

STEP 2 – HOW TO START UP A MENTOR-MENTEE RELATIONSHIP?

START UP A MENTOR-MENTEE RELATIONSHIP- WITH THE FOCUS ON GROWTH

1. INITIAL MENTOR-MENTEE CONVERSATION TRIGGERS

To Do	Conversation triggers	Strategy
Take time getting to know each other	Obtain a copy of each other' CV. Look for areas of common interest to discuss.	Establish rapport. Exchange information. Identify points of connection.
Talk about mentoring	Has a partner ever been engaged in a mentoring relationship? What was it like? What did he learn from that experience?	Sharing mentoring experiences.
Determine Mentee's goals	What is it the mentee wants to learn from this experience?	Mentee articulates broad goals.
Discuss assumptions, needs and expectations.	What does each partner want out of the relationship?	Be clear and specific about your needs or wants from this mentoring relationship.
Discuss boundaries	What does each party consider to be appropriate or out-of-bounds. - The scope of topics that are relevant and irrelevant for the mentoring process (for example, you may not wish to discuss personal or family issues that lie outside of work)	Be clear about personal and professional boundaries.



BE A MENTOR
IN THE WORKPLACE

Discuss options and opportunities for learning.	What kind of assistance would be the most useful? Discuss implications of each other's learning style and how that may affect the relationship.	Use a Learning Style Inventory, share information about learning styles.
Define deliverables.	What would a successful relationship look like?	Envision the outcomes at the end of the relationship and make a concrete list of achievable success factors.

Ref. The Mentor's Guide, Lois Zachary, 2000, San Francisco



2. CONFIDENTIALITY

Safeguarding confidentiality can be a major stumbling block in a mentoring relationship because we hold different assumptions about what confidentiality means.

Complete the following checklist. Then decide if there are other assumptions that should be added to the list.

Review and discuss with your mentoring partner.

Allow for full discussion before coming to consensus about which confidentiality protocols you want to adopt for your relationship.

Which of the following assumptions about confidentiality do you hold?

Assumption	yes	no	not sure
What we say between us, stays there unless you give me the permission to talk about it with others.			
Some issues will be kept confidential while others will not.			
It is okay to discuss how we relate to one another but not the content of our discussions.			
It is okay to talk about what we talk about as long as it is generic.			
What we discuss stays between us for as long as we are engaged in our mentoring relationship.			
If asked by a supervisor, I can freely disclose our conversations.			
After our formal mentoring relationship has ended it is okay to talk about what we discussed or how we related.			
Other assumptions I hold:			

Ref. The Mentor's Guide, Lois Zachary, 2000, San Francisco

Some people don't mind others knowing information about them, while others are very private. Discuss confidentiality needs and expectations to prevent problems before they arise. You need to feel safe in your mentoring relationship.

Examples of Confidentiality Parameters:

- For topics that are confidential: "I would like your complete confidentiality when I am talking about developing an effective approach for coping with my current manager"
- For a relationship that is confidential: "I am concerned about appearing incompetent to others, so I would prefer we say we are working together on a project, at least until I feel a little better about my capacity to navigate the decision-making process around here"

3. UNDERSTANDING YOUR LEARNING STYLE

Using a Learning Style Inventory (Kolb)

The Kolb model describes the four phases of a learning cycle. There are two ways you can take in experience – by Concrete Experience or Abstract Conceptualisation. There are also two ways you deal with experience – by Reflective Observation or Active Experimentation. When you use both the concrete and abstract modes to take in your experience, and when you both reflect and act on that experience, you expand your potential to completely engage in a learning process.

Learning cycle:

Concrete Experience: Learning by experiencing

- Learning from specific experiences

- Relating to people
- Being sensitive to feelings and people

Reflective Observation: Learning by reflecting

- Carefully observing before making judgments
- Viewing issues from different perspectives
- Looking for the meaning of things.

Abstract Conceptualisation: Learning by thinking

- Logically analysing ideas
- Planning systematically
- Acting on an intellectual understanding of a situation

Active Experimentation: Learning by doing

- Showing ability to get things done
- Taking risks
- Influencing people and events through action

Understanding your learning preferences, and the strengths and weaknesses inherent in that type of learning style, is a major step toward increasing your learning power and getting the most from your learning experience.

In addition to understanding the strengths of your own learning style, you might find it helpful to consider a few ways of strengthening learning skills that are more typical of styles different from your own. If you rely too heavily on one learning area, you run the risk of missing important ideas and experiences.

Developing Learning Style Skills

- Develop learning and work relationships with people whose learning strengths lie in areas that are different from your own.



- Practice and develop learning skills in areas that are the opposite to your present strengths.

Ref. David A. Kolb, Experienced Based Learning Systems, 1999

4. NEGOTIATION CONVERSATION GUIDELINES

What you will need	Questions to be answered
Well-defined goals	What are the specific learning outcomes desired from this relationship?
Success criteria and measurement	What are the criteria for evaluating successful accomplishment of learning outcomes? What is the process for evaluating success?
Delineation of mutual responsibility	Who will be responsible for what?
Accountability assurance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relationship ground rules - Confidentiality safeguards - Boundaries 	How do we assure we do what we say we are going to do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the norms and guidelines we will follow in our relationship? - What do we need to do to protect the confidentiality of this relationship? - What are the not-to-exceed limits of this relationship?
Protocols for addressing stumbling blocks	What stumbling blocks might we encounter? What process should we have in place to deal with them if they occur?
Consensus mentoring agreement	What do we need to include to make this agreement work for us?
A work plan for achieving learning goals	What is the process? What are the steps for achieving these goals?

