

## STEP 4 – “WHAT ON-GOING SUPPORT WILL BE OFFERED? HOW TO KEEP THE MENTORS MOTIVATED? HOW WILL THE PROGRAM BE EVALUATED?”

### PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

#### BUILDING A MENTOR-MENTEE RELATIONSHIP



Mentoring is a relationship. The mentee and the mentor collaborate in the development of the mentee.



*What are ingredients for successful relationships?*


- Effective mentors and mentees take time to get to know each other, talk about mentoring, share information on learning styles, establish the boundaries of the relationship, mutually agree on the goals of the relationship, agree upon a meeting schedule, agree upon a time frame for the relationship (with periodic reviews) to evaluate how well the relationship is meeting the goals, discuss confidentiality (to be able to be vulnerable, yet safe, in difficult conversations), show respect for each other.
- If both parties are able to express freely and honestly about strengths, weaknesses, goals and concerns, the learning will be greatly enhanced.
- Mentoring involves sharing. (Effective sharing involves freely giving thoughts, opinions, concepts, ideas, experiences, hunches, techniques and learning to one another)



*Duration of mentoring?*

- The duration of the mentoring relationship is dependent on the defined goal and target group.
  - The duration of the mentoring relationship for new hires is limited, (for instance limited to the induction/trial period)

- Mentoring relationships based on the mentee's longer-term development objectives should last as long as the mentee still needs development in that area.

 *How to start up, manage and close the relationship with the mentee?*

- Making contact
  - Contracting
  - Progress
  - Closure
- Mentoring goals achieved, moving on to a less formal/more personal relationship or the end of the relationship.

## START UP THE RELATIONSHIP

 *How to start up the mentoring relationship (mentoring for new employees )?*

- Getting to know each other.
- Explaining to the newcomer how you will cooperate.
- Discussing the learning goals to achieve (individual training plan with necessary competences to perform according to the standard in the job)
- Outlining the cooperation with line manager and colleagues.
- Outlining your involvement with respect to periodic conversations concerning the evolution of the learning process (end evaluation is responsibility of line manager).
- Making appointments concerning the cooperation.

- Communicating when you find that there is coordination with the line manager necessary: stimulating the newcomer to take action himself in this area.
- Sketching the duration of the period within which the mentoring role runs, when and how that period expires.
- Believing in the possibilities of the mentee and showing that.
- Making contracts concerning confidentiality within the relationship:
  - For example agreeing whether consultation is necessary with the mentees line manager concerning their progress.
  - Agreeing that personal aspects discussed (e.g. doubts, uncertainties, fears, difficult steps in learning, personal experiences at work...) are kept confidential and only shared with the manager on explicit request and/or in dialogue with the mentee.
- Protecting your integrity and being clear about the mentors role



*How to start up the mentoring relationship (focusing on the growth of existing employees)?*

- Making contact
  - Getting to know each other.
  - Appreciating differences in style (learning from differences)
  - Telling the personal tale in all its dimensions:
    - Socially: course of the career – family circumstances – interests outside the work.
    - Career ambitions: what you appreciate/find less attractive in your job and working in this organisation – where do you want to be in 5 years time – your most important realizations/failures – your idea of success.

- Goals for development: how the mentee can grow in the current job and with a view to future functions.
- Values, life aims.
- Defining mentoring goals (contracting)
  - Setting expectations.
  - Defining SMART learning goals, action plan and milestones.
  - Setting an initial time period for the relationship based upon the current needs and goals of the mentoring relationship.
  - Defining what subjects/issues will not be discussed.
  - Defining roles and responsibilities.
  - Agreeing upon a meeting schedule. When to meet, how to communicate (face to face, through e-mail, by telephone..), how many meetings.
  - Defining the time investment of the mentor.
  - Making agreements concerning confidentiality within the mentoring relationship (openness, trust!)
    - For career development consultation with the line manager may be necessary (if it concerns for example the development plan/ contract).
  - Setting up periodic reviews to evaluate how well the relationship is meeting its goals.
  - Collecting contact information from mentor and mentee.
  - Making an agreement on how to end the relationship when considered fulfilled or unsatisfying.
  - Making a contract (with the 'go-ahead' of the line manager).

