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Why Mentor?

OBJECTIVE

In Section 1 you will:

- Understand the importance of mentoring
- Learn about different models of mentoring
- Develop realistic expectations of a mentoring process

This section will take about two hours study time.

Where you see this symbol, allow yourself time to do an activity.



ACTIVITY 1.1

Create a reflective journal, either as a paper document or as an electronic blog (for example see Situ8: <http://www.situ8.org/>). You can use this to record your mentoring experience, by uploading photos, recording your voice and capturing your notes from these mentoring activities.

WHY IS MENTORING IMPORTANT?

At the Centre for Policing Research and Learning we are developing learning support for police mentoring as a way of facilitating and sharing Evidence-Based Practice.

The College of Policing have introduced a national Continuing Professional Development (CPD) framework for policing to improve the competence of police practitioners and help them maintain or enhance standards of professional practice throughout their careers (College.police.uk, 2015). You can find out more about the CPD framework from the College of Policing website:

<http://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Development/professional-development-programme/Pages/Continuing-professional-development.aspx>

Professional development includes managing change. Many individuals find themselves in a change management role having more enthusiasm than skill. If their peers see them as experts, then mentoring may help to foster self-reliance and support their personal development as champions of change. This section describes mentoring and presents two commonly used models of mentoring.

There are many definitions of mentoring for example, Alred's (2014) Mentoring Pocketbook or Clutterbuck's (2004) book entitled Everyone needs a mentor.

Zachary (2002) defines mentoring as:

"Mentoring is best described as a reciprocal and collaborative learning relationship between two or more individuals who share mutual responsibility and accountability for helping a mentee work toward achieving clear and mutually defined learning goals."

This definition places learning at the heart of a two-way relationship with mutual responsibility and accountability. Mentoring is sometimes described as a 'developmental alliance' as well as a 'learning relationship'.



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ACTIVITY 1.2

Follow the links to the videos and descriptions of the GROW and CLEAR models and adapt your own model that you could use in your own practice.

MODELS OF MENTORING

There are a variety of models available to support mentoring. Two of the more popular are:

The GROW model (Whitmore, 2009)

The CLEAR model (Hawkins, 2008)

GROW acronym stands for Goals, Reality, Options, and Will:

- Agree specific GOALS - that are measurable and attainable with realistic time-frames
- Explore the REALITY - identify issues which may help or hinder
- Explore the OPTIONS - what are the available courses of action and what are their advantages and disadvantages
- Determine what you WILL do (a way-forward) - encourage mentee to determine and commit to the best course of action

YouTube video on the GROW model in action:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6f3X2PEsV-Q> (7:08 minutes).

Mindtools internet training resource on the GROW model:

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_89.htm

CLEAR acronym stands for Contracting, Listening, Exploring, Action and Review:

- CONTRACTING - Agree scope, establish desired outcomes, and set ground rules.
- LISTENING - Use active listening to develop shared understanding.
- EXPLORING – Help the mentee reflect upon the situation and explore possible solutions.

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- ACTION: Support the mentee in deciding their next steps.
- REVIEW: Review and reflect on the mentoring process.

The Clear model is described at <http://blessingwhite.com/model/2016/05/17/clear-coaching-model/> and <http://www.personal-coaching-information.com/clear-coaching-model.html>



SETTING EXPECTATIONS

The mentee – mentor relationship can be both informal and professional. Mentee and mentor may have very different initial conceptions of the mentoring process. Mentees can sometimes have unrealistic expectations of their mentors, for example that the process is open-ended; or that the mentor can guarantee a successful outcome, so leaving the responsibility for success is in the hands of the mentor. Early on in the mentoring relationship it is important that you discuss and agree mutual expectations. It may be useful to have this in writing and it could take the form of a written agreement.

This mentoring agreement could include:

- aims, goals and objectives – establishing why the mentee may want a mentor through exploration and identification of what the mentee wants from the relationship
- responsibility – individual or shared responsibility for each of the objectives
- road map – agree a pathway to achieving objectives
- practicalities – such as the frequency of meetings, their location/medium (face to face, online, phone)
- commitment – for your mentee the time they will invest; for you, the mentor the time you will commit to the mentoring relationship
- boundaries – for example, what to do if either mentor or mentee is not fulfilling their part of the relationship
- confidentiality – agree on what can and can not be shared

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ACTIVITY 1.3

Draw up your own mentoring agreement checklist and use it to inform early discussions with your next mentee.

Mentors can be drawn from all levels within the police force and can support different aspects of career development. The appropriate mentee-mentor relationship will depend on the nature of the aims and objectives. For example, a mentee aiming for promotion may benefit from a more senior mentor. However, if the aim is to support the development of specialist skills such as collecting accounts from vulnerable witnesses, then a peer mentor with experience in this area will be more beneficial than a senior officer.

"In a competitive environment, people naturally will, particularly when they're being told in preparation for promotion for example one of the questions that people often ask is, "have you got a mentor?" No. "Well, you ought to go and get a mentor" and the temptation is to go for the highest most influential person who you think may be your mentor"
(EBC Police mentor)

In the policing context some mentees may assume the mentoring relationship will last during the promotion process and end with promotion, making it an instrumental relationship. The mentee may assume the mentor can guarantee a successful outcome, and both may assume shared definitions of success. Others might want a more developmental relationship.



In the next section (Section 2: <http://centre-for-policing.open.ac.uk/sites/default/files/pkf/supporting-ebcs.pdf>) you will learn about what are the key characteristics of an Evidence Based Champion (EBC) and the environment in which they operate. Activities are provided for you to work through with your mentee to develop EBC skills and to practise mentoring skills.

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REFERENCES

This website gives an overview of the CLEAR coaching model through short videos that outline the 5 CLEAR steps: Contract, Listen, Explore, Action and Review.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) framework for policing to improve and help maintain standards of professional practice.

The College of Policing website gives you information that can help your professional development.

Hawkins has developed the CLEAR model for mentoring.

Situ8 is a tool that enables you to annotate using different media types (text, image, video, audio etc.) within any location and can be used to record your mentoring experiences.

Whitmore has developed the GROW model for mentoring.

Teachers who choose to mentor students are often unprepared for the role. This chapter describes key dimensions of effective mentoring.

BLESSINGWHITE (2016) The CLEAR Coaching Model - BlessingWhite - Leadership Development and Employee Engagement. [Online]. Available at <http://blessingwhite.com/model/2016/05/17/clear-coaching-model/>

COLLEGE OF POLICING (2016) CPD Framework [Online]. College of Policing. Available at: <http://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Development/professional-development-programme/Pages/Continuing-professional-development.aspx>

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HAWKINS, P. (2008) 'The coaching profession: some of the key challenges'. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 1, 28-38. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233087921_The_coaching_profession_Some_of_the_key_challenges. You can also download the PDF direct from the References and Resources Section on the Website: <http://centre-for-policing.open.ac.uk/knowledge-exchange/policementor>

SITU8, <http://www.situ8.org/>

SITU8 WEB PORTAL USER GUIDE, (2013), The Open University: https://learn5.open.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/101/mod_resource/content/1/Situ8-web_user-guide.pdf

WHITMORE, J. (2009) Coaching for performance: GROWing human potential and purpose: the principles and practice of coaching and leadership, 4th ed. ed, United Kingdom: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

ZACHARY, L. J. (2002) 'The Role of Teacher as Mentor'. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2002, 27-38.