Ref. The Mentor's Guide, Lois Zachary, 2000, San Francisco

Sometimes, mentees have already specific goals and may not want to explore their personal visions. The challenge for the mentor is then to help link back to the big picture perspective and make sure that these objectives are aligned with a *vision*.

5. DEVELOPING YOUR PERSONAL CAREER PLAN

- Think about your career road and consider the following questions:
 - o Did I make a conscious choice regarding my career?
 - o What has led me to my present choice?
- Now, draw a map of your career road-to-date and include:
 - o Your likely or chosen destination
 - o Milestones along the way
- And then, consider
 - o Signs you have read along your career road
 - o Signs you might have missed or ignored.
- Add the appropriate road signs to your career roadmap.
- What crossroads, detours or roadblocks might you encounter in the future?

6. ARE YOU USING YOUR VISUALISATION SKILLS?

“Visioning is an art and skill you can use on a daily basis. The art involves designing a portrait of the future from a montage of facts, fantasies, fiction, and fun. The skill is to train oneself to think about tomorrow – constantly searching for opportunities and preparing to respond to threats...”

Rate yourself to determine the extent to which you exercise visualisation skills. Circle the number which expresses frequency of use.

	Always				Never
Do you constantly search for new ideas and opportunities which will enhance you, the practice and the company?	5	4	3	2	1
Can you translate your vision into simple written statements that your colleagues will understand?	5	4	3	2	1
Do you use mental imagery to see the future?	5	4	3	2	1
Do you believe in the power of visioning as a force for action?	5	4	3	2	1
Do you wrestle with your vision until it is clear and concise?	5	4	3	2	1
Does your vision excite and stimulate others to action?	5	4	3	2	1
Do you mentally rehearse possible consequences of your vision?	5	4	3	2	1
Do you allow yourself to dream?	5	4	3	2	1
Do you evaluate the success of your vision in organisational terms?	5	4	3	2	1
Does your vision build on the distinctive competence of your organisation?	5	4	3	2	1

Scores below 25 show a need for practice in using visualisation skills.

7. CREATING A PERSONAL VISION

Your personal vision is a picture of who you want to be and what you want to do in the future. When you put it together you take into account what you like to do, how you want to be known, who's important to you, what's important to you and what fits your style and way of doing things.

A personal vision is generally something that is far away (time wise) and is a static picture. As you develop your personal vision, you look at one point in time and don't think too much about how you are going to get there. How you get there comes later, so right now just identify where you may want to go.

You may have carried this vision with you for a long time, without really having a chance to verbalise it. You may have developed it when you were a kid or sometime later. A teacher, a boss, a friend, or a family member may have inspired you. Now is the time to formalise it and get it down in written form.

Try to suspend your internal critic and your modesty as you work on your vision. This is a time to stretch yourself.

Once you have captured your vision, the next step is to get feedback (Is it clear? Is it concrete enough that someone else can see the picture? Is it future oriented? Is it realistic and doable?) on the vision and draft a vision statement. Finally, assess the competences you have and the competences you need to achieve that vision and then identify goals that you want to work on.

8. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING MY VISION

- Does this vision stretch me as a person?
- Does it inspire me?
- Am I willing to commit to it?
- Am I willing to test it against all of my future goals, objectives and actions?
- Does it make sense to me?

- Is it something I can work with?
- Can I envision it in concrete terms?

If you answer no to any one of these, rework your vision statement until you can answer yes.

If you have answered yes, then create a vision statement.

9. A CONVERSATION GUIDE FOR GETTING FEEDBACK ON YOUR VISION

- I am thinking I'd like to take my career this way...
- Is it realistic?
- What does it mean if I take this route?
- What can I expect?
- What is it I have to learn to do?
- What is it I have to do to find out what else I need?
- What does it mean if I don't take this route?
- Other questions you want to add to this list:

10. FROM VISION TO GOAL SETTING – COMPETENCE GAP ANALYSIS

What gap exists between your vision and current competency proficiency?

Current Core Competences	Core Competences To Be Developed
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-

11. EVALUATING LEARNING GOALS

- Specific
 - o What is it the Mentee wants to learn as a result of this relationship?
 - o Are the goals specific, concrete and clear?
- Measurable
 - o Are the goals capable of being measured?
 - o In what ways can success be measured?
- Action-Oriented
 - o Are the goals future-oriented?
 - o What results should we be able to see when the Mentee's goals are accomplished?
 - o What concrete things will the Mentee be able to do as a result of accomplishing the goals identified?
- Realistic
 - o Are the goals achievable within a reasonable time frame?
 - o Are there other resources that need to be available in order to achieve the goals?
- Timely
 - o Is the time allocated for accomplishing the learning goals reasonable?
 - o Has a completion date been set for attainment of the goals?

12. GENERATING A LIST OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Ideas that come to mind:
- What kinds of opportunities exist for exposure to new learning?
- What kinds of opportunities exist to reinforce new learning?
- What kinds of opportunities exist which might accelerate learning?



13. COMPLETING THE MENTORING AGREEMENT

A completed agreement establishes a foundation from which to build.

Content:

Date, Mentor Name, Mentee Name, Contact info, Expectations of the Mentoring Relationship, Mentee's Goals, Meeting Schedule, Additional Agreements.