

The skills and tools required by a mentor



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Creating a Professional Development Plan

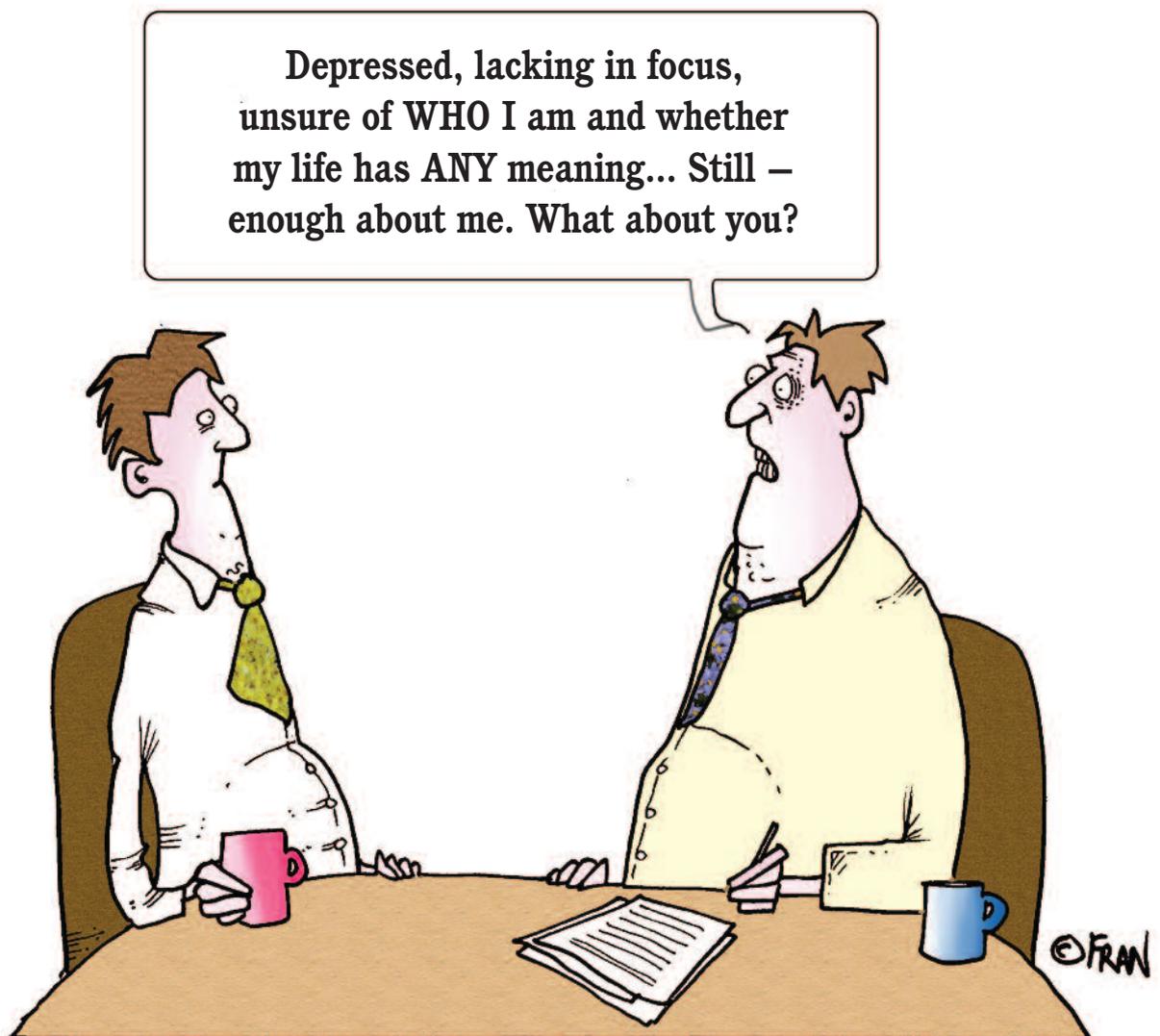
How can you be a good role model?

What type of records will you need to keep?

How will you create the right environment for effective mentoring?

What will you cover at the first meeting?

