

The SAGE HANDBOOK OF MENTORING

Chapter 7: The effective mentor, mentee and mentoring relationship

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to examine the various competency frameworks for mentors and mentees and consider the requirements for an effective mentoring relationship, exploring theoretical and empirical studies as well as conceptual models and frameworks. The chapter begins by outlining the behaviours, capabilities and characteristics of mentors and mentees drawing on current literature (Cooper & Palmer, 2000; Clutterbuck, 2004, 2011; Brockbank & McGill, 2006, Allen & Eby, 2011). These are compared and contrasted, taking into account methodological issues such as the significance of context (Kram, 1988; Bierema & Merriam, 2002; Fowler & O’Gorman, 2005; Ghosh, 2012), purpose and type of mentoring (Kram, 1980, 1985; Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Clutterbuck, 1998, 2015) and that competences may evolve through the different phases of the mentor-mentee relationship (Missiran, 1982; Kram, 1983; Clutterbuck, 1995, 1998).

In addition, the author recognises the need to consider the complex adaptive system (Mitleton-Kelly, 1997; Lansing, 2003; Clutterbuck, 2012) in which the mentor-mentee relationship is established and developed. Next, the author examines the measures for the effectiveness of a mentoring relationship, with particular reference to how this might be useful in the initiation, support and measurement of mentoring outcomes. Finally, the author offers recommendations for future research.

An effective mentor

It is important to consider the skills and capabilities that the role of a mentor requires to ensure that appropriate individuals are selected and supported within mentoring programmes. According to Cooper & Palmer (2000, p 55), *“it is evident that successful mentors are reported as employing a range of enabling strategies and skills within mentoring relationships.... it is important to consider the behaviours, qualities and characteristics of those who will be deemed suitable to provide this supportive roles for others”*. Specific skills and attributes necessary to carry out the functions of a mentor have been highlighted by those who have experience of designing, implementation and evaluating mentoring programmes. These are characteristics such as strong interpersonal skills, organisational knowledge, exemplary supervision skills, technical competence, personal power and charisma, status and prestige, patience and risk taking, aptitude to develop and grow others and ability to share credit (Murry, 2002; Everitt & Murray-Hicks, 1981; Haddock-Miller & Sanyal, 2015) . The mentor’s interpersonal skills was highlighted as key capability in an experimental three phase study by Olian, Carroll, Giannantonio & Feren (1988) on ‘What do Protégées look for in a mentor?’ which concluded that mentees will more readily establish a relationship with an individual who is enjoyable to deal with because of his or her interpersonal style and they may be perceived as more instrumental to the career of protégés than those without such competencies.

Research studies on mentorship in specific sectors such as early career teachers, medicine and academia have presented sets of competencies for mentors. A study of the role of effective teachers as mentors based on five case studies in Oregon, U.S.A (Ackley, Blaine & Gall, 1992) identified successful mentor skills as social process skills of interpersonal ease, listening, knowledge of educational content, demonstration/modelling and confidence building. Denmark & Podsen (2000) emphasises that a teacher mentor should be able to ask

questions freely to be able to engage in an effective two-way conversation that is meaningful. According to Rodenhauser, Rudisill & Dvorak, (2000), mentors in medicine serve as critical points of reference and provide some degree of guidance through education, collaboration, advice, sponsorship and friendship. Again, there is a clear emphasis here on relational competency as well as subject expertise. Similarly, Johnson's (2003) framework for conceptualising competence for mentors among graduate school faculty also advocates a set of virtues, abilities and skills with specific emphasis on relational capabilities to communicate empathy, respect and compassion to protégés. Finally, more recently Abedin *et al's* (2012) study on competences for research mentors of clinical and translational scholars also highlighted communication and managing the relationship as a key competence.

Therefore, as mentoring is defined as a *'relationship between two people with learning and development as its purpose'* (Megginson & Garvey, 2004, p 2), a mentor must establish a person-centred approach grounded in some core competencies such as congruence, unconditional positive regard and empathy which are essential for humanistic learning (Rogers, 1983). A mentor, therefore, is expected to embrace these over-arching principles to be able to engage in an effective mentoring relationship. Brockbank & McGill (2006) have identified a generic set of skills for mentors based on these principles to be able to engage the mentee in reflective learning leading to change. These are presented in clusters:

- Mentor presence – the mentor needs to be awareness of non-verbal messages such as body language, facial expression and voice which can deliver meaning quite independent of spoken communication
- Listening and congruence – active listening requires observation of the mentee's non-verbal behaviour as well as listening to verbal messages, putting oneself in the frame of the mentee. This will require the mentor to be genuine and real, share

feelings and attitudes as well as opinions and beliefs as a way that clearly takes ownership (i.e. I think..., I feel...)