## COURSE OF A MENTORING SESSION (FOCUS ON GROWTH)



### *What to do during the mentoring session:*

- Supporting the relationship.
- Defining the learning goal.
- Discovering the subject and questioning things
  - The mentor looks at the subjects from the perspective of the mentee.
    - Possible subjects:  
  
Self-development, Career Planning, Opportunities, Alternatives, Tactical approaches, Culture, Trends, Politics, Behaviors and impact, Successes and Failures, Learning experiences, Skills and Needs, Fears and doubts, Interests, Work/life balance, Work values.
  - For the mentor the challenge is NOT to judge immediately, give advice or start action.
  - The mentor stimulates the thinking and the learning of the mentee by asking questions.
  - The mentee listens to feedback and constructive ideas.
- Summarizing and making appointments concerning the learning
  - Start action and summarize the discussion.
  - The mentee shows commitment to learning. He/she agrees to think further on the subject and take action.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the session

- This step is essential for the learning and obtaining optimal return on investment of the mentoring relationship. Mentor and mentee look at both content and process:
  - What went well? Why?
  - What did not go well? Why?
  - What did we learn?
  - What are we going to do differently next time??

## SUPPORTING THE MENTORS



### *How to provide on-going mentor support (HR)?*

- Creating a manual for the mentors.
- Briefing of the mentors on their role.
- Defining clear definition of the different roles: mentor – line manager: tasks and responsibilities of each.
- Organizing training.
- Organising workshops on certain topics of mentoring.
- Coordination of the reporting on the mentoring sessions.
- Facilitating meetings (mentors/mentees).
- Supporting mentors that need support.
- Organising periodic evaluations of the mentoring relationship:
  - It is recommended, to perform a full evaluation of the relationship and the progress being made by the mentee, at least every 4-6 months to ensure benefits are still being achieved.

- Do the meetings take place, as planned? Do they spend enough time and energy to these mentoring sessions?
  - What subjects are covered already? What achievements have been made by the mentee with the support of the mentor?
  - Do they experience a general growth towards the development goals set? Are there measurable results or benefits from the relationship?
  - Are they satisfied with the mentoring relationship? Do they feel themselves free to share thoughts and ideas? Are there other points for improvement?
  - Do they expect that continuing the relationship will produce still more learning moments?
  - Are possible problems in the relationship solved adequately?
- Organizing final evaluations at the end of the mentoring relationship:
    - Allow mentors and mentees to have a critical and open retrospection on the relationship, to draw lessons for the future.
      - Mentor and mentee should ask themselves the following questions:
        - What did the mentoring relationship achieve for us both? Including expected and unexpected results (changes in knowledge, behavior, role...)
        - Did the relationship not achieve something which was expected at the beginning? If so, why not?
        - What are the future development needs of the mentee?

- Are there other development goals where other mentors could help?
- Recommendations for further development.

#### On-going support offered

##### **Examples from partner countries:**

*Quarterly cross evaluation by HR department, followed by action, if necessary (Turkey, big company)*

*Evaluation by HR department, after the 2 months probation (Slovakia, big company)*

*Mentors offer their “all time” availability (Slovakia, big company)*

*Support in a crisis situation, coaching and joint solving current problems (Polish SME)*

*Ongoing advices, support and help in different areas and in different ways. Working as a team; Helping each other to provide high quality results. Back-to-back feedback is crucial. (SME, Slovakia)*

*Every time different, when I was supporting a child, 5 minutes a day was better than half an hour per week. It is very important to maintain promises.*

*With adults it is very important to communicate clearly and regularly. It is also very important to keep supporting them also after the program finishes. (Brass Bands, UK)*

*To give them as much feedback as possible. To engage them within operational planning. (SME, Belgium)*

*None (Portugal, SME)*





### How to motivate the mentors?

- Recognition of the contribution of mentors
- Communication of mentoring results during yearly dinner
- Networking sessions between mentors.
- Sharing sessions (exchanging experiences) between mentors
  - The mentors could fill in a reflection sheet after each mentoring session, on which they register their experiences, to take along to the sharing session:
    - Date, subject
    - What did I want to achieve in this mentoring session with the mentee?
    - What have I tried out in the session?
    - What did I achieve? How did I feel myself as a result?
    - What went well?
    - What went less well?
    - Which questions or remarks do I take along to the next mentoring session?

### Motivation of mentors

#### **Examples of partner countries:**

*They receive extra financial compensation (Turkish big company)*

*They are motivated by receiving a chance to provide mentoring programme for other group of new employees and they receive some bonus (Slovakia, big company)*

*The main mentor in the company is the owner and chairman of the board /at the same person/ because he's the most experienced manager and the company is relatively small. (Polish SME)*

*Starting with outsourced audit, then work with common aims and declaration of the tasks by each of participants (Polish SME)*

*Mentors are motivated enough, being in the role of mentor is personal benefit by itself (SME, Slovakia)*

*For me as a mentor it was an immense satisfaction because it is helping people in a practical way and it also allows me to use the skills that I like to use best. (Brass Bands, UK)*

*@Retail and Technology the mentees read out a New Year's letter to their mentors at the New Year's reception and were rewarded with a small present. (SME, Belgium)*

*Our mentors are motivated by performances the mentees deliver. We do not experience we need to motivate them especially. Mentees are often grateful for their guidance and probably will be mentors in themselves in the future. The reward is a nice atmosphere between mentors and mentees and all the employees in general. (SME, Belgium)*

## PERIODIC EVALUATIONS



### *Evaluation during the mentoring of new employees*

- Evaluation of the on-the-job training for new employees, with recommendations.
- Periodic evaluation sessions (evolution of training plan, feedback from the mentee) during the mentoring period of a new employee, with recommendations.