How NOT to mentor



The skills and tools required by a mentor

The aim of this section is to consider the skills and tools required by a mentor. It is intended to answer such questions as:

- What are the key skills of a mentor?
- How will you communicate with your mentee?
- How will you manage two-way feedback?
- How will you use reflective practice in a mentoring situation?
- How can you create a Professional Development Plan?
- How can you be a good role model?
- What type of records will you need to keep?
- How will you create the right environment for effective mentoring?
- What will you cover at the first meeting?

The key skills of a mentor

The mentor's key skills are:

- 1 listening in order to understand
- 2 questioning to clarify and make sure they've understood correctly
- 3 questioning to explore additional options and consequences
- 4 action planning for the future.

Throughout these stages, the mentor is also facilitating the mentee's learning, development and performance.

Through the use of questions (and challenging 'with respect'), the mentor guides the mentee to:

- find their own solutions
- develop their own skills
- create new ways of thinking
- change their own assumptions and perceptions
- gain greater self-awareness
- improve their personal and business performance.

How will you communicate with your mentee?

Communication is a two-way process in which we both send and receive messages. We are like transmitters, giving out different signals to everyone around us from the moment we wake up in the morning, and receiving signals back from them.

The face-to-face communication process starts with an idea in one person's mind. They translate the idea into words and actions, and this becomes the message they 'send' to another person. The person receiving the message then translates it back into an idea. Effective communication has taken place when the receiver's idea is the same as the sender's idea.

ACTIVITY 3

Types of communication

There are three basic types of communication: **words**, **tone of voice** and **body language**.

What percentage of these three types do you believe the average person uses? Note these down opposite:

(Answers on page 18)

Words	=	_____	%
Tone of voice	=	_____	%
Body language	=	_____	%
Total	=	_____	%

Body language

Words are only part of the message and people don't always say what they mean. Body language is an excellent indication of how people really feel. Being able to 'read' body language is an art that allows you to perceive what others are actually thinking. By focusing on someone's body language, you can discover their true feelings towards you and about what you are saying. It's a skill that is beyond value in social as well as business situations, and if someone is being less than honest, their body language will usually give them away.

Using body language successfully involves four stages:

- 1 Learn what to look for.
- 2 Recognise people's body language so you can 'read' them better.
- 3 Recognise your own body language.
- 4 Control your own body language and use it to your advantage so you give the right messages to other people.

If your business brings you into contact with people from different nationalities and cultures, be careful with the first stage, learning what to look for. There are many body language gestures that are universal – but there are many that are not! Take care not to give or take offence unwittingly because of these differences.

The following information relates to body language in Western cultures only.

Clusters and changes

It takes a number of 'signals' to give you the full picture – one gesture doesn't prove how the other person is thinking. The fact that they have their arms folded may mean that they are being defensive about something – but it may simply mean that they are feeling cold.

Look instead for clusters – several individual bits of body language that fit together to tell the same story. Look also for any changes in the person's body language as you speak to them. This can give you an accurate picture of what they think about what you are saying.

Facial expression and head position

We all have a wide range of facial expressions that are very easily interpreted by whoever is watching us. If you watch someone's expressions and notice their gestures and the position of their head as well, it can be possible to work out what they are saying without even hearing their words.

In most cultures, nodding and shaking the head indicates 'yes' and 'no', and watching for negative head movements, however slight, is an easy way to spot when someone has an objection or is in doubt about something.

There are three basic head positions. The first is a neutral position. The second is where the head is tilted slightly to one side, indicating interest. If this is coupled with a smile, clearly it means the person is feeling very positive! The third position is where the head is down, indicating a negative attitude.

Watch out for inappropriate facial expressions. For example, if a smile is maintained fixedly for too long, it might be masking negative feelings.

Posture

The way we hold our bodies is important. If someone's posture is relaxed, with their arms behind their back or by their side, they are probably feeling open, confident and friendly. But even a simple change in their body position can indicate anger or antipathy. If they have their hands on their hips, watch out – this is a classic aggression signal!

If a person leans slightly towards you, it can suggest they are interested, friendly and approachable. If their feet are turned towards you, you have their attention. If they lean away from you, however, it could indicate lack of interest, boredom or even dislike. Leaning backwards tends to give very strong 'stay away' messages. An upright posture denotes assertiveness and confidence, but possibly a lack of emotion too, while slouching indicates a lack of confidence.

Eye contact

Looking someone in the eye establishes a real basis for communication. It tells you that:

- the other person is aware of you
- they are interested in you.

