

# DESIGNING A GENDER-SENSITIVE MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME FOR THE WORKPLACE

Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs)



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When companies develop mentoring programmes, they are promoting a workplace culture that values learning, development and collaboration. In such an environment, employees are encouraged to share their knowledge and skills with their colleagues, while learning from others.

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### Mentoring Cases

**DELOITTE** As part of Deloitte’s Emerging Leaders Development Programme, employees from underrepresented populations are paired with mentors from the partner, principal or director level. In 2018, Deloitte also launched a mentorship programme for women, the Deloitte Women’s Leadership Launch, which is one of the company’s initiatives to support women’s career advancement in the company.

**FACEBOOK** This international social media platform incorporates mentoring for development purposes. For the past 12 years, Facebook’s in-house mentoring programme has supported junior engineers by pairing them with more experienced employees. Facebook has also assisted in establishing several online mentoring groups across sectors and Lean In mentoring circles that offer small group mentoring to women in the workforce.

**RELX** Mentoring and sponsorship are two ways in which RELX is tackling the structural barriers that hold women back from senior roles. The company sees mentoring to build a pipeline of women talent in technology. The firm’s global Women in Tech mentoring programme connects women technologists with role models within the company. Through the mentoring process, employees develop cross-business partnerships and gain insights into potential career development paths.

**SODEXO** Sodexo offers three types of mentorship programmes to help employees at different stages of their careers. The Bridge Programme pairs new hires with seasoned managers. The IMPACT programme forms 100 formal partnerships over the course of a year between employees at any level, and a less formal peer-to-peer programme offers employees the chance to take part in mentoring at any stage of their career. In the United States, Sodexo started the “Young Women of Sodexo” Mentoring Circle in the fall of 2018. This peer-led learning group offers a cross-segment, competency-based collaboration space. The group meets monthly to encourage, challenge and support one another as they navigate their careers.

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## Mentoring Roles and Responsibilities

The roles involved in successful mentoring programmes are:

- **Mentoring Programme Coordinator**
- **Advisory Committee**
- **Mentor**
- **Mentee**

Successful mentoring programmes are usually housed in the human resources department or the department responsible for employees' professional development and/or wellbeing.

### **Mentoring Programme Coordinator's Role**

The coordinator(s) plan the entire programme, match pairs, train mentors, monitor the process and summarise the results. Their key responsibilities include:

- Setting the mentoring programme objectives
- Developing the mentoring guidelines
- Recruiting and selecting mentors and mentees
- Planning and implementing mentor training
- Matching mentor and mentees
- Monitoring and evaluating the process
- Channelling feedback and complaints
- Closing the mentoring phases

The Mentoring Programme Coordinator works closely with other management staff to determine the goals and needs of the mentoring programme and implements the programme accordingly. Throughout the process, the coordinator keeps records of the mentoring programme's progress and reports this progress to supervisors or other groups, as agreed.

One of the coordinator's key duties is identifying individuals who would make good mentors. Together with other relevant staff, the coordinator interviews mentor candidates to find those who possess desired traits such as knowledge of the organization and the ability to instruct others. The coordinator also interviews mentee candidates to ensure there is a level of openness to learning and growing and to further understand their motivation for joining the programme. The coordinator then coordinates the training for mentors, pairs each mentor with a mentee and provides mentors with guidance concerning what to teach mentees. The coordinator may even provide mentors with a list of goals that the mentor and mentee should accomplish throughout the course of the programme.

Two other major job duties include monitoring and evaluating mentor-mentee relationships. The Mentoring Programme Coordinator usually monitors these relationships through verbal communications, such as face-to-face or over-the-phone conversations. Indirect communication may include reviewing progress reports written by mentors and feedback provided by mentees. The coordinator also evaluates each mentor-mentee pair to determine if any changes must be made, such as reassigning the mentor or mentee. For many coordinators, part of the evaluation process includes writing reports about the success rates or failures of current programmes. The coordinator also might monitor the hours put in by mentors and mentees by reviewing the mentoring journals or session outcome forms.

### **Advisory Committee's Role**

The Advisory Committee, that includes the Programme Coordinator, is composed of three to five members. The Committee may include line managers, company executives or board members. Together with the Coordinator, the Committee reviews mentor and mentee applications, provides recommendations for who is accepted to the program, reviews surveys and feedback in addition to receiving and processing feedback and complaints.

The principal focus of the committee is to provide strategic advice and support for the activities of the mentoring programme. The final decision-making lies with the Mentoring Programme Coordinator and her/his manager.

Members are asked to join the committee by the coordinator. It is a voluntary role, with staff ideally being represented by the coordinator and one other person, and the other members from management.

The committee meets the coordinator regularly to review and discuss the:

1. Mentoring matches.
2. Monitoring and evaluation of survey results.
3. Quality of the programme.

Members are initially appointed for one cycle of the mentoring programme but can choose to continue.

The committee meets a minimum of four times (for 1 to 1.5 hours each time) to:

1. Discuss the programme, the strategy for recruiting mentors and mentees and the key lessons learned from the last mentoring programme cycle, if any.
2. Review all applications to select programme participants.
3. Review mentor and mentee matches as suggested by the coordinator.
4. Review survey results after the conclusion of the programme.