- Restating, summarising and questioning – restating enables a process of disentangling to ensure ones' own views are not imposed on the mentee; questions have to be framed and discussed to empower the mentee to learn and develop and summarising key thoughts and discussion can provide clarity of key issues.
- Managing emotions – a mentor has to be aware of his or her own emotions and manage these alongside being in tune with the mentee's feelings. This will require a high level of emotional intelligence.
- Feedback – a mentor should give feedback in a way that the mentee accepts it, understands it and is able to use it.
- Challenge and confrontation – a mentor has to seek to raise consciousness in the mentee about some restriction or avoidance that blocks, distorts or restricts their learning. This should be through appropriate challenge which raises the mentees awareness and help them reframe situations.

Another perspective to appreciate the behaviours that a mentor needs to demonstrate is to focus on the types of assistance a mentor is expected to provide to a mentee. Shea (2001) identifies seven types of mentor assistance to encourage mentee development – mentor's ability to help the mentee to shift context and envision a positive future or outcome; listen and be a sounding board when the mentee has a problem; pick up on underlying feelings related to the mentee's issues/problems; confront and challenge when appropriate; offer relevant information or suggest possible solutions; encourage explorations of options and bolster the mentee's confidence by delegating authority and providing new opportunities.

There is no doubt therefore that mentors who are friendly, honest, approachable, understanding, compassionate, dedicated, patient and act with integrity make 'good' mentors

(Gray & Smith 2000; Elzubeir & Rizk 2001). The willingness to provide honest feedback is another important skill that effective mentors possess (Gray & Smith 2000; Wright & Carrese 2002). In addition to interpersonal skills, effective mentors also demonstrate a high level of expertise, including professional skills, organisation and communication skills as well as self-confidence (Gray & Smith, 2000; Elzubeir & Rizk, 2001; Wright & Carrese, 2002; McDowall-Long, 2004)

According to Clutterbuck (2004), there is a great deal of confusion the about skills and competencies of a mentor. He offers a conceptual set of competencies based on what mentors do and how they do it. The ten mentor competences are:

- Self-awareness – mentors need high level of self-awareness in order to recognise and manage their own behaviour within the relationship
- Communication competence – this requires use of multiple skills such as listening, observing non-verbal signals, keeping in tune with what the recipient is hearing, understanding and adapting tone, voice, volume, pace and language accordingly
- Sense of proportion/ good humour – mentors needs to feel at ease with themselves and their role in the organisation; humour and laughter can help to build rapport, release tension and develop multi-perspectives.
- Interest in developing others – effective mentors has an innate interest in achieving through others and in helping others recognise and achieve their potential.
- Goal clarity – mentors must have the ability to support mentees to identify what they want to achieve and to help them to set and pursue clear goals
- Behavioural awareness - mentor must have reasonable insight into behaviours patterns of individuals and their interaction with groups; observation and reflective skills are required for this.

- Conceptual modelling – over time mentors need to develop a toolkit i.e. a portfolio of models and frameworks to help mentee understand the issues they face
- Business and/or professional savvy – mentors must be able to reflect critically on experience to develop judgement which they can share with mentees and also help to address mentee issues
- Commitment to own learning – mentors have to take responsibility for their learning and become role models for self-managed learning
- Relationship management – mentor should be confident and comfortable to manage the dynamics in mentor-mentee relationship, build rapport and respond sensitively to mentees' needs and emotions

Therefore, an effective mentor must have a blend of both functional as well as relational skills. Merriam (1983) in his empirical mixed method study within leading US corporations of the time such as Manhattan Bank, General Electric and Ogilvy-Mather Inc., emphasised that an effective mentor, apart from carrying out the functions of advising, guiding, supporting, protecting, directing, challenging, encouraging and motivating, must be able to develop and maintain an 'intense emotional relationship akin to parental love' with his or her mentee. This emphasis on relational capabilities with emotional intelligence as a core competence of a mentor is an area of current and future research.

