

What is Mentoring?

- Mentoring can be an enriching relationship for both parties, where one more experienced person (**Mentor**) shares their knowledge, skills, information, insights and life experience with another less experienced person (**Mentee**), in order to create growth through personal and professional development, problem solving and discussion of issues to reach the specific goals of the Mentee using constructive feedback. However, the success of this relationship depends on the communication, commitment and participation of both the Mentor and the Mentee in a confidential space.

- **The roles of a Mentor** can vary depending on the needs of the Mentee. The roles that successful Mentors use are as follows:
 - **Teacher/Advisor Role**- to share knowledge, the wisdom behind mistakes and explain in detail what is expected from the Mentee. This role requires the Mentor to develop realistic career goals with the Mentee and make an action plan of areas to develop.

 - **Problem Solver Role**- referring the Mentee to resources, answering questions in an open respectful way and offering other options and opportunities where available. By creating new opportunities with a minimum of risks the Mentee should not be able to fail, so not affecting their self esteem in a detrimental way. Be guided by your Mentee to know when these opportunities will be helpful, or a hinderance.

 - **Motivator Role**-giving encouragement, positive feedback and support to the Mentee during challenging times and during specific tasks to generate inner drive and act as a morale booster to the Mentee's self esteem. Being reliable and consistent is vital to Mentees, so Mentors should be clear from the start about their availability to the Mentee, to ensure clear boundaries and to reduce misunderstandings. A Mentee who has this open door policy is more likely to ask questions, seek guidance and feel supported.

 - **Coach Role**- By giving clear, positive and constructive feedback to the Mentee enabling them to work to overcome difficulties and change behaviour if necessary. In order to do this effectively you need to ask three specific questions;
 1. **Does the Mentee have the capacity to do the task/job?**
 2. **Is coaching likely to upgrade the Mentee's skills?**
 3. **Is there sufficient time to coach?**

If you know how to provide feedback then the role of the coach is much easier to perform. However, there are four factors that need to be considered before giving feedback. They are:

1. Make sure that the feedback is frequent and useful to the Mentee to give a clear understanding of the progress made so far.
2. Give quality feedback.
3. Make the feedback specific- how, when and why.
4. Give direct feedback on what you have observed.

To give constructive feedback ensure that;

1. You describe the behaviour that you have observed
2. Do not use labels
3. Do not exaggerate
4. Do not be judgemental
5. Phrase the issue as a statement, not a question

- **Guide Role- Set 5 realistic goals;**

1. Be specific as to what the Mentee wishes to achieve, but remain flexible in case of change.
2. Make goals that can be time- framed and limited in number.
3. Ensure that meetings are results orientated, concentrating on the results obtained not the activity it takes to get there.
4. Make the goals realistic and relevant.
5. Make the goals achievable.

➤ **Successful Mentors have the following characteristics;**

Supportive- supporting the needs of the Mentee through adversity and challenge.

Ability to be Patient- commitment of the Mentor to spend time with the Mentee performing mentoring responsibilities.

Respected- Giving the Mentee a positive role model by showing real life examples of values and ethics in professional practice. Learning by example is the most effective tool a Mentor has, allowing the Mentee to observe how the Mentor handles situations and interact with others. For this reason it is vital that all Mentors strive for high professional standards of professionalism, solid work ethics and a positive attitude.

➤ **What is a Mentee?**

Mentees can be anyone who wants to achieve their goals beyond their current position, using the opportunities provided by the Mentor. Mentees are bright and motivated individuals who can vary in age, gender and work or training experience.

Mentees are;

Learners who wish to learn new skills, insights and abilities.

Decision Makers who take charge of their own education.

Initiators who are willing to explore and challenge new initiatives.

Risk Takers in exposing themselves to a Mentor to challenge adversity and learn new ways of knowing and understanding.

Goal Setters who set their own goals and take steps to succeed.

In order to make the Mentee and Mentor relationship successful, look for clues to how the Mentee is feeling;

- Give appropriate eye contact in a respectful way.
- Make the Mentee feel comfortable to ensure trust is built.
- Use hand or facial gestures to show enthusiasm and smile often to show reassurance.
- Use open body language leaning forward to show interest.
- Be power aware in spaces so ensuring that desks and chairs are not acting as barriers between you.
- Ensure personal space is maintained between the Mentor and Mentee.
- Allow time for the Mentee to process information and solve their own problems before seeking help.
- Make the relationship fun!

**Pink Therapy mentoring scheme
courtesy of The Black & Asian Therapist Network
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