The committee is expected to:

- Give any feedback or reviews within the time frame requested by the coordinator
- Respect confidentiality in order to promote open discussion.

### **The Roles and Responsibilities of Mentors and Mentees**

The role of the mentor is key and some general rules for mentors to promote successful mentoring relationships:

- **Be confident and encourage confidence:** Act as a non-judgemental sounding board and facilitator. Ensure that you maintain privacy and confidentiality.

- **Act as a protector:** Support and create a safety net by ensuring a safe environment for the mentee.
- **Demonstrate leadership:** Give needed support by boosting moral and enhancing self-esteem; show empathy and understanding.
- **Be a bridge:** Identify and facilitate development opportunities and link the mentee to possible resources.
- **Guide:** Give structure and direction, provide technical and professional knowledge, empower the mentee to handle his/her own problems independently.
- **Challenge to drive progress:** Help the mentee explore potential career opportunities and other possibilities.

Roles and responsibilities of a mentor	Roles and responsibilities of a mentee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare for mentoring sessions.</li> <li>• Identify and monitor tasks assigned to the mentee.</li> <li>• Plan and participate in meetings.</li> <li>• Focus on goals and results.</li> <li>• Identify relevant literature and other resources, including contacts.</li> <li>• Share knowledge and skills.</li> <li>• Attend relevant training and meetings.</li> <li>• Be open and give constructive feedback to the mentee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine the goals of the process.</li> <li>• Communicate the objectives of each meeting to the mentor (focusing on desired outcomes).</li> <li>• Schedule meetings and propose agendas based on objectives.</li> <li>• Perform the tasks assigned by the mentor.</li> <li>• Attend relevant trainings, meetings and activities.</li> <li>• Be open and give constructive feedback to the mentor.</li> <li>• Seek advice, opinions, feedback and direction from the mentor.</li> <li>• Respect the mentor's time and agreed schedule.</li> </ul>

#### MENTORS: TRAPS TO AVOID

**“I can help”**

Avoid stepping in to fix problems for the mentee.

**“I know best”**

Share your experience, but do not tell the mentee what to do.

**“I can help you get ahead”**

Do not be tempted to do favours for the mentee that you would not do for others.

**“You need me”**

The goal is independence, not dependence. The goal is for the mentee to get stronger, not to feel better about his/her weaknesses.

#### Selecting Good Mentors and Mentees

Once the programme has been designed, the first step is for the Programme Coordinator (possibly with the Advisory Committee) to identify the participants: mentors and mentees. It is recommended that the Mentoring Programme Coordinator clearly communicate the goals, benefits and responsibilities:

For mentors	For mentees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling more responsible in the role of an expert.</li> <li>• Having a feeling of being appreciated and perceived in the company as somebody who has valuable skills and knowledge.</li> <li>• Enhancing mentoring and other interpersonal skills.</li> <li>• Being more involved in organizational development.</li> <li>• Developing a new style of leadership while supporting the mentee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experiencing professional growth.</li> <li>• Developing skills for a higher position.</li> <li>• Pursuing further personal and professional development inside and outside of the company.</li> <li>• Receiving honest and constructive feedback.</li> <li>• Exploring new skills to improve performance.</li> <li>• Expanding networks inside and outside of the company.</li> <li>• Adapting to the company culture and team.</li> </ul>

The personal qualities of mentors and mentees are as important as their roles and responsibilities:

Qualities of a good mentor	Qualities of a good mentee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is known to keep themselves and others accountable to their goals.</li> <li>• Is prepared to allocate good quality time to mentoring.</li> <li>• Shares openly his/her experience, knowledge and network.</li> <li>• Follows organizational values and ethical norms.</li> <li>• Listens well and provides constructive feedback.</li> <li>• Collaborates in cases where the Human Resources or Mentoring Programme Coordinator may need to be involved.</li> <li>• Welcomes the chance to give something back to the company.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes personal responsibility for his/her career.</li> <li>• Is open to listening and receiving advice and feedback.</li> <li>• Has humility and is open to learning.</li> <li>• Is proactive and open to fulfilling tasks assigned by the mentor.</li> <li>• Is motivated towards self-development.</li> <li>• Understands the values of self-directed learning.</li> <li>• Is honest and realistic about goal-setting and sharing expectations.</li> <li>• Seeks advice, opinions, feedback and direction from the mentor.</li> <li>• Is respectful of the mentor's time.</li> </ul>

## Sample Application Form

Below is a sample application that can be used for recruiting mentors and mentees.

Brief description of the programme: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's position: \_\_\_\_\_

Interested in being a mentor or mentee: \_\_\_\_\_  Mentor \_\_\_\_  Mentee

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_  Male \_\_\_\_  Female \_\_\_\_  Prefer not to say

Supervisor/Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Career level: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years in the organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of years of experience in the job: \_\_\_\_\_

Certification levels: \_\_\_\_\_

Responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Career aspirations: \_\_\_\_\_

Why would you like to join the mentoring programme? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

What would you like to offer to the mentoring programme? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

What would you like to learn in the mentoring programme? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Previous experience as a mentor or mentee: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Gender preference for mentor or mentee: \_\_\_\_\_  Male \_\_\_\_  Female \_\_\_\_  No preference

Ability to fulfil time commitment of approximately five hours per month: \_\_\_\_\_  Yes  No

Please attach a copy of your resume.

