



Workbook for Mentors

ybi | The Prince's
Youth Business
International

The Workbook

This Workbook has been designed to ensure that you will have a useful record for you to refer to.

This Workbook can be used to:

- Make notes
- Clarify actions you may wish to take
- Record any important ideas or information during the day
- Review the outcomes of the Workshop
- Act as a starting point and source of reference for your own mentor activities

Workshop Aims

To introduce the skills, the knowledge and attitude necessary to be an effective business mentor.

Workshop Objectives

Mentors participating in the network will be able to:

- Familiarise themselves with the mentoring process and the different roles within it
- Understand the three stages of the mentoring relationship
- Explore ways in which mentors can help mentees
- Practise some of the skills and techniques required for mentoring

What is Mentoring?

Originally, the word “mentor” comes from Greek mythology. Before setting out on an epic voyage, Odysseus entrusted his son, Telemachus, to the care and direction of his old and trusted friend Mentor (who was, in fact, a woman — the Goddess Athena in disguise!).

Modern mentoring is based on the original concept of apprenticeship in which an older, more experienced individual passes down knowledge about how to perform a task and how to operate in the commercial world. Mentoring taps a basic human instinct – the desire to pass on our learning to help other people grow and fulfill their potential. There are many examples of ‘mentoring’ relationships that exist in different cultures: the Guru in India, the Master in China, the Village Elder in Africa and the Tribal Elder in North America.

Today, mentoring can be described as a partnership between two people who have different levels of experience. A mentor provides support and opportunities for development, and confronts issues and challenges identified by the mentee. It is a positive, developmental activity, not a remedial one.

Defining Mentoring

Complete the following *mentoring is* statement:

My definition of mentoring is:

My group's definition of mentoring is:

Different Definitions of Mentoring

A close developmental relationship between experienced and less experienced individuals. Collin, 1979

A one-to-one relationship between two people, where one individual is prepared to assist in the professional and personal development of another. Gardner, 1996

A protected relationship in which experimentation, exchange and learning can occur and skills, knowledge and insight can be developed. Mumford, 1993

Help by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking.

Megginson & Clutterbuck, "Mentoring in Action", 1995

YBI has its own definition for business mentoring:

"Business mentoring is a practical approach to helping entrepreneurs develop their own abilities and insights as they start and grow their business."

In Summary....

Mentoring IS:

- One-to-one
- Confidential
- Trusting & supportive
- Developmental
- Building capacity and skills
- Focused on the individual
- Partnership and friendship
- A mutual learning experience
- Building self-reliance

Mentoring ISN'T:

- Direct sponsorship
- A conflict of interest
- Secretive
- Task focused
- Doing it for the mentee/giving the answers
- Detailed
- Therapy
- Protection

What is Mentoring? - The Mentee's View

Some feedback from young entrepreneurs:

"My mentor challenges me... How are you going to survive throughout the lean times? Did it go as you planned? What is your fallback position if plan 'A' fails?"

"My mentor gets involved when I ask and in the early days compared sales against cash flow forecasts, which I didn't!"

"She could relate to us because, she had been there."

"(The mentor) helped us with loan interviews after we were turned down the first time, then she coached us in handling the likely questions from the loan panel."

"His local knowledge was a great assistance and he introduced us to people who could help."

"It's down to me. I should call more often. Each month when I sit down he wants to know everything that's going on in my head. He doesn't let me dwell on decisions".

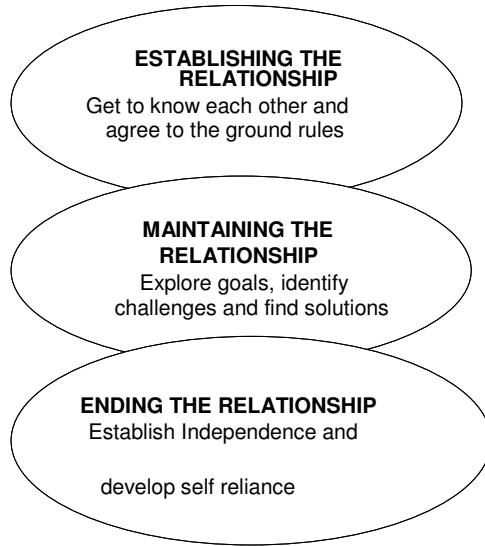
"Meetings take as long as they need, whether it's two hours or four hours!"

"My Mentor helped my self esteem by encouraging me to challenge my negative mind set, 'No one will buy my services, I'm not good enough.'"

2. Stages in the Mentoring Relationship

There are three key stages that occur during the mentoring relationship with the mentee and each stage impacts the next. Though there is no specific time frame, it would be reasonable for the first two or three meetings to focus on **stage one:** building rapport and agreeing to the ground rules. This provides a solid base to explore wider issues at **stage two:** exploring goals and identifying challenges. After approximately 18 months (assuming a two year relationship) it is important to start thinking about bringing the relationship to an end, i.e., **stage three:** establishing independence and developing self reliance. This is essential to ensure the mentee is fully prepared to 'go it alone' and prevents one party from becoming dependent on the other.

