

Mentoring

Christina Youell



What is Mentoring?

'A wise and trusted counsellor or teacher'

'A relationship with an experienced individual happy to pass on their advice, guidance & wisdom to someone with less experience.'

'A nurturing and supportive relationship to support someone to develop in their career.'

Skills Involved in Mentoring

- Listening – to understand
- Empathy – appreciating other person's view
- Curiosity – asking questions
- Honesty – giving feedback
- Support – providing a sounding board
- Challenge – evaluating options

What's in it for the Mentor?

- The possibility of supporting the development of someone's career
- The chance to share your hard earned experience – pass on your life lessons
- The opportunity to understand how a mentee experiences the profession
- The satisfaction of seeing someone develop in their career
- The opportunity to give something back

What's in it for the Mentee?

- Access to the knowledge, skills & experience of the mentor
- The opportunity to speed up your development
- Advice, guidance & support from a 'wise owl'
- The ability to take or leave the advice
- Access to your mentor's network
- A sounding board
- Someone to give you honest feedback

Successful Mentor Relationships

- Explicit needs and expectations
- Agreeing a 'contract' to ensure clarity of roles & avoid misunderstandings
- Being honest with each other and giving feedback
- Identify outcomes from mentoring
- Monitoring the achievement of outcomes

The 'Contract'

- Contact arrangements – when, where, how
- Boundaries – time, content, etc
- Confidentiality – to build trust
- Clear outcomes from mentoring – so what?
- How we will treat each other
- Feedback

Hopes and Fears

- ‘Will they be honest with me?’
- ‘What will they expect of me?’
- ‘How much time will this take?’
- ‘What if I don’t follow their advice?’
- ‘What if they don’t follow my advice?’
- ‘What if they follow my advice and it goes pear shaped?’
- ‘What can I give advice about and what can’t I give advice about?’

What Works Well?

- Open and clear contract to ensure clarity of needs and expectations
- Commitment for a period of time
- Constructive suggestions – appreciative and encouraging approach
- Regular review of the relationship – is this working?
- Feedback to each other – what can we both learn from this?

What Works Less Well?

Mentor

- Not understanding the mentee's situation
- Imposing your solution
- Not giving feedback
- Not listening
- Telling rather than asking
- Getting frustrated when they don't follow your advice

Mentee

- Not owning the issue
- Procrastinating
- 'Doing what you are told'
- Going along with the advice
- Not following the advice
- Using the time to moan
- Blaming others
- Getting frustrated