**The following recruitment criteria can be used for all candidates to determine their suitability:**

- Gender
- Career level or grade
- Number of years with the organisation
- Certification level, responsibilities or job title.

- Number of years of experience in the job.
- Peer recommendations.
- Motivation for being part of the mentoring programme.
- Career aspirations.
- Skills offered.
- Ability to fulfil the time commitment.

### Designing the Programme

When designing the mentoring programme, it is important for the Programme Coordinator to consider a coherent designing process to lay the foundation for a comprehensive and successful programme.

### Preparation Phase

#### Identify the scope of application of the programme

- What are the objectives and desirable outcomes of the programme?
- Who and what is the programme designed to affect?
- How does this programme fit into the overall training and development programme?
- Which existing partners could support the mentoring programme?
- What amount of time can be dedicated to managing, establishing and implementing the programme?
- What resources are available for the mentoring programme?

#### Key performance indicators to consider when developing a mentoring programme:

- ✓ What is the composition of the company's leadership team? Consider age, gender, years with the company and backgrounds. Does the leadership team reflect the company profile? Is this profile diverse?
- ✓ What is the likelihood that participants in the mentoring programme will be promoted?
- ✓ What kind of career progression is offered to women after maternity leave?
- ✓ What is the gender salary gap? What strategies are helping to reduce this gap?



- Who is the target mentee group?
- Who are the best mentors for the group?
- Who will be in the Advisory Committee?
- What is the start date of the programme?
- What are the mentor training dates?
- What is the length of the programme?
- When will the cycle be closed?
- What are the criteria for selecting mentors and mentees?
- What type of mentoring is desired?

<p><b>1. Traditional or one-to-one mentoring</b></p> <p>This is a traditional hierarchical mentoring process in which one person is more experienced and is mentoring the one with less experience. This type of mentoring can also be understood as more of a “teacher” or “guru” style; the mentor is taken more as an expert who has the answers due to experience or knowledge.</p>
<p><b>2. Peer mentoring</b></p> <p>Individuals with a similar status or position in a company can mentor each other. Here, the focus falls more on mentoring skills, relationships and organizational development than in the traditional approach. This type of mentoring still requires one mentor and one mentee, even though they may be peers. Mentoring sessions can be conducted in pairs or small groups.</p>
<p><b>3. Mentoring circles</b></p> <p>In an effort to create safe mentoring opportunities for all employees, many companies are turning to mentoring circles. This is a form of group mentoring that may encourage participation from all levels, demographics and genders within an organization. Sometimes, the mentoring circles target a specific group of employees, such as women. The mentoring circle proposes topics of interest for group discussion and growth. By initiating mentoring circles, organizations can create intentional networks to help employees grow, share experiences and develop in a number of ways.</p>
<p><b>4. Inter-agency mentoring</b></p> <p>This is when companies establish mentoring programmes with like-minded companies or partners. Mentors or mentees can be selected from different agencies. The strength of this model is that mentees are exposed to mentors they do not know and who may have different career paths and broader networks.</p>
<p><b>5. Reverse mentoring</b></p> <p>In this model, cross-generational collaboration is supported through the mentoring process, in which junior employees assume the responsibility of mentoring senior mentees. For example, junior staff may provide mentoring support to senior staff on technology-related topics.</p>
<p><b>6. Reciprocal mentoring</b></p> <p>As the name suggests, reciprocal mentoring involves guidance and transfer of knowledge bilaterally within organizations. This productive way of mentoring allows participants to play the role of both mentor and mentee at the same time. The strength of this approach is that both parties have the opportunity to experience the benefits of the mentoring process. Some companies are using this approach when working with staff from different generations, while some larger companies use this with staff across different departments.</p>

A needs assessment could be conducted to assess the programme needs. Below is a sample mentoring needs assessment that can be conducted in a focus group, surveys, formal interviews with staff or any application that works for your company:

**Box. 3 Should women be matched with women or men mentors?**

In most countries, women do most of the unpaid work at home and often have the primary responsibility for childcare at home. Female mentors might be able to understand female mentees' challenges of juggling career and care duties particularly well. Women who have faced direct gender-based discrimination during their careers may find it easier to speak to other women than men about their career and related challenges. For this reason, some female mentees may prefer and specifically benefit from having a female mentor.

On the other hand, because most of the managerial positions are still mostly occupied by men, male mentors might be able to provide female mentees with better access to management networks that help women climb the career ladder. Having a male mentor may also help them gain another perspective. A male mentor may also gain insight into the gendered challenges women often face during their careers.

Men mentoring women and women mentoring men may promote a positive shift towards gender diversity and equality in the organizational culture of a company. If the company decides to match females with males, it is important that any perceived or actual risks – for example, with regard to sexual harassment – are adequately addressed in mentoring guidelines, training and feedback processes.

LeanIn.org found that almost half of male managers are uncomfortable participating in a common work activity with a woman, such as mentoring, working alone or socializing together. With this realization, there has been an outcry through #MentorHer. This movement calls for men to mentor women and stand as allies in the workplace to enable more women to move through the leadership pipeline, thereby generating more creative, innovative and profitable organizations.

