

Mentoring is where a
mentor engages his
mentees to learn
nursing essay



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Executive Summary

Throughout the study, the practical importance of the subject has been bore in mind.

Mentoring is where a mentor engages his mentees to learn and reach their development goals. The Mentoring program is also a framework where both parties in a relationship can be supported in clarifying their roles and their objectives. It also provides a framework for the mentee to develop and learn alongside an experienced peer.

The ultimate objective of the mentoring sessions was to facilitate the mentees to achieve their development goals. The mentor has helped the mentees to do this by arranging different activities on a weekly basis. The aim of the activities was to challenge the mentees to finally use their own initiative and help them understand the steps they need to take when solving a difficult problem. The mentor made clear at the start of the mentoring session as to what he will do, to avoid any disappointments.

This reflective essay reports the outcome of an eight week mentoring session carried out with first year engineering students. The aim for the mentor was to help their transition from secondary education to higher education. This essay outlines the process the mentor developed to understand his mentees and the action he put in place to facilitate and challenge their learning. The essay reflects on the positive and negative aspects of the sessions and evaluates if the mentoring sessions were a success or not.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my appreciation of Dr Roger Clarke He maintained a continual interest in my work, providing advice when required. I have appreciated not only his advice but also his encouragement and confidence in me which has inevitably allowed me to peruse this work with a level of independence that I had not anticipated. I would also like to thank my mentees Umar and Sohail who enabled to gain experience as a mentor.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1. 1 Background

Learning is essential in allowing individuals to be successful. This concerns both our personal and professional lives. The process of learning begins on the day we are born, and continues all the way through our entire life.

Mentoring is observed to be one of the best methods to enhance individuals learning and development (Klasen 2007). The purpose of mentoring is to encourage and support the mentees to administer their own learning in a way that they can maximise their potential, improve their performance develop their skills and become able to accomplish their career aspirations.

1. 2 The Need for Mentoring

Whittaker and Cartwright, (2000) postulate that the use of mentoring and other development methods reflect a widespread recognition of the limitations of classroom-based teaching. Whittaker and Cartwright, (2000) suggest that the later can be ineffective in various ways, notably the transferral of knowledge and skills. The hypothesis by Whittaker and

Cartwright, (2000) is also echoed by Ragins and Cotton, (2000) as from their own experience they believe that students can forget as much as thirty five percent of classroom-style learning before they leave the learning situation. Within a month, more than seventy percent of the learning can be forgotten and in the long term, little of the learning is either remembered, or transferred. In contrast to that, mentoring can be seen as an effective method of enhancing the development of individuals, precisely because it typically improves both learning retention as well as the transfer of the learned information to real life situations.

1.3 Objectives of the Mentoring Sessions

The purpose of the mentoring sessions is to support and encourage the mentees to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, and improve their performance which consequently facilitates their transition from secondary education to higher education. In saying that, it cannot be overemphasised that the mentors' task will be to merely assist the mentees in making these transitions, not to do the work for them! The mentor will enable his mentees to learn from their past successes and failures, and encourage them to engage in self-determined learning and to find their own solutions.

Chapter 2 Mentoring Process

2.1 Three Stage Process

The whole point of the mentoring process was to create a reflective environment in which the mentee can address issues of career and personal growth. The role of the programme is to support the mentoring process, and

that in turn demands effective programme processes. The model adopted to facilitate the mentoring process is a three stage process applied to mentoring in Alred, Garvey and Smith (2010). The application of this process will give a shape to the mentoring sessions. The process is depicted in figure 1 below.

Figure Three stage process model Alred et al (2010)

The application of this process will enable the mentor to take a democratic approach rather than an autocratic. The reason for this approach is because the mentor does not want to dictate the agenda of the meeting, let alone the issues to be discussed. The main focus needs to be on his mentee's: it is the mentees needs that ultimately determine the content and order of the meetings. The idea is that through appropriate exploration, new understanding is gained and then actions can be considered in relation to the understanding. The three stage process will also be viewed as a map of mentoring. A map that shows the mentor the way and facilitates the mentor of this report to plan a route. The process will become a valuable tool so that both the mentor and mentee understand what is happening. In short the process will allow the mentor to:

Help the mentee to identify and raise their issues and other needs.

Provide guidance so as to keep the meeting focused and productive.

Enable them to become an independent, enthusiastic learner.

