, and a mentor doesn't need to be a qualified trainer or an expert in the role the mentee carries out. They need to be able to listen and ask questions that will challenge the mentee to identify the course of action they need to take in regards to their own development. The following definition provides a useful insight:

“ off-line help by one person to another in making significant transactions in knowledge, working or thinking ”

(Clutterbuck & Megginson 1995)

Off-line means an individual who is not the mentee's direct line manager. A mentor is different from a line manager in that they will not have direct responsibility for the mentee's work performance but they will be responsible for encouraging the mentee to work towards their own individual objectives and be a motivating guide for the mentee on their journey.

When to use Mentoring

Mentoring can be used for a wide variety of situations and different points in someone's working life for example:

- Induction for a new starter*.
- Individuals working towards promotion.
- Staff who have changed roles in the department or across the organisation.
- Staff on structured learning programmes for example ILM programmes.
- Changes to job roles for example following a restructure.
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

*Guidance on the role of a buddy during induction is available at:

<http://www.mmu.ac.uk/humanresources/pdf/general/guidelines-for-new-starter-buddy-or-mentor.pdf>

What is a Mentor?

A mentor is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as an “experienced and trusted adviser”. This description reflects how we would like to see mentors work with their mentees. Your role as mentor will cover at least some of the following:

- Listen
- Ask questions to help develop your’s and the mentee’s understanding of a situation or problem
- Provide information and knowledge and share informal networks
- Provide advice on career development
- Offer different perspectives
- Provide support and encouragement
- Provide an insight into your work and career
- Offer guidance and advice in regards to qualifications
- Be a sounding board
- Be a critical friend
- Encourage self reflection
- Help mentees identify areas for development

As a mentor you will have the opportunity to use your experience and knowledge in a facilitative manner to support the development of the mentee. However, the responsibility for making things happen and putting plans into action lies primarily with the mentee - not with you.

Why Mentoring?

- It has flexibility – mentoring can happen in so many ways and under lots of different circumstances
- Is an off line activity- it is not a role carried out by the mentee’s line manager although mentoring conversations can become part of day to day activity and don’t always need to be scheduled
- It relates to work and the job
- It is individual – each relationship will be unique to those two individuals involved
- It is people centred
- It provides a feedback system- feedback is central to mentoring and is a great tool to enhance and embed learning
- It is broad in focus – it should meet the needs of the mentee and mentor
- It is not exclusive – but actually complements other methods of learning

Support for Mentors

At times you may feel that you need a little support yourself as a mentor; you may have faced or be dealing with a situation with your mentee and be unsure how to approach it. There are a range of support methods available to mentors.

- Your colleagues and peers
- Your own mentor if you have one (a good idea if you are going to mentor others)
- Organisation Development & Training team
- Mentor development sessions/programmes – including ILM Level 5 Certificate in Coaching & Mentoring
- On-line resources and tools, including information provided for MMU's mentormatch scheme for students at:

www.mentormatch.mmu.ac.uk

The benefits of Mentoring

For the Mentor	For the Mentee	For the Department/ Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job satisfaction from seeing others develop • Increased recognition from peers • Challenge and stimulation • Having identified future potential of the person they are mentoring • Learning and developing yourself from the process • Satisfaction at the success of the mentee • Recognition of your mentoring skills by the Department and the University • Motivation from self development and responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased self confidence and motivation • Support and challenge in formulating a clear sense of personal direction • Understanding of the formal and informal culture and structures at MMU • An opportunity to develop skills by observing others • A source of knowledge and experience to tap into • A sounding board to discuss ideas and approaches before action is taken • An opportunity to think about things in a different way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased levels of motivation from those involved • Employees who have a clear direction and clear objectives • Improved communication at all levels and across levels • Sharing of knowledge and experiences and best practice as standard working practice • Tangible and measurable gains if work tasks and projects are used as a development tool • Innovation and continuous improvement in the way that employees approach their work

Skills and experience required to be a Mentor

- **Self Awareness** – you should have a good understanding of your own strengths and development needs.
- **Organisational know-how** – you should know how to get things done at MMU and how things work.
- **Credibility** – you should have personal and professional credibility, this may include being a member of relevant organisations.
- **Accessibility** – you should be willing and able to commit sufficient time to your mentee to offer support and guidance.
- **Communication** – you need excellent communication skills and be able to understanding the ideas and feelings of others. You also need to be a great listener.
- **Ability to empower** – you should be able to create an working environment where it is safe for individuals to try out different things, allowing them to contribute in different ways.
- **A desire to help others develop** – you should understand how individuals develop and have experience, either formally or informally, of developing others.
- **Inventiveness** – be open to new ways of doing things and different ways of working.
- **Empathy** – Ability to empathise with others.
- **Understanding** – You should be prepared to try to understand different perspectives, approaches and possibly backgrounds of different mentees.