An ineffective mentor

In practice not all mentors demonstrate the competencies discussed previously. Sometimes, mentors may volunteer to take on this role but not dedicate the time and commitment required; in some instances they may want to but are not able to manage conflicting priorities (Sanyal & Rigby, 2013). Others may have their own agenda, including own personal development, which can lead to the process becoming a paper exercise rather a two-way dynamic learning process leading to development and change. Morton-Cooper & Palmer

(2000) have placed mentor traits within two axes: enabling/disabling and facilitation/manipulation. While the behaviours for an enabling and facilitative role have been discussed above, they describe a ‘toxic mentor’ as one who is not easily accessible, dumpers who place protégés in challenging situation and then abandon them, blockers who thwart mentees’ needs either deliberately or unconsciously and destroyers who ‘tear down’ their protégés and undermine them in private or public. Clutterbuck (2004) refers to such individuals as ‘mentors from hell’. He suggests that such mentors might have an alternative agenda, transfer their own problems into the mentee’s situation, take umbrage if mentee is able to address their own solution and not be engaged in their own learning.

The sets of competencies, behaviours and skills discussed above illustrate that to be effective as a mentor, one needs to be authentic, display strong emotional intelligence, be an excellent communicator and be sincerely committed to the development of others. However, these are generic competencies of a mentor and several contextual factors are likely to determine the emphasis a mentor may need to place on particular competencies or sets of competencies. These will be discussed in later sections.

An Effective Mentee

Although there is no doubt that the role of mentoring is to help mentees develop themselves, it is still essential to consider the skills and behaviours of a mentee, as this can have substantial impact on the quality and type of help he or she receives (Clutterbuck, 2004). In their studies, Singh, Ragins & Tharenou (2009) assessed the rising star hypothesis and propose that individuals who are on the fast track to career success are more likely to gain mentors than others, Allen & Eby (2011) in their handbook on mentoring also suggest that mentors select their protégés based on their performance and potential; intuitively, mentors

will be drawn to those who stand out for their talent and they will be more willing to invest their time when mentees use the time well and are open to feedback.

Therefore, literatures appear to focus on what mentors are looking for in a mentee; for example, Zay (1984) highlights the following criteria:

- Intelligence – mentees must have the ability to identify and solve business problems
- Ambition and enthusiasm – mentees must be able and ambitious, striving for career progression; willing to take on new or additional roles
- Succession potential and hard working – mentors are likely to want a mentee who is capable of following in his or her footsteps and are willing to work hard for this i.e actively seek challenging assignments
- Strong interpersonal skills – mentees must be able to forge new alliances and demonstrate networking ability

Where mentors seek such capabilities in a mentee, the context is usually sponsorship mentoring within an organisation aimed at ‘high flyers’ or ‘future potentials’. However, mentoring is increasingly viewed as an individual learning and development tool for wider use directed at individuals with a wide range of abilities and needs, such as mentoring programmes for disaffected youths and people with learning disability, mentoring in the context of gender and sexual preference, mentoring for refugee and immigrant students and academic mentoring for students. Mentees on such Programmes are unlikely to require the same criteria, although ownership of learning and personal commitment will be expected of all mentees irrespective of the type or context of the programme.

Thus, as mentoring is a two-way relationship, the mentee’s capabilities and commitment is crucial for its success. According to Clutterbuck (2004), a ‘good’ mentee will take primary responsibility for arranging meetings and setting agenda, manage own expectations of the

relationship, be able to select and bring issues for discussion, willing to challenge and be challenged, show respect, openness and good humour and fulfil obligations of the relationship not only to the mentor but also to any other third party such as their line manager or programme co-ordinator. He or she must also understand the purpose and organisational context of the mentoring programme, manage his or her own as well as the mentor's expectations and be clear about the positive outcomes for both parties. Therefore, a mentee is required to take the initiative, regularly reflect on the process, take responsibility for their own development and embrace change and new ideas (Allen et al 2011; Clutterbuck 2011).