2. 2 Exploration

Understanding the mentees and their situation was vital because their problems can only be correctly identified, and a tailored personal development plan (PDP), detailing the mentees goals and objectives can be designed. As both the mentees were not clear about what aims they seek to achieve. Identifying these is of course, an ongoing process; however, the mentor through questioning prompted the mentees to evaluate their needs and objectives.

What would you like to talk about in the mentoring session?

What activities would you like to take place?

What would you like to achieve in these session?

What skills would you like to develop?

What module in specific would you like extra help with?

The answers to these questions which are depicted in figure 2, however, are not set in stone. To the contrary, the mentor realises that the relevance of the goals and objectives may change over time. This process was also supplemented through the use of one Myer-Briggs-Type indicator self-assessment questionnaires (See Appendix).

It was imperative to allow the mentees the freedom to take responsibility for this process and put together their own PDP without the mentor pointing to needs and goals in an attempt to speed up the progress. This process was vital for the mentor as he wanted to send out consistent messages: after all,

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the learning relationship is supposed to centre on the mentee's agenda, and from start to finish the mentee ought to be in control. PDP depicted in figure 2.

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2. 3 New Understanding

Understanding his mentees was vital for the mentor to make the relationship work. As explained in Chapter 1, learning is the process of acquiring new knowledge, skills and understanding. However, the way people embark on this process varies greatly. According to Honey and Mumford, (1983), who

have based their model on work by Kolb, (1984) there are four disparate types of learning styles: activist, reflector, theorist and pragmatist.

For the mentor to be successful in developing his mentees, a learning styles questionnaire was completed by his mentees (See Appendix for LSQ). The results from the questionnaire facilitated the mentor in knowing his mentees learning styles and adjust their development efforts to these. Adapting to the mentees learning style will also allow the mentor to help his mentees to identify those learning opportunities from which they are likely to benefit from. This would be mainly such that they correspond to his mentees preferred style. For example, both the mentees were identified as pragmatists and should learn best in situations in which they can apply their learning to actual practice to see if they work. In respect to that the mentor encouraged the mentees to use the other learning styles, particularly the one least preferred; this is because according to Parsloe and Wray, (2000) the best learning occurs only when an individual passes through all four stages of the learning cycle.

2. 4 Action Planning

From the exploration stage of the mentoring process it became evident, as to what had attracted the mentees to the mentoring relationship. Their responses from the questionnaire and the identification of development needs listed in their PDP included the need to carry on informal mentoring in a formal manner and the desire to focus on the self and develop in a relationship with an experienced peer. The need to gain different perspectives, learning opportunities and the general enjoyment of mentoring were further noted. These comments reflect an ' Egocentric' dimension of <https://assignbuster.com/mentoring-is-where-a-mentor-engages-his-mentees-to-learn-nursing-essay/>

attraction to mentoring. For the mentor, he was attracted to mentoring in relation to the need and desire to pass on their experience (in and out of the academic environment) and to encourage and explore the potential of the mentee. Learning from their mentees were further reasons for relationship engagement. Both 'Egocentric' and 'Altruistic' comments reflected the mentor's attraction to mentoring.

In order to endeavour these comments and the mentees individual PDP's the mentor came up with a list of activities. These were aligned with his mentees' goals and will support their achievements. List of these activities planned by the mentor are catalogued in table 2. By creating different activities the mentor created a stepping-stone approach to achieving the mentees' final goals; they were designed to move mentees gently forward, allowing them to make accomplishments as they go along. According to Kram, (1983) creating such short term successes is a good means by which to build the mentees' self-confidence and motivation, inevitably facilitating their progress through the course and university life.

WEEK

ACTIVITY

WEEK3

(1) Ice breaker (Jenga) (2) develop PDP (3) List activities that can fulfil PDP

WEEK4

(1) Career workshop: Placement, CV, Gradcarcker, ICE and information how to contact Placement officer

WEEK5

(1) Tutorial session: AutoCAD and engineering computation

WEEK6

(1) Surveying exercise led by James Haigh

WEEK7

(1) Presentation and report writing workshop

WEEK8

(1) Talk with Mr J. Philby: has 30 years experience in industry. Both of his sons are engineer's one working for MACE. Will give mentees chance to ask questions and gather information on the engineering industry

WEEK9

(1) Fluids Laboratory tour: Will also show mentees different types of flow regimes i. e. Turbulent, laminar, transitional and hydraulic jump

WEEK10

(1) Examination workshop: Provide technique on exam preparation

Table 2 Week-by-week schedule of activities planned for the mentees

2. 4. 1 Mentoring Contract

Once it was established what both parties intended to achieve from the mentoring sessions, an agreement on how best they can work together was established. A mentoring contract was created by the mentor to facilitate him in defining the ground rules for the relationship, and assist him in keeping the mentoring relationship on track; each party now clearly knows what their individual responsibilities and roles will be. The key purpose of the contract was to avoid any future disappointments and to gain commitment from the mentees and mentor. A further aim was to clearly communicate what was expected from each person within the relationship. Table 2. 1 details characteristics of the mentoring contract by the two mentees and the mentor.

