

Mentoring

– Activity Summary –

SECTION 1: Initial Briefing

1. What is Mentoring?

An activity to ensure that all participants have a common understanding of the concept: what it is and what it is not.

2. What Do I Do?

An exercise that demonstrates to existing and potential mentors that the sub-skills are similar to those they use as part of their everyday management or supervisory roles. Its goal is to both develop existing mentors and to reassure new or potential mentors.

3. Identifying Learning Opportunities

An activity that helps to identify the different on-the-job learning opportunities for people that are both available and that have been effective within their own organization. Participants can then go on to explore ways of creating such opportunities for their proteges.

4. Evaluating Mentoring

This activity will appeal to trainers and managers alike. It helps to identify the different ways mentoring systems can be monitored and evaluated, and evidence collected that can demonstrate the benefits accrued.

5. Creating Links

An activity that allows mentors to create links between mentoring and other development systems that might involve them or their proteges, such as appraisal systems, succession planning systems etc.

6. Briefing Proteges

This activity will help the mentors (and trainers) to prepare for the first sessions to be held with their proteges, either individually or via group briefings. It will give mentors the chance to consider the information needs of their proteges.

SECTION 2: Core Skills

7. Identifying Development Needs

A opportunity to agree on ways and systems to help the identification of training and development needs in proteges: the information needed, the sources of such information and mechanisms available to tap those sources.

8. One-on-One Coaching – Reproductive Tasks

How to help proteges by training them in informal, one-on-one situations at work. This activity will concentrate on the coaching situation where the task is reproductive i.e. there is one correct way of carrying it out.

9. One-to-One Coaching – Productive Talks

How to provide help for proteges where the task to be learned has more than one method or where the learner is already better at the task than the coach: a productive task.

10. Counselling Skills

A series of activities that starts by defining counselling, looks at the micro-skills involved (listening, focusing, drawing out, paraphrasing and suspending judgement), and then briefly explores the styles available (and their applications).

11. Managing Learning Projects

Recognizing that many mentoring systems use work-based tasks, experiential learning – or projects – as learning vehicles for the proteges, this activity will look at the management of such projects; identifying, specifying, monitoring and reviewing them.

12. Giving and Receiving Feedback

A vital sub-skill in any developmental activity, but of particular importance in mentoring where the mentor's views are very often seen as carrying additional weight because of their status, position, expertise or dispassionate position. This activity both establishes a framework for giving feedback and gives development, practice and feedback on giving feedback.

13. Motivating the Protege

A chance to visit (or re-visit for many managers) aspects of motivation at work and to identify the actions that mentors can take in helping to maintain the enthusiasm and motivation of their proteges.

SECTION 3: Specialized Skills

14. Managing Mentoring Meetings

An exercise that helps participants to develop their skills in managing both the content and the process of the mentor/protege meetings, which are often multi-faceted with little apparent task urgency.

15. Gaining Rapport

This exercise will help the participants to establish exactly what is meant by the phrase and to explore and develop the micro-skills involved, both verbal and non-verbal.

16. Performance Aids

A practical session that provides participants with a number of ideas and advice on the production of aids they could produce and use to help learn particular skills or knowledge outside of coaching sessions.

17. Career Management

A series of exercises and practical sessions in which careers are defined, influences identified and future career opportunities mapped out. Participants can also be given the opportunity to practice some career counselling in either simulated or 'real' circumstances.

18. Managing Stress

An activity that helps to identify the symptoms, causes and consequences of stress. It also gives participants an opportunity to develop and share coping mechanisms.

19. Managing the Politics!

A practical look at the management of organizational politics that surround mentoring systems. This activity also gives mentors the opportunity to explore ways in which they can help their proteges to cope and survive in organizational politics.

20. Problem Solving in Mentoring

This activity is not looking at the management process of problem solving but is looking at the sorts of things that can go wrong in mentoring systems and helping the mentors to be 'forewarned and forearmed' with a range of practical solutions.