



AN EMPLOYERS GUIDE ON COACHING AND MENTORSHIP FOR THE WORKPLACE

Employers' Guide on Coaching and Mentorship

Introduction and Definition

Many organizations' core values recognize the fact that people are the most important assets and as such are committed to continually develop employees.

Coaching and mentoring are ways of giving people time to think. This can have a significant impact on the development of individuals, and consequently organizations during a period of economic pressure and continual change. Organizations are now able to offer their employees coaching and mentoring from well trained and experienced practitioners in a way that is as straight forward and effective as possible.

This guide explains more about coaching and mentoring and how it works. It is here to support the development of all coaches and mentors, and those with whom they work, to help you as you grow, learn and thrive at work through effective partnerships.

In order to deliver on an organization's mission and vision, there is need to develop aspiring and existing leaders by giving them space and time to think, reflect, build new skills, allow them to explore and develop a range of leadership behaviors so they can be adaptable, resilient, and ultimately deliver what employers need.

It is important to link the coaching and mentoring objectives to the **vision** and **mission** of the organization.

What is Coaching?

Coaching is a way of having conversations with someone else that are safe, supportive and challenging. It can be a thought-provoking and creative process and will help you to maximize your personal and professional potential.

Recent research points out the huge personal benefits to people who have coaching, particularly at times of change. People might see a coach to improve how they relate to their circumstances, to achieve their goals or to explore new ways of approaching situations.

Common benefits people experience from coaching include:

- Better engagement and performance
- Organizational effectiveness
- More confidence
- Increased resourcefulness
- Stronger Motivation
- Increased sense of direction and focus
- Increased sense of self and self-awareness
- Increased thinking and reasoning capacity

Central to the philosophy of coaching is a belief in the potential of the person being coached to improve their performance and develop their own solutions. While the coach need not be a technical expert in aspects of your work, they must have credibility in order to build an effective partnership with you.



COACHING & MENTORING



What Happens During a Coaching Session?

A skilled coach shall use a combination of questioning, listening, observation and feedback to create a conversation with staff that is rich in insight and learning. They will encourage staff as they do what they need to do so as to move things forward.

Coaching usually lasts for a defined period and focuses on specific work related skills and goals. Goals will be set at the start of the coaching relationship in a way that works for staff to give focus. At the end of the relationship, staff will evaluate these goals together.

Is Coaching Confidential?

A line manager needs to support applications for coaching, as well as give the time and space for coaching. Coaching is based on trust and openness, and the content of your sessions is confidential unless there is a perceived risk to you or others.

Differences to Note between Coaching Mentorship

MENTORING	COACHING
On-going relationship that might last for a long time	Relationship generally has a set duration
Can be more informal and meetings can take place as and when the employee needs advice, guidance or support	Generally more structured in nature and meetings are scheduled regularly
Will share ideas and what they have done	Will help you to identify your own solutions
More long-term and takes a broader view of the person	Short-term and focused on specific development areas/issues
Mentor is usually more experienced and qualified than the employee; often a senior person in the organization who can pass on knowledge, experience and can open doors to others out-of-reach of opportunities.	Coaching is a more equal relationship and generally not determined by the level of experience the coach has of the employee's formal occupational role – rather this professional distance can help to provide a thinking partnership with a different level of challenge and support

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring allows more senior staff to share their knowledge and experiences, whilst supporting other staff in their development journey. It facilitates the building of new networks for both mentor and mentee.