An ineffective mentee

Not all mentees fully engaged in the mentoring relationship. There may be numerous reasons for this; such as lack of commitment or interest in the process, they may have been recruited on to a mentoring programme without fully understanding the context or being fully clear about expectations. In such cases, this can have a negative effect on the mentoring relationship in the first phase and can lead to an early closure. In other cases, a mentee may be keen to engage with the mentor but may lack confidence or may find it difficult to be at ease with his or her mentor. Here, self-confidence can be a valuable competency in a mentee; however over-confidence verging on arrogance is unlikely to be appreciated by the mentor. Also, a mentor can help a mentee to build his or her confidence as a part of their development.

Effective mentoring relationship

Once started, a mentoring relationship tends to follow a common pathway of evolution (Kram 1983; Missirian, 1982; Clutterbuck, 1995, 1998). However, how mentors and mentees are supported through each of these stages and the transition from one to the other may have a

significant influence on the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship. This is dependent on a range of factors.

First, the affinity between the mentor and mentee will impact on the effectiveness of the relationship. This is referred to as 'rapport' or 'rapport building' in the mentoring literature (Clutterbuck, 1998, 2001; Megginson *et al*, 2006). The matching process within a mentoring programme attempts to address this by trying to ensure that mentors and mentees are paired to enable this rapport building process. Thus, the matching process may consider race, age, gender, work experience, personal interests, mode of preferred communication etc. to support this. However, it will be up to the individual pairs to build on their mutual interest, motivation and commitment to establish a sustainable relationship throughout the mentoring programme and sometime even beyond it. Training and support sessions can also help both mentors and mentees to consider behaviours and capabilities which will help them to maintain this relationship.

Second, both mentors and mentees must be clear about the 'purpose' of the mentoring exchange. If the goal of each mentoring exchange as well as the overall outcome of the mentoring intervention is clear, this will ensure that each mentor-mentee exchange delivers optimum value both for the mentor and the mentee. Therefore the 'clarity of purpose' (Clutterbuck 2001) or the 'working alliance' (Brockbank & McGill, 2006) to achieve the mentoring outcomes together is another essential factor in the effectiveness of a mentoring relationship. Several studies have discussed the need for 'expectations' to be shared early on in formal mentoring relationships to ensure both parties receive the support to achieve them and early alignment with perceptions and expectations between mentors and mentees can avoid problems with mismatch and misunderstanding later (Young & Perreew, 2004; Egan, 2005). However, it is important to note that 'early' expectations and objectives may change with the mentee's increasing understanding of themselves and their environment and

therefore effective mentoring relationship will require regular review of mentoring expectations. Thus, 'goal clarity' will be a key competency for both mentors and mentees.

Third, the progress through the stages or phases of the mentoring relationship is likely to be dependent on the 'intensity of learning' (Clutterbuck, 1998) i.e. the quality of the learning exchange. The mentor-mentee conversations must be meaningful for both. The mentee should be able to 'learn' or at least gain relevant information which increases knowledge and understanding or sign posting for access to further information or networking opportunities. The mentor should get a clear sense that he or she is contributing to the mentee's learning and development. According to Jones (2013) sharing experiences, views and stories are the most influential way mentors and mentees learn. Consequently, mentoring conversation offer a social learning process by which both the mentors and the mentees acquire new information, attitude and behaviours (McDowall-Long, 2004). However, as sometimes the most significant mentoring outcomes may be realised long after the formal ending of the relationship and on some occasions personal development and growth may be difficult to attribute specifically to mentoring interventions, the most common measure of effective mentoring relationship, i.e achievement of agreed outcomes, may not always be valid.

Finally, successful mentoring is a two way, dynamic process where the functions of both the mentors and mentees are equally important. Also, the number of functions may not always equate to the success of the relationship. Whether these functions are psychological, developmental or specifically career related, mentors and mentees will require both functional as well as relational skills and capabilities to sustain an effective mentoring relationship (Colley, 2003; Haddock-Millar & Sanyal, 2015).

Key methodological issues for considerations

As discussed above, research in the field of mentoring has tended to offer sets of generic competencies, skills and behaviours for mentors and mentees and the outcomes from mentoring relationships. Although this has enabled all professionals involved in mentoring programmes to identify, develop and support these skill sets, it is important to consider the contextual relevance of when, where and which competencies will or should apply. It is the purpose, functions, type and stage of mentoring which will determine the requirement of the competencies for mentors and mentees.