### *Periodic reviews of a mentoring system with focus on growth*

- Regular contact of facilitator with participants?
- Pairs met at least the minimum number of times?
- Meetings and specific activities evaluated and discussed by pairs?
- Used time for mentoring according to the planned time?
- Facilitator available to support/council pairs?
- Common problems/pitfalls reported?
- Side-effects reported?
- Recommendations.

### Evaluation during periodic reviews

Examples from partner countries:

*Quartely (Turkish big company)*

*After 2 months (Slovakia, big company)*

*Yes (Slovakia, big company)*

*During periodic reviews (Polish SME)*

*No (SME, Slovakia)*

*Regular feedback (SME, Slovakia)*

*Yes (Brass Bands, UK)*

*Yes, after 1 month and after 3 months (SME, Belgium)*

*All went smooth so far. The only thing we have to be careful about is that we don't use the same mentor every time. This could demotivate the other*

*mentors. (SME, Belgium)*

*No (Portugal, SME)*

*When new members start, they are automatically followed up by their team leaders and mentors during the first months. Eventual problems are working points.(SME, Belgium)*

### Evaluation at the end

Examples from partner countries:

*Results are checked for evaluation (person promoted, successful? Etc.) (Turkish big company)*

*Result in evaluation report (Slovakia, big company)*

*Feedback from new employees (Slovakia, big company)*

*Yes (Slovakia, big company)*

*No (Portugal, SME)*

*Feedback from contact (transfer of knowledge and motivating new employees and monitoring their work went well. Problems/pitfalls: fill in the gap between the theory on schools and the daily work practice of organizations, very much information which must be passed on, too much new hires in the same period, requiring training ) (Polish SME)*

*Feedback from contact: motivation went very well, the staff is very motivated; Problems/pitfalls: lack of competences of the mentors, the features the mentors should have (Polish SME)*

*Yes (SME, Slovakia)*

*Regular review of the KPI (SME, Slovakia)*

*Yes. The evaluation from mentees was collected at the end of each*

*session. (Brass Bands, UK)*


*We do exit talks when people leave the company and this is one of the topics which are discussed. (SME, Belgium)*


*Evaluations are made at the end of each program. (SME, Belgium)*

*There is not really an end between mentors and mentees. After some months, the mentee is properly integrated and the bond between them increases in a natural way because it is not really necessary anymore. (SME, Belgium)*


*According to both mentor and mentee the mentoring process is running as predicted, they established a relationship of loyalty, confidence, and empathy. The only problem that was mentioned was the fact of the mentor not to have the due time to dedicate to the process, in order to convey all necessary information that the mentee needed in order to perform her job accurately. (Portugal, SME)*

## ENDING OF THE MENTORING PROJECT

 From the organization's point of view, formal mentoring programs should have a finite length. (Some pairs will choose to continue the relationship beyond the formal program). It is important that when participants volunteer their commitment it is for a specific period of time. If there is no formal conclusion of the relationship it could fade away without a sense of closure.

 A formal session that concludes the mentoring program allows participants to express their appreciation to their partner, acknowledges the contribution that the mentors have made to the organization, and marks the end of the formal relationship and commitment.

- Sharing significant moments and experiences (stories)
- Celebrating
  - Recognition of the contribution and rewarding the mentors and mentees (particularly the mentors who might have less tangible gains from participating in this program)
    - For example: distribute 'mentor awards' (certificate, commemorative plaque, an article in the company newsletter or a thank you from significant leaders within the company).

 Conduct an evaluation of the mentoring project (evaluate the success of the mentoring project), including:

- Program promotion.
- Support from the program coordinator.

- Roles of all parties involved.
- Selection and matching.
- Training, competences of the mentors.
- Learning goals achieved (success of the learning, change in the performance).
- Realized benefits for the mentees.
- Impact of the mentoring program. Return on investment?
- Recording of testimonials (significant moments and experiences) of the mentors/mentees.



#### Stop or start new project

- Good closure of a mentoring project can be a springboard for another project. The experience and information now available can facilitate the organisation of a future project, and raise its quality.



#### Follow up evaluation

- To obtain accurate data about the success and influence of the program, you need to continue the evaluation process for at least one year beyond its formal conclusion. However, few organizations are prepared to resource the evaluation process to that extent.