The Mentoring Process



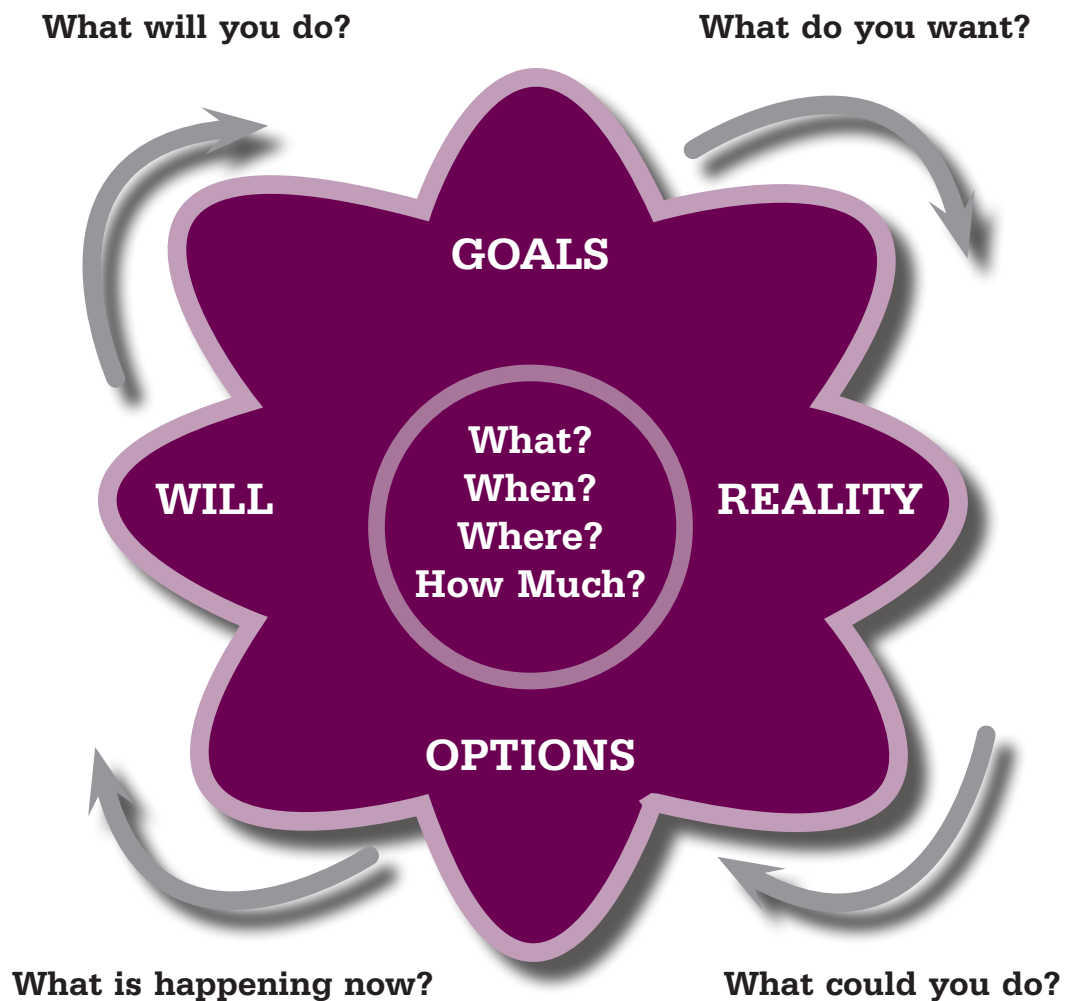
Different roles a Mentor may be required to take