People can seem honest or untrustworthy according to the amount of eye contact they make. Someone who is being dishonest will meet our eyes for less than a third of the time – successful con-artists understand this, and will deliberately make extra eye contact in order to appear genuine and trustworthy.

Of all the parts of the human body, our eyes are probably the most expressive. Our pupils dilate and contract according to mood. If the person's pupils are small it's possible that they are hostile or in some other way negative. If they are large, they are probably feeling positive.

To establish a good rapport with someone, it's probably best to meet their gaze about 60–70% of the time.

Blink rates can be equally revealing. People normally blink about six to eight times a minute. If this slows down, it can indicate that the person has lost interest or is bored by what you are saying.

Personal space

It is important not to intrude on someone's intimate and personal space if we want to maintain a professional relationship with them. This includes taking care not to make too much eye contact or stand too close.

Our society also has unwritten rules about touching each other. People in crowded lifts, on public transport or in supermarket queues who are forced to touch each other avoid speech and eye contact in order to lessen the intrusion. Generally, the only acceptable touching between strangers is the handshake when saying 'hello' and 'goodbye'.

Take great care to recognise how cultural diversity influences all aspects of verbal and non-verbal behaviour.

Find out more

If you want to find out more about communication skills, visit <http://mentor.ioee.co.uk/resources> where you'll find additional resources.

The three levels of awareness

When you communicate a message to someone, three levels of awareness are at play at the same time:

- **objective reality** – what the person actually sees and hears happening
- **interpretation** – how they make sense of what they hear and see
- **the individual** – how they react to what they see and hear.

Getting your message across depends on the level of awareness you have while you are mentoring.

Your mentee will be going through the same process

Questioning skills

From an early age, we are encouraged to give answers but rarely taught how to phrase and ask questions – yet this is just as important. Types of question include:

- **Closed** questions, requiring a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ or other brief answer. These are good for finding out specific information but can shut down a conversation or make the other person feel they are being interrogated.
- **Open** questions, such as ‘What do you think?’ invite longer answers leading to an exploration of thoughts, emotions and the expression of complex ideas.
- **Follow-up** questions encourage someone to continue talking: ‘Could you explain that?’
- **Take-a-guess** questions, such as ‘What do you think will happen?’, ask the person to speculate – but be careful as their answer may be unreliable!
- **Hypothetical** questions can aid creativity: ‘If you lost your job tomorrow what would you do?’
- **Either/or** questions can encourage decision-making or open up discussion of alternatives.
- **Reflective** questions are useful for checking you’ve understood what has been said or summing up: ‘Tell me if I have got this right...’
- **Find-the-priority** questions are useful for establishing the other person’s goals: ‘Which area would you like to deal with first?’

Before asking a question, think: why are you asking it? Are you searching for meaningful information or simply trying to break the ice? By using a good question, you can empower the mentee and enable them to really think about the issue, resolve it themselves and take responsibility for it. A powerful question can provoke a new insight, move the person to action or help them commit to something. Your goal is to provoke self-awareness, so dig deeper when the mentee gives a general answer. Your questions should be designed to get them to think in a new direction.

A poor question, on the other hand, might lead nowhere. Take this exchange, for example: ‘Did you feel that went well?’ ‘Yes.’ Replace that closed question with an open one (‘What do you think went well?’) and the conversation immediately opens up. Try not to influence the mentee by prompting or by phrasing your question in a particular way – and remember that listening to the answers is as important as choosing the right questions.

‘Killer’ questions

Current situation

- What will give you the most value from today’s session?
- What do you want to focus on today?
- What issue or problem do you want to discuss today?
From whose perspective is it a problem?
- What is keeping you awake at night?
- What is the present situation in detail?
- What is happening now that is working well?
- What is happening now that tells you that you have a problem?
- What do you have control over?
- What strengths and resources do you bring to this?

You’ll have the chance to practise your questioning skills when you work on the case study in **Activities 9, 10 and 11.**

Options, possibilities and plans

- What do you want to achieve? Where do you have control or influence with regard to this goal?
- Where do you want to be a year from now? How will you measure your success?
- What else might you consider?
- What actions are possible now?
- What control do you have over this?
- What are your choices? What can you change?
- If you had to find a way, what would it be?
- How might that work?
- Do you have a timetable of actions?
- What is holding you back?
- What do you not know about this situation/project? How could you find out?
- Can you think of anything that might disrupt your plans?
- What risks are involved?
- What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?
- If you improved one thing you do, what change would make the biggest improvement to your business's performance?
- What do you do when you're really up against it?
- What do you enjoy about what you do?
- What can I say to you when you are most stuck that will help you return to action?
- What might you be overlooking?