**Box. 4 Information for needs assessment**

Date:	Number of participants:
Moderator 1:	Time:
Moderator 2:	Location:

- Proposed focus group questions**
1. When we say the words “mentor” and “mentoring”, what kind of associations come to your mind? (Make a list on a flip chart)
  2. What is the mentor’s role? Can you explain the basic duties of a mentor?
  3. What knowledge or experience would you want to gain during the mentoring programme to fill gaps?
  4. If your mentees are looking for support, what does that support look like?
  5. Do you remember any kind of activities used by the organization for the development of the mentees?
  6. Why do organizations need a mentoring programme? What can a mentor help with?
  7. Which departments need mentor engagement?
  8. What kind of external and internal barriers could occur during the implementation of the mentoring programme?
  9. What are the strengths of the company’s current support for mentee development?
  10. What are the weaknesses of the company’s current support for mentee development and socialization?
  11. What gaps in the organization do you feel a formal mentoring programme can address?
  12. What impacts would mentoring have on the lives and careers of mentees?
  13. If an ideal system were to be built, what do you believe would be the key features and characteristics of the mentoring programme?
  14. Depending on the organizational culture, what issues, goals and needs should the mentoring programme focus on?
  15. What do you hope to accomplish through the mentoring programme? What does success look like?

**The coordinator's role is then to:**

- Identify mentors and mentees
- Analyse the mentees competency gaps.
- Matching mentors and mentees and matching criteria include:
  - Backgrounds.
  - Career path of the mentor and aspirations of the mentee.
  - Avoiding conflict of interest.
  - Leadership capacity.
  - Personalities.
  - Gender.

A successful mentor-mentee relationship requires commitment from both participants. The following agreement is intended to clarify goals, provide a foundation of trust and establish a basis for the relationship to be successful. Both parties should understand that they may address any concerns about the programme by contacting the Mentoring Programme Coordinator. Each party should keep a copy of this agreement and make every effort to fulfil the terms of the agreement.

**PARTIES' DETAILS**

Mentor _____	Mentee _____
Job title _____	Job title _____
Contact number _____	Contact number _____

The mentor and mentee are encouraged to share additional contact information as needed.

**MENTEE'S GOALS**

The mentee should establish with the mentor at least three professional development or personal growth goals.

**Goals should be specific, measurable, attainable and relevant and should include a time frame .**

GOAL #1 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

GOAL #2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

GOAL #3 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

GOAL #3 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACT AGREEMENT**

The duration of the formal mentoring programme is \_\_\_\_\_ months. Mentors are encouraged to continue the relationship on a voluntary basis. Contact with the mentee may be in person or by telephone during working hours. The mentor/mentee should allow enough time to discuss goals as well as questions from the mentee concerning his/her professional and/or personal development.

**Meeting schedule**

Jointly agreed-upon meeting dates and times: \_\_\_\_\_

**Communication channels**

What will be the primary communication channels (e.g. email, phone)? \_\_\_\_\_

**Turnaround time for communications**

(ideally two business days): \_\_\_\_\_

**Summary of expectations:**

- Mentee and mentor agree to meet at least once a month for \_\_\_\_\_ months.
- Mentee and mentor agree to provide \_\_\_\_\_ (Mentoring Programme Coordinator) with written feedback after each contact.
- Mentee and mentor will provide a final evaluation of the relationship at the end of the formal programme.
- Confidentiality: Both parties agree to keep the content confidential unless one person is at risk, when this will be shared with the Mentoring Programme Coordinator or Human Resources as soon as possible.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mentee signature and date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mentor signature and date

## Creating a Safe Mentoring Environment

### Create a safe mentoring environment through:

- Meeting in an agreed place (choose a public yet quiet location)
- Avoiding sexual innuendos or suggestive comments or humour
- Letting the coordinator know of meeting times and of any uncomfortable conversation
- Ensuring that the intention of each meeting is clear
- Booking a time for the meeting
- Documenting the content of the meeting in a mentoring journal, which can be checked by the Mentoring Programme Coordinator
- Treating each other with respect

### The coordinator is also responsible to:

- Orientate the participants on the mentoring requirements and process.
- Agree on roles, schedules, venue and mentoring content for each pair.
- Facilitate signing of mentorship contract/agreement.

### Programme Duration

Mentoring programme should be not less than three months to give mentees the time to achieve their goals. The ideal duration is six months and can go up to a maximum duration of one year. Mentor-mentee meetings should occur at least once a month.

### Sample Schedule

<b>Month 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction.</li> <li>• Pre-orientation meeting for mentors and mentees.</li> <li>• Explaining the cycle and responsibilities of mentors and mentees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First meeting of mentor and mentee.</li> <li>• Setting up the goals in each mentorship pair.</li> <li>• Building trust.</li> </ul>
<b>Month 2</b>	Working on Goal #1 (at least two meetings between mentors and mentees, and when needed, an additional meeting between all mentors and the management team responsible for mentoring).	
<b>Month 3</b>	Midterm evaluation (meeting with all mentors and mentees, either all together or separately).	
<b>Month 4</b>	Working on Goal #2 (at least two meetings between mentors and mentees, and when needed, an additional meeting between all mentors and the management team responsible for mentoring).	
<b>Month 5</b>	Working on Goal #3 (at least two meetings between mentors and mentees, and when needed, an additional meeting between all mentors and the management team responsible for mentoring).	
<b>Month 6</b>	Final meeting and final evaluation (meeting with all mentors and mentees, either all together or separately).	
<b>Months 7 and 8</b>	Follow-up evaluation and new cycle. This can also be done a few months after the mentoring process in order to see more clearly the achievements.	