<h2>Coaching</h2>	<p>Core skills needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening with an open mind and suspending judgements • Being able to see the issue from a different perspective, that of the mentee • Identifying behaviour that needs to change • Helping mentees to recognise their own individual strengths and areas of weakness • Providing constructive feedback • Setting projects that will stretch the mentee • Ability to clarify so both parties have a shared understanding • Being able to take a mentee back through and experience, to help them to evaluate it and to recognise what could have been done differently.
<h2>Counselling</h2>	<p>Core skills needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening – withholding comments unless it helps the mentee to clarify their thoughts • Focusing on observable behaviours rather than personality traits • The ability to handle negative information without driving the mentee into an emotional corner • Avoiding unconstructive arguments • Being able to help move the mentee into constructive problem solving mode • Knowing when to call in specialist advice.
<h2>Networking</h2>	<p>Core skills needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to define and understand networks, what adds value and why • Understanding key areas you need to influence and who are the key individuals • PCreating opportunities for mentees to meet others who will help provide information or opportunities to help develop gaps in the mentee's knowledge
<h2>Facilitating</h2>	<p>Core skills needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being clear about what needs to happen and why • Recognising potential barriers and what causes them • Provides advice and guidance on ways to overcome barriers • An understanding of the politics of management • Smoothing the path for mentees for example by providing introductions, backing ideas and spreading the word on projects the mentee is working on

Mentoring using the **GROW** model

The GROW model is a good way to structure a meeting with your mentee. You can either start with the goal and work logically through the model or you can move the model around, starting with the reality and then the goal, if this works best. Remember to always finish with the way forward and ensure that this is set and owned by the mentee. The model is outlined below.



Goal – Get the mentee to focus on the future and on what **THEY** want to achieve as an individual. It is not where you think they should be aiming.

Reality – Ask questions to help the mentee establish where they are now. If you work with the individual directly you may need to give feedback on actual performance. Encourage the individual to get feedback on their performance from their direct line manager if you do not work with them directly as this will help them to identify their current reality.

Options – help the mentee to identify what different options are open to them and ask questions to help them explore the reality of each of these options. Share your own experiences if the mentee is struggling to identify sufficient options and beware of being too directive.

Way Forward – Encourage the mentee to design an action plan which they have set and encourage them to set SMART objectives, objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable and realistic for the mentee in their current position and that have clear timescales attached.

Remember to

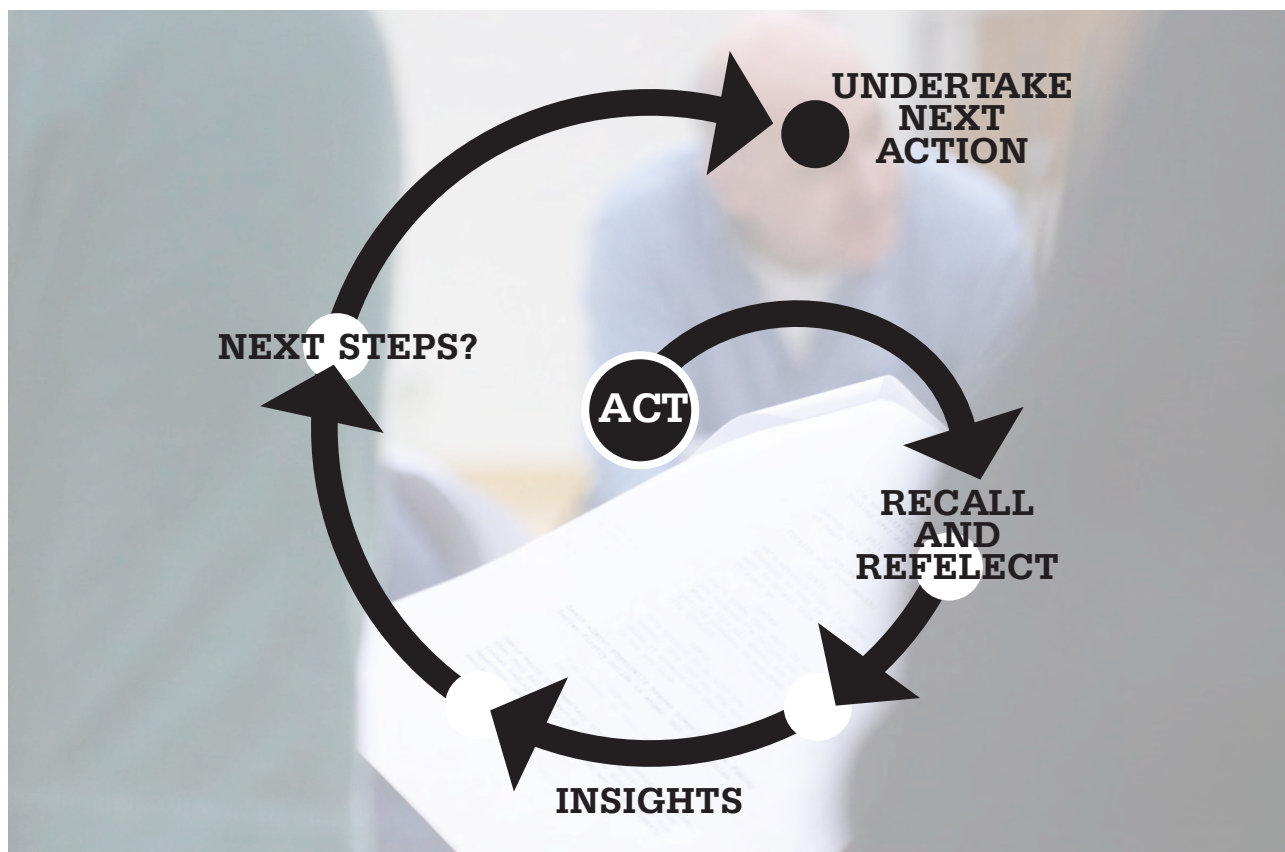
- Focus on what the mentee needs to achieve
- Listen more than you talk
- Support and encourage the mentee
- Encourage the mentee to address challenging issues
- Keep an open mind.