Resources

- What written help exists?
- Who else has done this before?
- Who else can you ask?
- Who needs to be involved/informed?

Evaluation

- What have you learned from this?
- What can you do differently next time?
- What value did you take from this experience?
- What did you do well?
- Did anything happen that you could not have predicted?
- What will you do next?

Answers to Activity 3

It is generally accepted that words account for about **7%**, tone of voice for about **38%** and body language for about **55%** of communications.

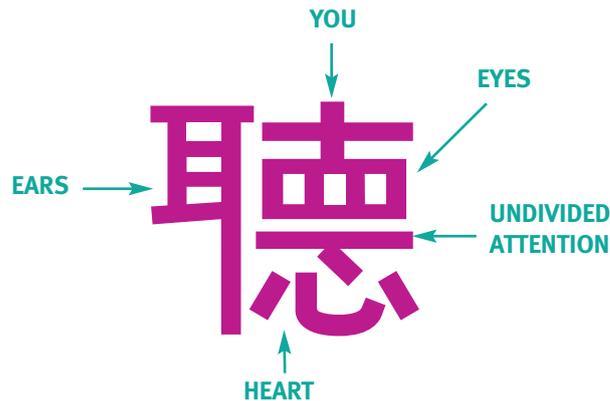
Listening skills

One of your most important responsibilities is to have good listening skills. In any oral communication, we are constantly switching between being the speaker and being the listener. A good listener knows how to use their listening skills to help make the communication effective.

Obviously, we must listen attentively to the message. Without concentrated, *active* listening, much of the meaning will be lost.

The Chinese have a symbol for effective listening, which, when translated into English, is made up of five elements:

- you
- your ears
- your eyes
- your heart
- your undivided attention.



How to listen well

Watch for non-verbal clues. Listen with your eyes as well as your ears. Watch for non-verbal clues, such as the person's body language.

Learn to use your thinking time wisely. Train your mind to scan like radar for key ideas. Try to identify the theme of the other person's message, and check your grasp of the facts by asking them questions.

Become an observer. Avoid becoming 'one who speaks and listens to himself speak'.

Listen with an open mind. We all have a tendency to resist ideas that are of no personal interest to us. Open your mind and focus on what the person is saying, even if you think you're not interested – you might learn something new!

Be aware of your personal prejudices. Guard against the tendency to exercise emotional censorship by ignoring or blanking out ideas you would rather not hear.

Listen all the way through. Do not jump to conclusions. The punchline usually doesn't come until the end!

- Look at the person and use your eyes to show that you are listening.
- Turn off any negative thoughts you have about the person.
- Lean towards them.
- Start listening with the first word and listen intently.
- Think at the speed they are talking; don't jump ahead.
- Do not interrupt.
- Nod in agreement; use facial expressions and body language to show you understand.
- Ask questions.
- Stick to the subject the person is talking about.
- Use the person's name and the word 'you'.

Find out more

If you want to find out more about listening skills, visit <http://mentor.ioee.co.uk/resources> where you'll find additional resources.

ACTIVITY 4

Personal analysis of listening habits

Have you ever evaluated your listening habits? If so, this will be a good opportunity for you to review them. If not, it will give you some insights and help you increase your listening effectiveness. Be as honest with yourself as you can.

When you are in a communication situation where you have a listening responsibility, do you:	Seldom	Most of the time	Sometimes
1 Position yourself so that you can see and hear the other person clearly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Try to keep an eye on what's going on elsewhere in the room?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Continually reflect mentally on what the speaker is trying to say?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Develop your response while the other person is speaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Suspend your judgement of the person's appearance and delivery?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Interrupt when you disagree or feel the need to challenge a statement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Examine your thoughts for prejudice or bias that may influence your listening?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Cut the person off or let your mind wander once you believe you've captured the person's message?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Encourage the person to continue, by using responses such as 'I see' and 'uhuh'?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Attempt to direct the conversation to the conclusion you desire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 Repeat key concepts and essential aspects of the message?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 Feel the need to have the last word?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 Listen to the feelings being expressed and reflect those feelings back to the speaker to show that you understand?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 Let your emotions – such as anger, dislike and defensiveness – influence your reception of the message?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 Maintain frequent eye contact with the speaker?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 Assume you know what the speaker is going to say before he or she says it?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Rapport

First of all, what is rapport? Most people would describe it as the ability to get on with someone, share understanding or be on the same wavelength. It is vitally important to establish this rapport, for without it your relationship with your mentee is likely to run into problems.