## Developing Guidelines and Training Materials

Mentoring guidelines are essential to implementing a successful programme as it contains all the essential information that the mentor and mentee would need.

The guidelines should include:

- Programme goals
- Programme guidelines
- Roles and responsibilities of all participants
- A timeline for the programme
- A mentorship agreement that sets out the rules and requirements of participants in the programme
- A process for feedback and making complaints
- Monitoring and reporting forms and tips

### Mentor Training Phase

When developing mentor training programmes, ask several key questions:

- What skills do mentors need to acquire?
- What is the minimum amount of training required?
- Should optional/additional training be offered?
- When should the training take place?

The overall goals of training could help mentors:

- Understand the limits of their role.
- Develop the skills and attitudes they need to perform well.
- Understand positive mentoring and mentee development.

The training should:

- Facilitate sharing of mentees' objectives and mentors' expectations
- Train mentors and introduce them to the formal mentoring and coaching principles:



- **Engage in active listening:** SOLER is a coaching technique that can be adapted to mentoring.



**S**

Face the mentee **squarely**, positioning your body so that you are turned directly toward them. This posture conveys interest in others and signifies respect for them as well as their message.



**O**

Adopt an **open** posture as a sign that you are receptive to what another person has to say. Stay aware of body language, such as crossing arms and legs that could convey a lack of openness - even if that is not how you are feeling.



**L**

**Lean** toward the mentee. People tend to communicate their interest in one another by leaning slightly toward each other. You probably do this without realizing it while chatting with coworkers or catching up with a friend over lunch.



**E**

Maintain good **eye contact** without staring. Watch two people engaged in a deep conversation, and you will notice that they are looking directly at one another. Eye contact not only allows us to concentrate better on what is being said, but also communicates our interest in the message and the messenger.



**R**

Stay **relaxed** and avoid fidgeting, breathe deeply. This will help you stay attentive and help your client to relax.

- **Building rapport:** Rapport can be built quickly using matching behaviour (general posture, amount of eye contact, volume of voice, rate of speech), and matching words and paraphrasing.
- **Building trust:** Although rapport can be built (and lost) quickly, trust takes more time. To build trust advise the mentee to:
  - Be authentic
  - Be sincere and keep promises
  - Be competent and confident
  - Be honest and tell the truth in a respectful manner
  - Be on time and give full attention

- **Asking good questions**

#### Open questions

Most of us are familiar with "open" questions; they begin with who, what, where, when, why or how and help us obtain information. We can develop the skill further (to avoid sounding like an interrogator) by prefacing them with phrases like:

- "Could you tell me about...?"
- "Do you mind if I ask...?"
- "Perhaps you'd like to talk about..."

#### Information-seeking questions

There is often a need to gather facts and perceptions in a mentoring conversation. It is also important not to make assumptions and not to move into problem-solving until you are sure that you have a true understanding of the situation. Questions might include:

- "How did you respond to that?"
- "What did you do about this?"
- "What options have you considered?"

#### Challenging/testing questions

One advantage of having a dialogue with a mentee is to explore alternative points of view. Examples of challenging questions are:

- "What are your reasons for saying that?"
- "What has led you to that conclusion?"
- "Do you think other people would see it that way?"

#### Action questions

Mentoring is not just about talking; it is about getting informed decisions and acting on them. Encourage action planning by asking:

- "What could be done to improve the situation?"
- "How might you go about achieving that?"
- "What specifically do you plan to do?"

#### Hypothetical questions

Thinking and talking through scenarios allows practice in a safe environment and can lead to a rehearsal or role play of a planned event to build skills.

- "What would you do if...?"
- "How would you handle...?"
- "If you had done..., what do you think would have happened?"

#### Priority and sequence questions

Goals and plans are often not achieved because people feel overwhelmed or do not know where to start. Sorting out what is to be done, and in what order, can clarify thinking and divide the task into manageable chunks.

- "What will you do first?"
- "What is the next step?"
- "Is there a logical order in which to proceed?"

#### Diagnostic questions

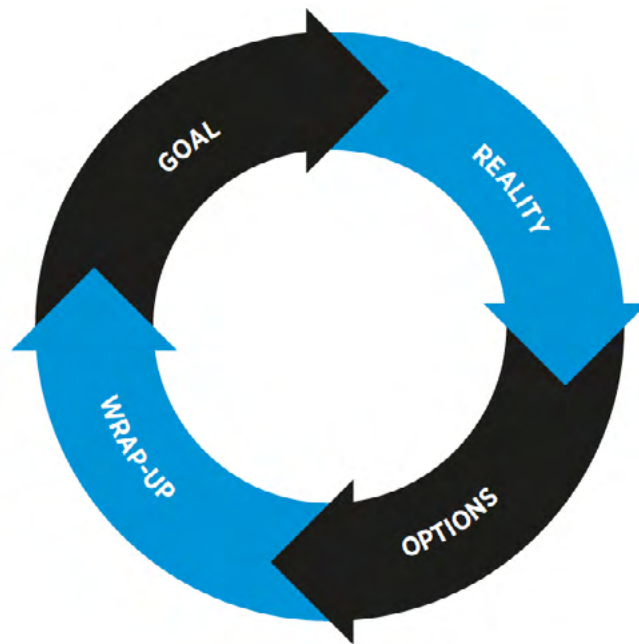
This type of questioning is used to find the root of a problem -in order to separate the symptoms from the cause- by inquiring about the issue and prompting reflection on the experience. Examples include:

- "Why do you think they responded that way?"
- "What happened immediately before this event?"
- "What other factors are contributing to the situation?"
- "How do you feel about that?"