Chapter 3 Outcomes of Mentoring

3. 1 What has worked

Week three, exploration and planning: Key benefits for the mentee included having the opportunity to review their development objectively in a supportive environment, addressing work-life balance issues, developing their own PDP and developing to the requirements of further higher education. In contrast, personal outcomes included developing a sense of perspective and gaining confidence.

Week four, careers workshop: Highly successful and was valued by both mentees. Gaining insight into the Civil Engineering industry and recognising the main differences between a contracting engineer and a consulting

engineer. The discussion also allowed the mentees to re-confirm that engineering is an excellent profession with endless opportunities.

Week five, AutoCAD and engineering computation tutorial: Again both mentees worked very well both individually and as a group. They supported each other well and have been able to bring considerable knowledge to the sessions. They have retained their enthusiasm and are keen to carry on attending the mentoring sessions

Mentors work: The mentor reports learning with his mentees, developing and expanding his management styles and developing mentoring skills, as important professional benefits resulting from the mentoring experience. Furthermore, understanding different approaches to learning, achieving high levels of self-development and developing awareness the mentees were additional benefits. Personal benefits included becoming friends, enjoying the exchange and developing a new awareness of academic issues and the way to resolve them.

3. 2 What has not worked so well

Week six surveying exercise: Both mentees showed little interest in the surveying exercise. The reason for this cannot be understood as it was an activity that they were looking forward to the previous week. There was no sense of awkwardness between the two mentees as they both supported each other in setting up the surveying equipment.

Week seven-to-ten: There was no mentees to mentor, understandably as their workload increases they had to prioritise their time. However, for the mentor he reports frustration with the mentee's development, time demands
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and mentees own poor priority structure. Furthermore the mentor reports being exasperated at the fact that after spending time creating a mentoring contract that both the mentor and his mentees can adhere to the mentees have not taken the initiative to respond to the mentors email and give him an explanation to the reason for their absence, knowing very well the mentor has arranged an activity that they agreed to.

Mentees work: The main problems for the mentees included time and workload demands, low preparation time, the amount of effort required for constructive engagement, slow personal development and poor goal establishment.

3. 3 Measurement Categories

After week 6 the interest the mentees were showing seemed to have become obsolete. There was no attendance in the following weeks and there was no reason given through the various contact mediums we established. In terms of what to assess, the simple answer was to revisit the original proposal for mentoring and pull out the objectives for the programme to establish the reason the mentoring experience has not gone the way as was planned.

3. 3. 1 Mentoring organisation: To maximise the time and productivity of both parties, the meeting works best when it is organised. The mentor wanted this regimented style because chaos and a lack of focus can decrease the mentees' desires to meet with the mentor and further decrease their abilities to effectively work with him. Having an organised flow for the meetings also gave the mentor the opportunity to be flexible. As on some

occasions the mentees raised unexpected issues however, it was easier to adjust the conversation when everyone was following a track. Was this style too regimented, agreeing to a mentoring contract of what is expected by each mentee too disciplined? To be honest you will never know. According to Murray and Owen, (1991) mentoring is successful when the mentor has an organised plan which allows both the mentor and mentee to understand what is going to happen and when. This also removes the possibility of any disappointments from the mentoring sessions.

3. 3. 2 Learning Styles: Through the LSQ it was understood that the mentees preferred learning style was a pragmatic approach rather than an activist theorist or reflector. Knowing this the mentor arranged an activity like the surveying exercise in week 6. Could it now be argued that he is to blame for the absence and lack of interest shown by the mentees? Well the mentors answer to that is no. The mentor knew very well the preferred learning style of his mentees however, he wanted his mentees to use the other three learning styles, particularly the one least preferred; this was because the best learning occurs only when an individual passes through all four stages of the learning cycle. So for example the surveying exercise would have suited an activist as the exercise created a situation in which they were simply confronted with a new task without preparation.