From time to time, we all meet people with whom we have no rapport. Why is that? What is missing? Often, this happens because one person feels the other is either 'stand-offish' or over-familiar. Sometimes it might be to do with the person's tone of voice. More often than not, whether we are getting along with the other person or not, we notice it intuitively.

How to build the right rapport with your mentee

Think back to when you last felt very comfortable with another person. Perhaps you were meeting for the first time but something just 'clicked'. Was this a gut feeling? Intuition?

One sign that there is comfort or rapport between two people is that they have a similar tone of voice, body language, movements and so on. Rapport also comes from shared values or experiences, and sometimes from a 'chemistry' that is hard to define. We tend to like and trust people who are similar to us. This reaction happens in our unconscious and that's why we put it down to gut feeling or intuition.

Consider how you will build rapport with your mentee.

Building rapport

When in the company of others, have a (discreet) look around at other people talking together. Look for examples of similarities or 'synchronicity' between them, using these questions to guide you:

- Are their body postures similar?
- Do they use similar hand movements?
- Look at their faces, especially their expressions. What do they tell you?
- Are their moods similar?
- How similar are their voices?

There are other elements that could be added to the list but the important thing is that you are able to see for yourself how this happens.

Feedback

The skills of giving and receiving feedback are fundamental to effective relationships and are an essential part of the mentoring process.

If you give feedback skilfully, it will enable you to convey the idea that you want the person to develop and be successful. If you give feedback clumsily, it can sound as if you are blaming the mentee or accusing them of being stupid. Such ‘destructive criticism’ will erode the mentee’s self-esteem and make a positive outcome unlikely.

Receiving feedback is also a skill that can be learned and improved upon. Hopefully you enjoy receiving positive feedback! But you should welcome constructive feedback just as much, because it can lead to valuable learning and development.

Methods of giving feedback

There are a number of ways you can give feedback, some more helpful than others.

- **Positive feedback** praises strengths and achievements. It is possibly the easiest form of feedback to give, and is extremely important.
- **Negative feedback** involves commenting on actions or behaviours that may be hindering a person’s improvement. This is more difficult to give but is equally important. If given skilfully, it is an invaluable way to identify areas in which the person has an opportunity to grow and develop.
- **Constructive feedback** is a combination of positive and negative feedback, and focuses on joint problem-solving. This is probably the most productive way of giving feedback.
- **Destructive feedback** has no benefits whatsoever. This is criticism without positive suggestions and is to be avoided at all costs – it dampens enthusiasm and reduces commitment.



Receiving feedback

The way you receive feedback may affect the way it is given to you. You can influence the person who is giving you feedback to become more effective by responding and asking constructive questions.

Here are some tips when receiving feedback:

- Always welcome positive feedback and enjoy the praise!
- Always listen to what is being said and do not jump to conclusions. Try to understand why you are receiving the feedback.
- Try not to be defensive or justify what you have done.
- If you do not understand what is being said, ask the person to clarify what they mean.
- Ask the person to give examples of your behaviour that have given rise to the feedback.
- Agree what needs to happen next, what both of you will do, and by when.

How will you use reflective practice in a mentoring situation?

It is really important for both the mentor and the mentee to reflect on the mentoring meetings themselves and the actions taken as a result of those meetings. This allows both of them to think about and understand what went well and what didn't go so well. This can be used to ensure that both the mentor and the mentee are learning from the mentoring experience.

How can you help the mentee to reflect on their learning?

When the mentee reflects on what he or she has done, it helps them to understand the link between their actions and the practical results those actions have achieved. This is true both in their professional life and in their personal life. It also gives them a wider understanding of the things that might be important to their business success.

When they become 'reflectors', mentees are then able to apply their new knowledge and skills to their future activities. As mentor, you must help this process along by using reflective questions, for example 'How did you feel at the time' or 'Why do you think that happened?' or 'What made you approach the situation in that particular way?'