#### Prediction questions

Remaining non-directive can be a challenge, yet sometimes you may see potential pitfalls in someone else's plan. When it comes to making big decisions, it is essential to consider the possible unforeseen consequences. Therefore, prediction questions are good for risk management.

- **Applying the GROW model:** A coaching tool that can be adapted to mentoring:
  - **Goal:** Decide where you want to go. Sample question: *What outcomes are you seeking by the end of this session?*
  - **Reality:** Establish where you currently are. Sample questions: *What is your present situation? What has stopped you from achieving more? Who can support you?*
  - **Options:** Explore various routes. Sample questions: *What actions can you take? Can you list five things you could do? Which option would you choose? Which option can you begin now?*
  - **Wrap-Up:** Summarise the next steps. Sample questions: *What are the next steps? Which might get in the way? What support do you need?*



There is no fixed rule for how the Programme Coordinator can conduct mentor training. The amount and content will be determined by the programme’s goals and objectives, and the scope of problems mentors are expected to address. However, the Programme Coordinator must dedicate due attention to the mentor training as it is the foundation for the success of the programme. The following is a sample agenda template for Mentor Training.

Training Blocks	Training Topics
Block 1 Introduction	Helping participants get to know each other and participate in the session
	Overview of the programme
	Determining the training expectations
	Understanding the role of the mentor and mentee in the organisation
Block 2 Core mentoring skills	Listening skills
	Questioning skills
	Building rapport
Block 3 Managing mentoring sessions	Meeting rules and etiquette
	Appropriate styles of feedback
	Giving effective feedback
	Receiving feedback and complaints
Block 4 Methods	SOLER technique
	The GROW model

#### Mentor Informal Assessments

Mentors can be trained to conduct informal assessments to help the mentees identify their skills and/or strengths, values and interests. The assessments can be given to the mentees to work on in between meetings and share results with the mentor prior to their next meeting. Informal assessments include:

1. [VIA Strengths Survey](#)
2. Strengths Energy Matrix (handout provided)
3. Skillscan: Identify Your Core Skills (handout provided)
4. [Career Values](#)
5. [O\\*Net Interest Profiler](#)

## Mentor Training Plan Template

**Name of the Training:**

---

**Date:**

---

---

**Trainer(s):**

---

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**Location:**

---

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**Target Audience:**

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**Learning Objectives:**

As a result of this training, mentors will be able to:

1. 

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2. 

---

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3. 

---

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4. 

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5. 

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**Training Introduction:**

Method/Activity	Content Description	Support Materials	Estimated Time

**Training Main:**

Method/Activity	Content Description	Support Materials	Estimated Time

**Conclusion:**

Method/Activity	Content Description	Support Materials	Estimated Time

**Resources:** (List any books, articles, websites, etc. that may be useful in implementing or following up on the lesson)

**Tips for Trainers**

**Before the Session**

1. Adults need to see the reason for learning something new and the learning must be applicable to their work or other responsibilities of value to them.
2. Know the training content thoroughly.
3. Select a training venue that is physically comfortable and contributes to group interaction.
4. Be prepared with handouts, required materials, equipment, markers etc.
5. Arrive early

**During Each Training Session**

1. Create a comfortable learning environment.
2. Pace the training appropriately.
3. Model good listening skills, feedback and problem-solving.

**After Each Training Session**

1. Get feedback from the participants.
2. Follow up on information promised to participants during the session.

**Programme Launch**

Before starting the programme, it is recommended that companies host an event where all the participants can begin networking. This will also create hype around the programme launch. During the launch the timeline and date of end of the cycle should be communicated clearly. Average program duration is 3-6 months.

**Planning Mentoring Sessions**

Prior to the start of the mentoring programme, introduce the mentor and the mentees and send them each their profiles. This introduction may include a request for each of them to share their initial motivation for participating in the program and what they aim to get out of it.

The mentees should be advised to request their first meeting with the mentor after the introduction and to allocate at least 1 hour for the first meeting. The first mentoring session can address the following questions:

- What were the mentor and mentee’s career journeys (including major decisions and milestones)?
- Why did they decide to join the programme?
- What are their expectations and goals for the programme?
- What would success look like?
- When would regular scheduled meetings work best?
- How can they connect between meetings, and what level of communication will the mentor be able to offer?
- What is the most pressing for the mentee now?
- What are their decided next steps and due dates?
- When will the next meeting be?