Stages in the Mentoring Relationship



Stage 1 – Establishing the Ground Rules

- Only if asked will the mentor and mentee enquire into each other's personal lives
- Mentor and mentee cannot make excessive demands on each other's time and will agree to abide an approved contact schedule
- The mentee will use the mentor's authority only with the latter's consent
- The mentor will assist the mentee in achieving the agreed objectives but will let the mentee run his/her business independently
- Both parties will review their relationship and progress monthly, and check each other's 'comfort levels' at the end of each meeting
- The mentor will only communicate his/her knowledge of the mentee to other parties with the mentee's consent. Both parties will accept the **Confidentiality Statement.**

Confidentiality Statement: the boundaries

Anything said during the course of a mentoring meeting is confidential to the parties involved and should not be repeated without the express consent of those individuals.

The First Meeting: a Mentors Check List

Consider what **you** would expect of your mentee and what **your mentee** would expect of you.

Decide what you would talk about at your first meeting and create a PLAN containing the key points.

I would expect:

My mentee would expect:

Important Points for the First Meeting

- Identify a likely venue for the first meeting, i.e., should it be a public venue?
- Is this likely to be a three way meeting with the Mentoring Manager? If so, who will do what?
- Is there anything that each party needs to sign?
- What boundary issues will be covered and who will highlight them?
- How long is the meeting likely to last?
- Who will arrange the next meeting?
- Is any recording needed? If so, who will do this?
- What if one party doesn't like the other?
- Should the first meeting be used for action planning?
- How formal or informal should the meeting be?
- How much will you need to know about each other, i.e., business background, business ideas, (mentee) hobbies, interests etc?
- What happens if the mentee doesn't turn up?

Stage 2: Maintaining the Relationship

“You have a feeling about people. If you couldn’t share a coffee with them, chat with them, it wouldn’t work. In which case there would be little point in continuing the relationship”.

Mentee

My Ideal Mentor

Imagine you are looking for a mentor. What qualities would you want in your ideal mentor? The following exercise invites you to identify these qualities.

My ideal mentor would be:

My Ideal Mentor Would Be:

- Someone I can respect
- Someone who makes me feel safe and comfortable
- Someone with whom I can share ideas
- Someone who can help me find creative solutions to problems
- Someone who encourages me to take action not just talk about it
- Someone I can trust

Key skill is to L.I.S.T.E.N.

A good listener DOES ...

- recognize how the speaker feels about the subject matter
- look for points to agree with rather than disagree
- give a quick summary of what has been said, every now and again, to check that it is correct
- give their full attention to the person who is talking by facing them and nodding in agreement

A good listener DOES NOT ...

- interrupt a speaker or break the flow of conversation
- become distracted or let their mind wander
- let a previous opinion of the speaker affect them
- let prejudice get in the way
- act negatively or belittle the person speaking
- change the subject
- fidget or distract the speaker

Challenges to Mentoring

There are a number of potential pitfalls that can get in the way of a successful mentoring relationship. Here are some of them:

- Conflict of interest
- Inadequate definition of roles and ground rules
- Relationship difficulties: broken promises, lack of commitment, prejudices
- Meetings are postponed repeatedly
- Unreasonable demands for help and support
- Mentee wants to give up
- Conflicting values
- The parties dislike each other
- Not committed to a long term relationship
- Others?

Case study; Eric's Story

Eric is a successful IT software designer and he has been selling a piece of software called **WebCan**, which enables individual users to update web sites without having to continually instruct a third party to do it for them. Although there are other software products on the market, many are more costly and tend to be far more complicated than the product he is selling.

At the point of start-up there was no customer base but with the help of a YBP loan, Eric was able to get trade endorsement for his product and since then the software has been 'flying off the shelves'. With the first year of business about to be completed, he has seen the business grow threefold vs. budget.

Although this sounds like a problem all businesses would like, it is causing headaches for Eric. The biggest concern he has right now is how to reclaim his rented home/office which is starting to resemble a small factory distribution centre. Eric seems to be spending his entire time packing product with little time to do what he really wants to do which is to get on with developing new designs. As a result he is starting to feel frustrated for the first time and is losing his focus and energy. Eric is also dealing with complaints from customers calling him up demanding to know when they can expect delivery.

Eric's mentor has been meeting with him once a month but recently the mentor has noticed that his e-mails are not being returned. He is also concerned because Eric rescheduled their last meeting at short notice. The mentor is the IT Director of a leading software house and his background in IT was one of the reasons why he was matched with Eric. He is now starting to become concerned about Eric's lack of focus and would like to offer some mentoring advice. He originally encouraged Eric to take advantage of market conditions and now feels partly responsible for Eric's predicament.