Why is it important for the mentee to use reflective practice?

It helps them:

- to accept responsibility for their own personal and business growth
- to see a clear link between the effort they put in and the outcome
- to get value from each mentoring experience
- to 'learn how to learn' and add new skills over time.

Why is it important for the mentor to use reflective practice?

As a mentor, you need to be keenly aware of how learning happens for you yourself, particularly if you want to help others. As you explore your role as mentor, you will need to observe change as it takes place for you.

Reflective practice:

- develops your analytical skills and creative thinking
- highlights areas where you need more knowledge
- leads to greater understanding and ability
- increases the chance of the mentee receiving effective mentoring from you
- helps your self-awareness and your personal and professional development.

When you reflect, think about:

- decisions you make intuitively, on the spur of the moment
- what goes well and what goes badly
- what takes you by surprise
- what you find you can do easily and what proves to be more difficult
- how your mentee behaves, what he or she does, what he or she finds difficult or easy
- what you observe and learn about yourself
- sudden insights, when you notice that your perception of something has changed.

Whenever these things happen, write it all down on your reflective practice sheet contained in your Continuous Professional Development Plan (CPD Plan). Try to do this as soon as possible after the event and remember to include a description of the way you feel. You can download your CPD Plan at <http://mentor.ioee.co.uk/resources>.

Creating a Professional Development Plan

The purpose of a development plan is firstly to identify your current development needs and then to begin your continuous development as an enterprise mentor.

You will need to demonstrate your CPD in order to maintain your mentor status within IOEE and it is therefore important that you review your CPD needs regularly and maintain a record of all CPD activities you undertake.

Once you have completed your reflective review you will be able to draw out the areas you think you need to develop and include them in your CPD Plan. You can also include any needs that have arisen from any other questionnaires or activities in this workbook.

Professional development can come from a wide range of activities, not all of them formal. Development is not just about attending a course. The type of learning most appropriate for you is also related to your learning style – whether you learn better in a classroom setting, for example, or by experiencing the activity ('learning by doing').

Taking into account your individual learning style and learning needs, as well as the resources that are available to you (such as your time), take some time to write your CPD Plan. You will continue to add to your Plan – you never stop developing! So bear in mind that your CPD Plan is a *dynamic* document that changes over time.

How can you be a good role model?

“I am able to control only that of which I am aware. That of which I am unaware controls me.”
Whitmore (2009)

The mentor must be someone who demonstrates the ethics, values and behaviours of the profession of mentoring. As a skilled mentor, you must be self-aware. You must be conscious of the ways you think and communicate. You must be able to understand yourself through self-examination, awareness and reflection. And, as a mentor and role model, you need to be very aware of your external environment. Being self-aware is one of the main skills of an effective mentor.

If you have a high level of self-awareness, you will be able to *listen actively* to the mentee with a clear mind, understand the mentee’s needs and respond confidently to each situation.

As a mentor, it is important that you prepare well for each session and give 100% of your focus and attention to the mentee. This involves:

- being open and receptive
- being non-judgemental about the views and opinions expressed by the mentee
- displaying a high degree of energy and interest in the mentee.

Together, these ingredients help you to be an authentic, trusted and respected role model.

What type of records will you need to keep?

Part of your role as a mentor may be to keep records of sessions. During your first session, you will usually have a discussion about this with your mentee. Your mentoring organisation will have a code of ethics and conduct for mentors and coaches, which will explain the level of record-keeping that they can expect from you.

How will you create the right environment for effective mentoring?

In his book *Concepts of Coaching*, Peter Hill explains the importance of creating an environment in which the mentoring process can be effective.

Use **Activity 6** to note down ways in which you could create the right environment for mentoring. Think about such elements as comfort, confidentiality, noise levels, access to resources, travel and accessibility, neutrality of the space, and so on.