The context and purpose is an important factor. For example, although comparison is often made between the mentoring functions within education and industry (Ghosh, 2012) there are also overlaps. Anderson & Shannon (1988) argue that effective educational mentoring programmes must be grounded on a clear and strong conceptual foundation, particularly as in education, a mentor may play several roles ranging from being a role model to a counsel, teacher, guide and a friend. Therefore, it is imperative to have an articulated approach to mentoring which includes an agreed definition of the mentoring relationship, the essential functions of the mentor role, the activities through which selected mentoring functions will be expressed, and the dispositions or capabilities that mentors must exhibit if they are to carry out requisite mentoring functions and activities. Similarly in business mentoring, the mentor also plays multiple roles that serve the overarching purposes of supporting both career and psychosocial development of the mentee (Kram, 1988). Business mentors may be involved in personal and emotional guidance, coaching, advocating, as well as facilitation of learning and career advice of the mentees within the organisation (Fowler & O’Gorman, 2005). This will involve more than one mentoring function and therefore require an appropriate set of competencies. Therefore, it is important to recognise that the context may require emphasis on different sets of mentor competencies. For example, listening and congruence, giving

feedback, and interest in developing others may be a strong set of competencies in educational mentoring whereas business savvy, conceptual modelling, challenge and confrontation may be more relevant for business mentors. Some common core mentor competencies, regardless of context are self-awareness, communication competence, goal clarity and managing emotions.

Another difference to consider is the function or type of mentoring. Although, traditionally mentoring has been defined as a relationship between an older, more experienced mentor and a younger, less experienced protégé for the purpose for helping and supporting the protégé's career (Kram, 1985; Levinson, 1978; Ragins, 1999; Wanberg, Welsh & Hezlett, 2003), this is considered to be a US centric definition where the mentee is a protégé i.e someone who is sponsored and/ or protected. In such 'sponsorship mentoring' (Kram 1985), mentors have been able to oversee the career development of the mentee through facilitating their learning, offering advice and guidance, as well as providing psychological support, and promoting or sponsoring (Zey, 1984; Haddock-Millar and Sanyal, 2015). Thus, where mentoring is primarily about career development i.e. sponsorship mentoring, the essential competences for the mentor will focus on his or her interest in achieving through others and guiding the mentee to achieve career progression. Where the mentor is also the direct line manager or the boss i.e in supervision mentoring which is a sub-set of sponsorship mentoring, clearly, one of the key competences here must relate to relational aspect of how the mentor separates out the mentoring functions from the supervisory functions, avoiding or managing any potential for conflicting priorities. The mentee must demonstrate ambition and enthusiasm to succeed and be willing to work hard and forge new alliances through networking opportunity. In contrast, in a development mentoring programme where the aim is to enhance learning and development, the mentee competencies will focus on commitment and willingness to learn

and be challenged. For the mentor, the behavioural awareness and relationship management competencies will be the key to the success of the relationship.

A consideration for difference is the medium of mentoring i.e a traditional mentoring (face-to-face) or e mentoring (Bierema & Merriam, 2002; Shpigelman, Weiss & Reiter, 2009; Hamilton & Scandura, 2003). A face-to-face mentoring programme within a medium size company where line managers are the mentors may require emphasis on a different set of competencies to an in-house e-mentoring programme set up in a multinational company where mentors and mentees are separated by different time zones and geographical boundaries. Here, communication competence and relationship management skills within the e-mentoring programme will need to be considered in the context of e-communication and telephone conversations. Hamilton & Scandura's (2003) study exploring the benefits and challenges of e-mentoring, emphasise the need to develop 'electronic chemistry' in an e-mentoring relationship, particularly in the initial stage. Here, alongside computer literacy, the ability to personalise and emotionalise the media will require a lot of commitment and patience from both the mentor and mentee to move through the phases of the relationship. If mentor and mentee invest the time and engage in building the rapport, the relationship will moved forward, otherwise e-communication may became a challenge to the development of the relationship.