Don't

- Take responsibility for the action plan
- Assume that what worked for you will work for your mentee
- Take action on behalf of the mentee unless you jointly agree that this is the best course of action
- Assume you know what the problem or the answer is.



How individuals learn



This diagram shows the process of learning. By following the diagram through we are able as individuals to embed our learning and part of the role of a mentor is to encourage mentees to work through the learning cycle. An individual's learning style will determine where they will naturally want to spend the most time. For example, activists will want to spend time moving onto new experiences and will have to be encouraged to recall and reflect on experiences they have just been engaged in. Theorists will be reluctant to try out new things until they have all the information they can possibly find. Pragmatists will want to think about and have lots of time to plan how they will approach things. Reflectors will need to be moved on from reviewing what has happened to trying out new experiences. Understanding the learning style of your mentee is helpful in showing you the part of the learning cycle they will lean towards naturally and where you may need to give a little push. An easy way to find out an individual's learning style is to ask them to describe something they learned how to do and how they did it. For example, riding a bike, learning a musical instrument, learning a language or how they approach building flat packed furniture. This gives you a good indication know about how your mentee likes to learn.

It is helpful to also recognise your own learning style so you are aware of the areas you may gloss over as they don't suit your own natural way of learning. For example, an activist mentor may get frustrated with a mentee who is a reflector or a theorist. Something to watch out for!

Managing the Meetings

The mentor should take on the role of a facilitator during the meetings using questions and a non directive, non judgemental approach. Following the GROW model will be really helpful during the meetings. The purpose of the meetings could be for some or all of the following reasons:

- Reviewing and identifying the mentee's experience
- Helping the mentee to identify individual strengths and areas for development
- Discussing professional and work issues
- Agreeing what support is required
- Exploring the options open to the mentee
- Coaching on specific skills
- Supporting the mentee to set achievable realistic and stretching action plans

Remember meetings will not be the only form of contact with your mentee. Telephone calls, emails and brief on the job discussions will also be a part of the process but you should have an agreed number of scheduled meetings with your mentee set to fit around the action plan of the mentee, and around specific points in their development.

Making the Meetings Work

1. Have a clear structure and purpose. Before the meeting consider the structure and the time parameters. These should be agreed during the initial meeting when you are contracting with the mentee. Having a clear structure and purpose in mind will be the best and most effective use of your time and their time.
2. Think about the content of the meetings. There should be a balance of looking back and reviewing the mentee experiences and reviewing if objectives set have been met or, if not, why not? There should also be a balance of discussing current issues and thinking about the future and ensuring the mentee sets realistic objectives for their action plan.
3. Keep to dates and times set. It is easy to let the day job get in the way but try to focus on the benefits to everyone (including the organisation) of engaging in this process. Give it the priority it requires to be successful.
4. Enjoy the experience!

Ending the Mentoring Relationship

It is important to consider how the mentoring relationship will end. Discuss the reasons for the ending of the relationship with your mentee. In certain situations the end date is agreed during the initial meeting but it is not always possible in all situations to be able to identify a clear end date. Reasons for ending the mentoring relationship can be varied:

- The relationship has achieved its objective
- You feel that your mentee is confident and ready to move on
- You have tried but the mentee is not responding
- The programme is coming to a close
- The relationship isn't working successfully and both parties wish to move on.

It is useful and good practice for the mentor and mentee to revisit the original goals and objectives and compare them with actual outcomes. This allows both parties to review what progress has been made and to acknowledge what has been achieved. It is useful to encourage the mentee to find another mentor for the next stage of their journey and you may even be able to suggest individuals the mentee may like to approach. However you should take time to evaluate how you feel you have developed during the relationship and what lessons you have learned.





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