Challenges to Mentoring

Exercise: Deciding where to focus

With reference to the case study, decide what you **can** and **cannot** do as a mentor and divide these into the following categories:

Factors the **mentor** can control:

Factors the **mentor** can influence:

Those factors the **Mentoring Manager** needs to address:

Relationship Reviews

"They're not accountable, you are, and so it is good to have someone who gets you to reflect on whether you've delivered on what you set out to do"

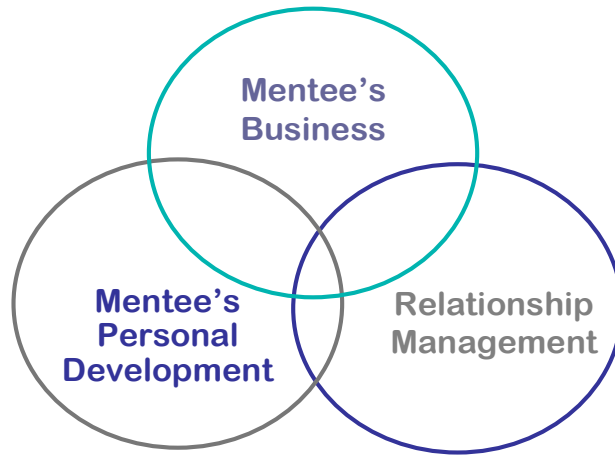
Mentee

The purpose of a 'relationship review' is to confirm that each person feels they can work together and wants to move forward. It provides an opportunity to resolve any early issues and mismatched expectations. It is a good idea to conduct such a review quarterly, at a minimum.

It is helpful to assess the overall outcome of the mentoring relationship to see how it compares with the original objectives. In addition, consider what benefits have been derived and whether the costs (in terms of time) are justified.

A cooperative attitude and a willingness to improve continuously have been shown to be vital to maintaining a productive relationship, resulting in higher levels of performance by both parties.

Areas of focus in mentoring relationships can be seen in the diagram below:



Activity – Relationship Feedback

You are three months into your relationship...

What do you talk about?

How do you give/receive feedback? Consider:

- **WHY?** you are giving feedback
- **WHAT?** you are going to give feedback about
- **WHEN?** you are going to give feedback
- **WHERE?** am I going to give feedback
- **HOW?** you are going to give feedback

Stage 3: Ending the Relationship

It is part of the natural cycle of a mentoring relationship to draw the relationship to a successful close and to 'move on'. The key parties that have made the relationship a success are the mentor, the mentee and the Mentoring Manager.

What do you see as the KEY SUCCESS FACTORS for all three parties? What will success look like?

For the mentor:

For the mentee:

For the Mentoring Manager:

Ending the Relationship

Important points to consider:

- Plan the ending carefully and prepare the mentee so that a 'winding down' process can take place
- Encourage some kind of celebration
- Use the ending as an opportunity to generate local media interest about the program
- Mentors and mentees should be aware of possible emotions that may surface
- The Mentoring Manager should advise participants that he/she will provide support
- Consider further support networks that can help the entrepreneur as they move forward on their own
- Highlight the achievements of the relationship

- Recording sheets are helpful to review the relationship; noting the high points and the low points
- Endings may not always be planned as the mentee may walk away before the official end – consider the reasons why this may happen
- Mentors who wish to continue some form of contact with their mentee should consider how to do this appropriately
- Conduct an evaluation for both the mentor and mentee

From GOOD to GREAT

If a GOOD mentor is...:

- a good facilitator
- skilled at asking open and probing questions aimed at checking knowledge and understanding
- a good listener
- confident in using silence
- observant (aware of what the mentee is doing/feeling)
- knowledgeable about business
- encouraging, enthusiastic, motivating
- credible and honest
- willing to take some risks
- able to allow others to discover answers without jumping in with the right answer
- able to judge when it is right to disclose information
- able to give constructive feedback

What is a GREAT Mentor?

Superb Mentoring – a Summary

- Ask: why am I doing this and what are the benefits?
- Adopt a head and heart approach
- Stay focused on the mentee's agenda
- Build a genuine, long term relationship built on trust
- Focus on specific, measurable outcomes
- Encourage regular progress reports
- Use disappointment as a positive lever for improvement
- Celebrate success
- And when it comes to the end, "let go"

The comment below best illustrates the impact a positive mentor can have on a mentee's business:

"If the DYBT had not provided me with a mentor, I would not have made some of the better business choices because I wouldn't have known any better."

Some Mentoring Tools

1. The mentoring session – preparation
2. Relationship quarterly review for mentor and mentee
3. Mentoring vs. coaching
4. Mentoring definitions; positive and negative indicators
5. Case study: Eric's Story – best practice solution
6. Reading list
7. Workshop feedback