Also, the competencies required for both the mentor and the mentee may evolve as the relationship develops and matures. The early stage of mentoring will require emphasis on effective communication to build rapport; goal clarity will be essential to progress the relationship. Other competencies would come into play to sustain the relationship and achieving the mentoring outcomes. Purcell (2004) suggests that the initial opportunity to develop a mentoring relationship in person may be most effective. In e-mentoring programme video skypeing conversations should be considered where possible to ensure visual cues can

be exchanged as a part of the rapport building process between mentors and mentees. Thus, multiple methods of communication are likely to maximise learning and achieve programme outcomes (Hegstad & Wentling, 2005). A mentee must be willing to engage and learn from the mentor as a first step and then build on this as the relationship progresses using the mentee competencies discussed earlier.

Finally, in establishing the effectiveness of mentors, mentees and the mentoring relationship, the researchers and authors so far appear to have taken a linear approach. However, today's fast changing organisations are characterised by complex behaviours that emerge as a result of often nonlinear spatio-temporal interactions among a large number of component systems at different levels of the organisation. Mitleton-Kelly (1997) referred to these systems in organisations as the Complex Adaptive Systems. Lansing (2003) also suggests that complexities lurk within even the extremely simple systems and therefore it may not be practical to know the outcome of interactions which is likely to be emergent and spontaneous. Therefore, this is more than likely to impact on the nature of relationships in organisations. More recently, Clutterbuck (2012) has also highlighted that organisations and their employees form a complex, adaptive system where the people and the organisations are constantly changing and so the relationships in these organisations are dynamic and constantly evolving. However, the phases and stages of mentoring models (Kram, 1983; Missirian, 1982; Clutterbuck, 1998) suggest that the individuals involved in the mentoring process will move from one stage of their relationship to another which reinforces the notion of mentoring as a linear, quasi-parental relationship (Collney 2003). Similarly, the mentoring success and outcomes of the relationships do not appear to consider societal factors such as individual lifestyles or life histories and the impact this can have on the relationship. Thus, a mentor's or mentee's family circumstances, beliefs, religious practice, economic status is often not considered to understand the mentor-mentee relationship development. Also,

organisational antecedents such as organisational culture and structure will have an effect on the mentoring programme (Hegstad & Wentling 2005). For example, where the culture supports the pursuit of personal power and influence, as in the US context, the behaviours by the mentor in helping the mentee to gain power would be an important competence, and high levels of ambition might be a desirable quality in a mentee. In contrast, in a collectivist or less authoritarian culture, such competencies would be less relevant. Another cultural variation, which may impact on mentor-mentee relationship, is that if an organisational culture supports employee learning and development, a mentoring programme's likelihood of success increases; on the other hand, if an organisation is downsizing or experiencing turbulence it may be difficult to locate suitable mentors.

The broader socio-economic and political agenda, which has driven the formalisation of mentoring is obvious from the increasing range of contexts in which mentoring is offered today, such as in education to support students, in companies for staff development, in youth development programmes, as a part of diversity training and social inclusion. However, it is important to note that in most situations, mentoring programmes operate within a complex, adaptive system where both internal organisational dynamical systems as well as external environmental factors will impact on behaviours, both individual and group, which in turn will affect the interaction between mentors and mentees. These circumstances will define the expected mentor and mentee behaviours and competences.

What measures need to be taken for an effective mentor- mentee relationship?

1. Design and development of mentoring programme

A robust and well-structured mentoring programme can go a long way to ensuring that mentor-mentee relationships are well matched, developed and sustained. There are a number

of different frameworks which can be utilised to assist with the design and implementation of mentoring programmes. For example, The International Standards for Mentoring Programmes in Employment (ISMPE) provides a clear structure which can also be used to continually evaluate the effectiveness of the mentoring programmes. Generally, the stages of these programmes are:

- Project design involving clear scoping and identification of stakeholder aims, objectives and evaluation strategy.
- Criteria for recruitment of mentors and mentees are established and awareness raising activities are undertaken prior to recruitment.
- Training or briefing for both mentors and mentees is provided. The ISMPE guidelines suggest that mentors and mentees be trained together to develop a shared understanding.
- Mentors and mentees are given an opportunity to express a preference for a partner based on brief biographical profiles before matching is undertaken.
- Once the matches are agreed and accepted, the mentoring begins.
- At the outset, throughout and at the end of the project baseline, interim and final evaluations are undertaken to capture experiences and learning from all project stakeholders.
- Mentors and mentees receive some form of continuous support for at least the first 12 months of the relationship.
- Clear and planned endings are considered at the start; this will result in stronger positive recollection of the relationship.