3. 3. 3 The relationship: As mentioned earlier in chapter the purpose of the mentor was that the mentees take control of what they want to happen. This was vital for the mentor as he wanted to send out consistent messages: after all, the learning relationship is supposed to centre on the mentee's agenda, and from start to finish the mentee ought to be in control. The way the

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mentor understood it was that the aspects of informal mentoring involve efforts to facilitate mentees do for themselves. The emphasis was on mentees being able to solve problems, make decisions, and set plans at their own levels of responsibility-versus being dependant on the mentor for the answers. The mentoring approach adopted followed the old adage

“ Give a man a fish, and the man will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he will eat for a lifetime.”

So taking this approach the mentor made the mentees to put together their own PDP. This gave the mentees the freedom to take the responsibility for this process. So was this the wrong approach, should the mentor have taken responsibility and treated the mentees like children? Well my role was to facilitate their transition and guide them through their 1st year, not to do the work for them. The mentor was there as an experienced guide. Obviously he gave insight into his own experiences and went through the problems they were having but wanted his mentees to take the initiative and responsibility.

3. 3. 4 Mentor behaviour, Telling: Even if it was comfortable for the mentees to be told what to do without having to think and decide, personally too much direction defeats the aim of mentoring. For example the mentees required the mentor to help them solve mathematic tutorial questions. The mentor developed his own problem and solved it to show the mentees the technique they need to apply. If the mentor was too autocratic the mentee's growth towards self-reliance is not supported. Furthermore, if the mentor pushed his own agenda and did not actually focus on the needs, of his mentees' then this renders the mentoring process worthless. Was this again

the correct procedure or should the mentor have solved the problem the mentees were having? Not sure here really. The mentor saw this as an opportunity to use his mentees learning style to solve the problem. Apply the problem to a different situation from which the mentees can see the technique, procedure and relevance.

Were these the reasons as why the mentees disengaged from the mentoring sessions? Was the mentor too disciplined and strict? Was he following a mentoring process too much that he was not able to see he was alienating his mentees? Should he just have told them what to do and give them the answers to the problems they were having? To be totally honest the mentor does not know. The mentor was acting like a mentor and trying to guide his mentees to take responsibility, that's the aim of higher education, the mentoring was just a process that would facilitate and lighten up this transition.

3. 4 The Re-appearance of the Mentees

Wait a minute what have we here. In week 11 and 12 both mentees arranged more than 1 meeting time in the two weeks. In total the amount of hours spent with the mentees within the last two weeks was more than the entire 10 week schedule that we had planned. So what was the reason that both of them re-developed contact, even though the mentor sent weekly emails outlining the schedule of the session just to see no show and no interest in returning a quick email for apologies? The reason for the contact was that they both were struggling with coursework for engineering computation and visualisation. Both of which were very challenging compared to when the mentor had read them. The mentor had no problem in <https://assignbuster.com/mentoring-is-where-a-mentor-engages-his-mentees-to-learn-nursing-essay/>

helping the mentees through this challenge. It was more interesting as there were things that the mentor got to learn in the process.

Engineering computation: As the coursework is all based on Matlab the mentees were having difficulty in understanding how to programme Matlab to do various tasks. The mentor himself a novice outlined he would be of no help as he himself is new to the software. However, the sessions were interesting as both the mentor and mentees learnt how to programme the software by helping each other. The same with visualisation the introduction of digital mapping and civil 3D is totally different to what we have done. The mentor applied all the knowledge he had of the programmes to assist the mentees. Here the mentor forgot about the mentoring models and processes and just showed them how to go about doing it and at the same time learning himself. The sessions seemed more rewarding and both mentees were fully engaged in the process of learning and helping each other.

4. 0 Final Conclusion

So in the end was this mentoring?, the mentor agrees that the first three sessions were in the essence of mentoring however, in weeks eleven and twelve the mentor mentee relationship became very different. The mentor believed the point of mentoring was to develop a mentee to accomplish their goals and facilitate the mentee into developing skills that they outlined in their PDP.

If general help when a person is stuck on tasks is mentoring then the mentor has been mentoring for years. Showing his fellow colleagues how to solve problems is that classified as mentoring or developing a colleague through

like a graduate scheme where the mentor analyses the mentee in order to see their progress and enable them to progress higher in the company or to see if they are ready to take professional exams? I personally think it is the later. However, with that said the experience has been invaluable and will help the mentor in his future endeavours.

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