Subsequent mentoring sessions could be approximately one hour and could cover:

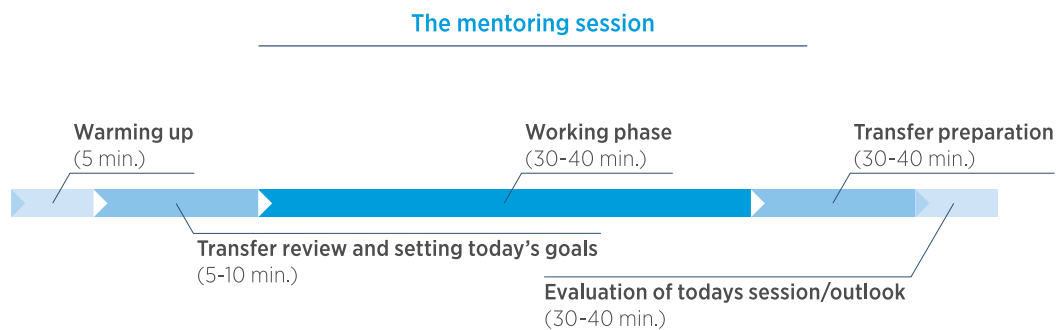
- Any moments to celebrate or acknowledge since the last meeting.
- Current challenges.
- Follow-up on the tasks.
- Current subjects and issues under discussion.
- Next steps.

**Types of mentoring sessions:**

- Face-to-face.
- Written or online communication, such as emails, "homework" or working through an intranet chat group.
- Telephone or Skype conversations.
- Shadowing or tutorials on the job.
- Professional review of work.

The mentoring session can be divided into the following components:

- **Warming up:** Open with pleasantries and check in on how both people are doing.
- **Transfer review and setting today's goals:** Check in on progress from last time and identify the intention for this session.
- **Working phase:** Discuss in detail the goals for this session.
- **Transfer preparation:** Discuss next steps and the assigned reading, tasks and reflection.
- **Evaluation:** Ask the question, "What was your biggest takeaway?"



**Sample Mentoring Pre-session Form**

This form is to be filled in by the mentee before each session and sent by email to the mentor, preferably at least one business day in advance (ideally two) so that the mentor may prepare for the session.

Overview of achievements and completion of assigned tasks (brief description): \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Overview of the goals set in the previous session and the current situation (where I am on the path towards achieving the goal): \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Barriers faced during the process and potential ways to overcome them: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Goals for the next session: what do I want to achieve at the next meeting with my mentor? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Details for the next meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### Sample Mentoring Session Outcomes Form

A mentoring journal will help mentors and mentees develop and stick to the working plan and note opinions and ideas. At the end of each session, spend 5 to 10 minutes discussing the outcomes of the session and the goals of the next session with any follow-up tasks.

This form is for the mentor's records and tracking the meeting hours. It can also be used as a reference point for future sessions.

#### Session outcomes form

Mentor's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentee's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting date and time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting's main working topics: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mentee's achievements towards the goal: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is going well? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is the problem? What is the reason for the problem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What kind of help can I offer my mentee to address the problem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What attitudes or feelings need to be changed to overcome the problem facing my mentee? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Agreed date/time for the next session: \_\_\_\_\_

Main topics and agenda for the next session: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Insights from today's session: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Sample Mentor/Mentee Progress Review Form

This form can be used by the mentor and mentee and submitted to the Mentoring Programme Coordinator confidentially. It is not meant to be seen by the other party, as it provides an insight on how the mentoring relationship is progressing.

What has been the main focus of the meetings? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What have been the successes since the latest review? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have there been any problems or difficulties encountered since the latest review? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How were these issues resolved or addressed? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are the original objectives for the mentoring relationship still the same, or do they need to be adjusted?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please identify some key outcomes to be achieved by the next meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel that this is still the optimal mentoring relationship? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please identify a date, time and location for the next meeting or review session: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How would you rate your satisfaction with the mentoring experience? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Not satisfied at all  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10 Extremely satisfied

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed

## MEETING RULES AND ETIQUETTE

### Be on time

Ensure on-time arrival for the meeting. Not only is it respectful, it builds trust. Be on time regardless of whether it is on the phone or in person. If you cannot be there on time, make sure you let your mentee know as soon as you can. This builds trust and makes the mentee feel respected.

### Prepare for the meeting

Review the mentee's pre-session focus forms. Take some time to make sure that you have read through the forms before the mentoring session. This becomes a very valuable tool for your preparation.

### Silence phones

Ensure all mobile phones are on silent or that calls are diverted and phones are out of sight. If you are expecting an unavoidable call during the mentoring session, let the mentee know at the beginning.

### Maintain confidentiality

Abide by the agreed-upon terms of complete confidentiality, at all times!

### Take notes

Note-taking acts as a memory aid and can help with planning future mentoring sessions. If you can, make notes after the session or use bullet points – minimize anything that will distract the mentee.

### Summarize actions

At the end of the meeting, make sure that all agreed-upon actions are recorded. It is important that the mentee make note of these and that they are clear. You might give your mentee some homework, which should also be noted in his/her list.

### Decide when to meet next

Before ending the mentoring session, always confirm the date and time for the next session.

## Working Phase

- Ensure that each mentor-mentee pair holds regular mentoring session.
- Monitor the process through for example, periodic reports to the Mentoring Programme Coordinator.
- Support the creation of an organisational culture of learning and collaboration through sharing the education tools and supporting mentoring sessions.
- Acknowledge mentors and mentees through internal communications and possibly appreciation events and awards.