The GROW model

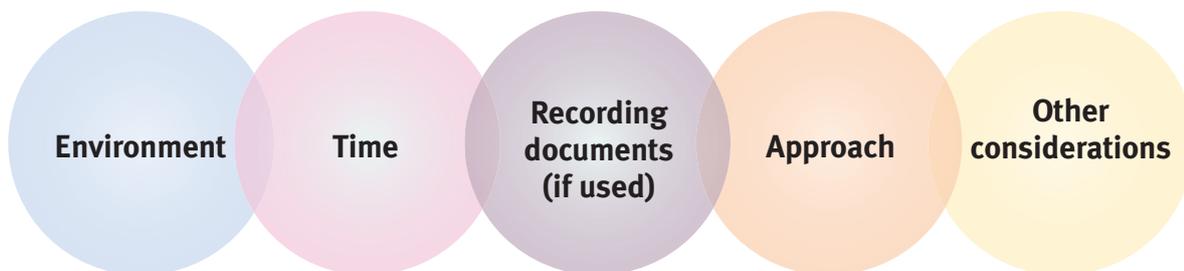
This is a useful technique for structuring mentoring sessions. The GROW model, developed by John Whitmore, allows you to ‘navigate’ your way through a session, first by setting the mentee’s **G**oal and identifying where they are now – their current **R**eality – then exploring their **O**ptions and ensuring they have the **W**ill, or motivation, to grab hold of the challenge and run with it. The four elements can be addressed (and revisited) in any order. For more, see John Whitmore’s book *Coaching for Performance: Growing people, performance and purpose*.

What will you cover at the first meeting?

The following is an example of a checklist covering points you might find useful to discuss at your first meeting with the mentee. (The list is taken from the NWDA *Solutions for Business* provider manual.)

- What do we expect to learn from each other?
- When will we check the relationship is working for us?
- How will we end our relationship if it isn't working?
- What are our goals and what is the order of priority?
- How will we measure progress?
- Do we both agree that openness and trust are essential?
- Will we both give honest and timely feedback?
- What is the ideal schedule for our contact and meetings? How often will we meet?
- How long shall we meet for?
- Will either of us take notes? What can we record?
- What will we agree about boundaries and confidentiality?
- To what extent is each of us prepared to share our network of contacts?
- What is the agenda for our next meeting?

We also need to prepare in terms of:



We must also consider the mentee's point of view. They may not know what to expect from the mentoring process and therefore it is important that you invest time in agreeing their role as well as your own. This would normally form part of an induction for mentees carried out by the mentoring organisation.

How *not* to mentor

You also need to be clear about how *not* to do it! Here is David Clutterbuck's light-hearted take on what he calls 'toxic mentoring'.

The 12 habits of a toxic MENTOR

- Start from the point of view that you – from your vast experience and broader perspective – know better than the mentee what's in his or her interest.
- Be determined to share your wisdom with the mentee whether they want it or not; remind them frequently how much they still have to learn.
- Decide what you and the mentee will talk about and when. Change dates and themes frequently to prevent complacency sneaking in.
- Do most of the talking, checking frequently that the mentee is paying attention.
- Make sure the mentee understands how trivial their concerns are compared to the weighty issues you have to deal with.
- Remind the mentee how fortunate they are to have your undivided attention.
- Neither show nor admit any personal weaknesses. Expect to be the mentee's role model in all aspects of career development and personal values.
- Never ask the mentee what they think they should expect of you – how would they know anyway?
- Demonstrate how important and well connected you are by sharing confidential information they don't need (or want) to know.
- Discourage any signs of levity or humour. This is a serious business and should be treated as such.
- Take the mentee to task when they don't follow your advice.
- Never, never admit that this could be a learning experience for you, too.

The 12 habits of a toxic MENTEE

- Bring to the first formal meeting a long shopping list of things you want the mentor to do for you.
- Expect the mentor to be available for you whenever you want them. (Heroes never need sleep!)
- Regard the mentor as your prime source of gossip to pass on to other people.
- Expect the mentor always to have the answer – that's why they are more senior.
- Expect the mentor to decide when to meet and what to talk about.
- Boast about the relationship to your colleagues at every opportunity.
- Never challenge what the mentor says – s/he is paid to know best.
- Blame the mentor whenever advice doesn't work out – s/he should have known better.
- Treat mentoring sessions as mobile, the easiest item in the diary to move at the last minute.
- Enjoy the opportunity to have a good moan or whinge whenever you meet, especially if no one else will listen to you.
- Make it clear to the mentor that you want to be just like them – adopt their style of speaking, dress and posture.
- Never commit to doing anything as a result of the mentoring session.
- If, by accident, you do commit to something, simply forget to follow it up. (Why spoil the fun of discussion with outcomes?)

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