2. Training and support for mentors and mentees

Many mentors volunteer to take on this role and others find themselves acting as mentor to contribute to an in-house mentoring programme. Where programmes are planned and

structured in advanced, there may be opportunity to train mentors on the skills discussed above. Clutterbuck (2004) advocates the need to motivate the mentor and help him or her to understand how he or she can contribute to the mentee's development. Workshops can be planned, designed and delivered to ensure that mentors are clear about the aims and objectives of the programme, understand the dynamic nature of mentoring, its stages and phases, and the behaviours, capabilities and techniques required to be an effective mentor.

To be able to take responsibility for the mentoring relationship, a mentee training session or a workshop is also essential. Here, the aims and objectives of the mentoring programme as well as the expectations of both the mentor and mentee can be addressed. The skills and behaviours of a mentee can be explored through experiential, interactive learning activities to enable a mentee to understand how he or she can be effective in the relationship and achieve the required mentoring outcomes. Where possible and appropriate, mentors and mentees should be trained together as it provides a developmental opportunity for both joint understanding as well as building the mentoring relationship. This can help to strengthen the initial 'phase' of the relationship. In case of e-mentoring programmes, online training material should be made available to both mentors and mentees.

Apart from initial training, some mentors and mentees may require ongoing support to develop and sustain the mentoring relationship during the mentoring programme. Here, the role of experienced learning facilitators with a clear understanding of the organisational context as well as individual capabilities can help and guide mentors and mentees to manoeuvre through the layers of complexities within the organisation to maintain effective mentoring relationships and achieve the required mentoring outcomes.

3. Role of a Mentoring Programme Manager

Although both the mentors and the mentees must be fully engaged and committed to the mentoring for its success, the role of an effective programme manager or co-ordinator is essential within a professional mentoring program. An effective mentoring programme manager can often make the difference between a failed mentoring relationship and a successful one as he or she plays a critical role in the development and implementation of the mentoring programme. Key functions may include training participants, engaging key stakeholders, reporting to senior management and evaluating the programme. Therefore, the Mentoring Programme Manager can be pivotal in managing the dynamic processes in recruiting, building and maintaining relationships with mentors, mentees, their line managers/tutors as well as sponsors of the programme such as senior management and funding bodies.

4. Ongoing evaluation of mentoring relationships

The process of evaluation must be interwoven throughout the mentoring programme as part of both support and supervision processes, including continual monitoring of the mentoring relationships and their progress toward established goals, as well as capturing qualitative and quantitative data efficiently and accurately. This method of ongoing evaluation can help to address any arising issues with individual mentor-mentee pairs and thereby improve overall mentoring success. It can identify and provide need for additional support for a mentee or a mentor as required as well as other resourcing and management issues within the programme. This enables an overview of the mentor mentee relationship within a more complex adaptive system rather than a linear approach which can be limiting to the growth and development of both individual relationships as well as the programme as a whole.

Recommendation for future research

The current sets of mentor mentee competencies are mainly conceptual; therefore in-depth empirical studies on the effectiveness of these competencies and their impact on the mentoring relationship should be considered. Application of sets of competencies could be tracked through recruitment, selection and development of mentors and mentees as well through the stages of the relationship to understand effectiveness and impact. Another potential area of research is a comparative or multiple case studies of traditional mentoring and e-mentoring to identify the similarity and difference in the competencies applied. The evolving nature of the required competencies through the development of the mentoring relationship could be another specific area of research. Mentoring research can also be further widened to study the impact of personal context such as socio-economic, religious and life histories on both capabilities of mentors and mentees as well as the development and effectiveness of mentoring relationships. Similarly, how mentor and mentee competencies may vary according to context, purpose and type of mentoring could be another both interesting and useful area for further research. Finally, mentoring relationships should be studied in the context of the dynamic, complex systems in which mentoring programmes often operate to understand the key influences and drivers of an effective mentoring programme. In such an evolving system, how the competencies of a mentor and mentee may interact and influence behaviours of each other and the overall efficacy of the relationship will be another interesting and cutting edge topic for future research.

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