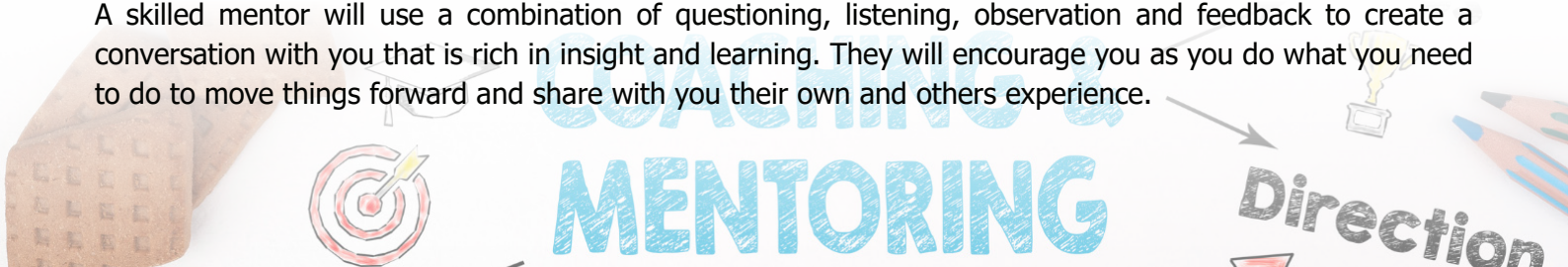
A mentor is someone who offers you space to think of who has already had experience of the area you wish to explore and has knowledge and networks which may be appropriate to share as you develop and grow as a professional and as a person.

A mentor might:

- Teach a mentee about specific areas where you need more knowledge
- Coach you
- Help a mentee's career and professional development by sharing networks or giving you new opportunities to shadow them
- Challenge a mentee beyond their comfort zone
- Focus on a mentee's development as an individual and as a professional
- Support a mentee to strengthen and develop leadership skills in a time of change
- Give a mentee space to reflect on their own and others' learning and leadership

What Happens During A Mentoring Session?

A skilled mentor will use a combination of questioning, listening, observation and feedback to create a conversation with you that is rich in insight and learning. They will encourage you as you do what you need to do to move things forward and share with you their own and others experience.



Mentoring can be an informal conversation or a formal program where Mentees observe, question, and explore while Mentors demonstrate, explain and model.

At the start of the mentoring relationship, you will need to think about what the gap is that you would like mentoring to fill. It might be

- Understanding how to do something
- Leadership etc

It's useful to set some goals as you begin to work together. This will give focus and ensure that the mentoring serves you and the organization. These goals will be reviewed regularly to ensure a continued focus to the meetings.

Is Mentoring Confidential?

Your line manager needs to support your application for mentoring, as well as give you the time and space for mentoring so they will know it is happening. Mentoring is based on trust and openness, and what you discuss with your mentor is confidential

Ground Rules

Like any professional relationship, coaching and mentoring work best when trust is high and conversations they are conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect. The following ground rules can help the relationship stay positive and focused.

Coach and Mentor

1. Make time to prepare before each session by reading through notes and reflections from previous sessions. Think about what you need to do to disconnect enough from the issues and demands of your day job to be able to listen well and to be able to think.
2. Take time after a session to record your initial reflections and document any observations you want to make. However these are confidential and should be stored securely.
3. Be punctual and make the room as welcoming as possible.
4. Avoid cancelling sessions wherever possible and give your colleagues adequate notice and reschedule at the next available opportunity. Where sessions are regularly cancelled by either person, research studies suggest that the support program is more likely to fail.
5. Adhere to the Code of Ethics.
6. Stay in role and avoid changing hats to a role outside your agreement (e.g. counsellor, consultant etc.)

Coach and Mentee

1. Make time to follow up on agreed actions between sessions, including reflecting on your learning.
2. Be punctual and make best use of the time by knowing what you would like to get out of each session.
3. Avoid cancelling sessions wherever possible and give your coach/mentor the agreed notice, aiming to reschedule at the next available opportunity. Where sessions are regularly cancelled by either person, research studies suggest that the program of support is more likely to fail.
4. Ask for feedback from your coach/mentor to support your development.
5. Challenge yourself to be open and honest and approach coaching/mentoring as an opportunity to experiment, learn and develop.
6. Accept that behavior change can be uncomfortable and that the coach/mentor cannot do the work for you.
7. Use your colleagues and your line manager to help you embed what you are learning at work.