### Benefits

#### Examples of partner countries:

*For mentees:*

- *move up in shorter time (Turkish big company)*
- *faster growing in sales skills (Slovakia, big company)*
- *practical experience and tips (SME, Slovakia)*
- *upgrading skills, acquiring knowledge, acquisition of practical skills, support and care (Polish SME)*
- *improving skills and possibility to promotion (Polish SME)*
- *learn by doing and watching which makes them familiar with the process quicker (Slovakia, big company)*
- *empowering them and help them to move on in life. (Brass Bands, UK)*

*For organization:*

- *invest in people for better management and overall success (Turkish big company)*
- *they can recognize in short time if they will continue in investment to hired people (Slovakia, big company)*
- *more experienced employees in general, employees get the impression that the organization cares about their personal development (SME, Slovakia)*
- *long-term learning process for all employees, low cost method, the way how to share knowledge within the company (SME, Slovakia)*
- *discovery of talent, specialized staff with high qualifications and skills (Polish SME)*
- *gaining two tasks: quality and profits (Polish SME)*
- *win-win situation, mentoring helps avoiding current staff making mistake at work (as they need to automatically re-educate*



*themselves every time they*

- *mentor someone). On the other hand, it accelerates the pace of learning for the new staff.*
- *fulfil our aims of supporting community groups. (Brass Bands, UK)*
- *In our eyes, the mentor is a beacon in the storm and he or she gives advice about concerns/problems of employees which are difficult to discuss with their manager. In fact, a mentoring program is wonderful but sometimes superfluous if the atmosphere within the company is good and the collaborators can depend on all of their colleagues. (SME, Belgium)*
- *Mentorship is definitely a win-win situation. If the well-being of our employees is secured and they feel happy, there's a good atmosphere and people are productive. (SME, Belgium)*
- *In case of hiring new drivers, we are pretty sure about the new employee regarding skills and character. The new candidate driver has the opportunity to see if he likes the job or not. New drivers are integrated quicker. The management stays in close contact with the employees on the floor. (SME, Belgium)*

*For mentors:*

- *being in the role of mentor is personal benefit by itself (SME, Slovakia)*
- *sense of mission and responsibility for a young team; growing authority and respect. (Polish SME)*
- *by mentoring someone else this also helps re-educating himself on the process mentored (Slovakia, big company)*
- *for team leaders: Mentors are a really good support for the team leaders (SME, Belgium)*

## Critical success factors for implementing mentorship in a SME?

### **Answers from partner countries:**

*Financing for external mentoring when there are no internal mentoring sources.*

*The willing of the entire company to introduce mentoring, the willing to train mentors, to make time in their schedule and to follow up the evolution of mentors and mentees is absolutely necessary (SME, Belgium)*

*Get enough time for the mentoring process (Portugal, SME)*

*Mentoring programmes are usually outsourced by external companies so it is needed to manage enough financial sources to cover mentoring expenses. (Slovakia)*

*Well developed programmes, motivation and skills of mentors.*

*Clear structure and mentoring guidelines for the company (SME, Slovakia)*

*To have sufficient trained and experienced employees able to provide mentoring program or to be able to purchase the company providing sufficient mentoring program. (SME, Slovakia)*

*Mentoring technique on how to approach the mentees in a more personalised way (Slovakia, big company)*

*Knowledge on the topic of mentoring (Slovakia, big company)*

*Matching experience and people: this is for SME safe and comfortable environment for both parties. A suitable environment. Quality of time.*

*Willingness to help and to listen, informal conversations/procedures. (SME, Belgium)*

*Encouraging involvement .(SME, Belgium)*

*Selecting the right people. (SME, Belgium)*

*f.i. The willing of the mentors as well as the mentees to listen, cooperate, give and receive directions or information concerning the procedures. We believe there has to be a certain level of communication skills present with our employees, otherwise the purpose of mentors gets lost and becomes vague or inefficient. (SME, Belgium)*

Feedback or suggestions on the Framework for implementing mentoring in SME's?

**Answers from partner countries:**

*Retired personnel with mentoring experience may be external mentor for SME's (Turkish big company)*

*It is important to keep the boundaries clear: the balance between mentor, coach and counsellor needs to be clear; it may be more appropriate to have a mentor for staff who is external to the organisation so there is no conflict of interest (British SME).*

*It would be good to stipulate that the person should have been mentored in order to be a mentor (British SME)*

*The most important is to have reliable and well experienced mentor who can provide mentoring programme. (Slovakia)*

*The idea should be disseminated, spread definition and rules of mentoring between management and owners level. Popularization mentoring idea (by evidence base practice) as sparing way to make company competitive.*

*We would be willing to contribute feedback on a new Framework for implementing mentoring in SME's" (SME, Slovakia), (Slovakia, big company) (3 SME's, Belgium), (3 Turkish SME's) (1 SME from Portugal)*