Anticipated Challenge	Proposed Solution
The mentor and the mentee have been mismatched.	If the root problem is incompatibility between the mentor and the mentee, then either party may request that the coordinator rematch them or find another resolution. If the problem lies solely with the mentor or mentee, the person would be disqualified from the programme.
The mentee is uncooperative or unwilling to learn.	The mentee may face possible disqualification from the mentoring programme. The matter should be brought to the attention of the coordinator for possible resolution.
The mentor or the mentee are unavailable or cannot be contacted.	The coordinator can meet with each party and discuss the reasons for the unavailability.
There is a loss of trust and confidence between the parties.	The pairing should be terminated.
There is a loss of interest by either party.	The coordinator and management will investigate and, if necessary, rematch the interested party, and disqualify the other.
There has been a breach of the mentoring guidelines and principles.	The coordinator and committee should take action immediately and refer the case to management.

## Closing Phase

- Identify and clearly communicate closing milestones (e.g. Number of meetings, number of outcomes achieved, reaching cycle end date etc)
- Support the exchange of stories/experience among the mentors and mentees as well management. Use written and video testimonials.
- Survey mentors and mentees for programme feedback, training and improvements.

### What should be included in testimonials?

- Name.
- Position.
- Why did they join the programme?
- What did they gain?
- How did the programme impact their career?

### How can testimonials be expanded into case studies? Ask for information such as:

- Name.
- Position.
- Description of their career journey.
- Why did they join the programme?
- What did they gain?
- What did they learn?
- What skills and knowledge were transferred?
- How did the programme impact their career?

## Evaluation

- Revisit the mentoring programme results against the objectives.
- Pre- and post-tests can be used to see the direct output of the mentoring trainings or the process overall.
- A mid-term evaluation meeting with mentors and mentees allows participants to share their stories of success and failure
- The final evaluation can include interviews or questionnaires.
- A follow-up evaluation is recommended after a few months to analyse the impact of the mentoring process.
- Questions that can be included in an evaluation include:
  - To what extent were the expected objectives of the organisation and mentorship pairs achieved?
  - How did the mentoring programme contribute towards the achievement of the objectives?
  - What were the key success factors?
  - Who was most positively impacted by the programme?
  - Who, if any, was negatively impacted by the programme?
  - Were there any unintended effects, if any, of mentoring?
- Some common metrics collected to evaluate mentoring programmes include:
  - Pattern of regular contact between mentors and mentees.
  - Degree of adherence to programme structure.
  - Level of satisfaction with difference aspects of mentoring (eg. Matching)

- Perception of the value of the mentoring programme by the mentor and the mentee.
- Comfort in the workplace setting.
- Career satisfaction
- Work performance of participants
- Length of participants tenure in the organisation (ie. Retention rates)
- Changes in the demographics (eg. Gender) of the promoted employees.

### Sample Final Evaluation Forms

The sample forms below provide some questions that you may include in the final evaluation survey for mentors and mentees. The questions help assess participants' impressions of the successfulness of the mentoring programme. It is advised to revise and add additional questions as per the specific objectives of the mentoring programme.

#### SAMPLE 1: Form to be completed by the mentee

Mentee: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentee title: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact info: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of mentee contacts with the mentor: \_\_\_\_\_

Types of contact (telephone, face-to-face, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

Overall, how would you rate the mentoring experience?

5 Excellent    4 Good    3 Satisfactory    2 Fair    1 Poor

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Rate the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5.

5 Strongly agree    4 Agree    3 Disagree    2 Strongly disagree    1 Don't know

I feel that I have reached all or some of my goals for personal growth.

I feel better about my potential for career and personal growth since completing the mentoring programme.

I feel more self-confident since completing the mentoring programme.

My mentor played an important part in my growth and development.

I plan to continue my training and education.

I plan to continue to work towards reaching my current and future career goals.

I feel the mentoring programme has had a positive effect on my career success.

I would recommend this programme to others.

My mentor and I plan to continue our relationship.    Yes    No    Don't know

I would like to serve as a mentor in the future.    Yes    No    Don't know

Mentee signature and date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### SAMPLE 2: Form to be completed by the mentor

Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor title: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentee: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact info: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of mentor contacts with the mentor: \_\_\_\_\_

Types of contact (telephone, face-to-face, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

Overall, how would you rate the mentoring experience?

5 Excellent    4 Good    3 Satisfactory    2 Fair    1 Poor

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Rate the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5.

5 Strongly agree    4 Agree    3 Disagree    2 Strongly disagree    1 Don't know

I feel I was able to contribute to the career and personal growth of the mentee.

I feel I learned about myself through this mentoring programme.

I feel more self-confident since completing the mentoring programme.

I feel this mentoring programme contributed to my own career and personal growth.

I plan to continue mentoring and supporting others in their career.

I feel the mentoring programme has had a positive effect on my career success.

I would recommend this programme to others.

My mentee and I plan to continue our relationship.    Yes    No    Don't know

I would like to continue serving as a mentor in the future.    Yes    No    Don't know

Mentor signature and date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Making Mentoring Sustainable

- Initiate/Update the programme community group. Eg. LinkedIn and/or WhatsApp.
- Decide on the next cycle dates, adjust as needed and repeat.





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