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Mentoring Manual

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I. WHAT IS MENTORING?

1. General information

Erasmus Plus Programme

Erasmus + is the EU's program to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. With a budget of EUR 14.7 billion, more than 4 million Europeans will have the opportunity to study, train, gain experience and volunteer abroad.

Erasmus + has opportunities for people of all ages, helping them to develop and share knowledge and experience in institutions and organizations in many countries. More than 4 million young people, students and adults will gain experience and skills by studying, training or volunteering abroad through Erasmus +. The program will also support over 125,000 institutions and organizations in working with peers from different countries to innovate teaching practice and youth work. Together, they will work to provide young people and adults with the skills they need to succeed in today's world. Erasmus + replaces seven programs with one, making it more accessible.

Project Blue Tourism Opportunities - BTO belongs to the Erasmus + KA2 program - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices, type of activity: KA203 - Strategic Partnerships for higher education.

Project Blue Tourism Opportunities – BTO

Blue tourism in a rising sector. Taking into consideration the annual economic report on the blue economy of the EU presented by the European Commission, "coastal tourism is the largest contributor in terms of jobs, value added and profits, contributing significantly more to jobs than to GVA and / or profits ". Thus, the blue tourism sector has a special potential to encourage the development of new companies, which entails the implementation of actions that benefit both the improvement of the professional skills of graduates and university students with an entrepreneurial character in the knowledge of blue tourism as a greater involvement of the universities in the incorporation of educational programs of entrepreneurship in blue tourism in their curricula and the corresponding active participation of their professors.





The objectives of the BT Opportunities project are:

1. The improvement of business skills, including the business social skills of graduates in higher education.
2. The implementation of curricula and training programs in universities that meet the needs of the blue tourism industry.
3. The improvement of the professional competence of university professors in relation to the MOOC method in areas related to entrepreneurship in blue tourism.
4. The use of mentoring as a collaboration and support tool between the university / professor /student on the blue tourism business spirit.

In order to achieve these objectives, a training course with two training modules will be designed related to entrepreneurship in blue tourism following the methodological framework of ECVET and EntreComp (The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework) that facilitates the validation and recognition of the skills and professional knowledge acquired in the entrepreneurship of the blue tourism in the different education systems and countries of the EU, on the other hand, a mentoring platform in blue tourism entrepreneurship will be developed in which professors and students or graduates with entrepreneurial spirit can interact for the implementation in of their business. Likewise and in order to give an added value to the project, university professors will be trained in the use of MOOC as a didactic method for entrepreneurship courses in blue tourism.

Partners

The BTO project partners are transferring the quality and experience gained in daily activities to students and academics through their linkage with entrepreneurship companies in the blue tourism sector and the support they provide, and through their involvement in similar projects and initiatives. The international group of project partners consists of 6 organizations that have extensive experience and competence, and are also interested in developing the results achieved in the BTO project. These are organizations that are aware of the importance of entrepreneurship for the development of the blue tourism sector.

The partners are:

- Szkoła Główna Turystyki i Hotelarstwa Vistula - Coordinator (Poland).



- Asociación de Innovación Emprendimiento y Tecnologías de la Información y la Comunicación, INNETICA (Spain).
- Institut National de Cercetare Dezvoltare in Turism (Romania).
- ESE, Ensino Superior Empresarial, LDA (Portugal).
- Skills Zone Malta co. Limited (Malta).
- Glandrive, Unipessoal LDA (Portugal).



2. Business mentoring

Business mentoring is most often defined as a professional relationship in which an experienced person (mentor) supports and encourages people to develop specific skills and knowledge. This knowledge increases the business potential and will improve the work efficiency of the person participating in the mentoring process. In short, it can be understood as the transfer of knowledge, skills and experience. The mentor is important as a guide in finding the right direction and developing solutions.

However, it should be admitted that business mentoring as a concept is changing, which necessitates a flexible concept for this process.

Business mentoring begins with absolute and genuine faith in the companies we work with and their continued success.

Business Mentoring is not about hiring a consultant or employee to help you run your business. It is building a relationship between a person looking for solutions and a person with business experience who show these solutions. It will help guide you through the process of making difficult decisions, indicate ways to improve the company, or motivate you to achieve higher levels of performance, all within a trust-based relationship. In addition, business mentoring allows you to find a



partner in the search process, it will give you a chance to share your views with someone who really knows his stuff. Working with a mentor helps you gain fresh insight into problems and make decisions through unbiased, objective discussion and feedback.

There are a lot of benefits for participating in the mentoring process, for example:

- Reducing the level of risk in making business decisions (discovering options becomes easier when there is someone who understands the problem);
- Source of motivation;
- Faster achievement of positive progress;
- Opening new business opportunities (e.g., in the field of time management).

A business mentor should be genuinely objective and be able to use their unique life and business experience to influence the mentees. This is someone who is available and who can be completely trusted. The role of the mentor is therefore very responsible because:

- Helps to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that have been overlooked;
- Offers tips and shares ideas in the growth phase (e.g., on hiring new employees, raising capital or entering the market);
- Can offer specific support, share best practices from other industries and sectors, warn against potential pitfalls;
- Listens to and helps to develop the mentee's own ideas;
- Helps you find your own solutions at a much faster pace than doing it yourself;
- Encourages the use of business networks;
- Helps you focus on your business goals.

The mentor will not automatically solve all business challenges, as the mentee will still have to do the work, invest time and effort in implementing changes, but will help set goals and milestones, and make them prepared for their implementation.

It is extremely important for the mentee to find the right mentor so that the work gives satisfaction to both parties. So, the first step is to make sure everyone is happy with the meetings. You also need to make sure that the mentor has





relevant experience that is useful to the mentee, although this need not be industry specific. Thus, the mentee needs to be sure that the mentor has a great deal of knowledge and is able to address and understand specific challenges.

One of the possible techniques for working with a mentor is online business mentoring. It is an interactive, remote relationship between the mentor and the mentee. Some mentoring relationships are purely online, while others may involve a combination of face-to-face and online contact.

This type of mentoring is popular with people who prefer a more informal mentoring relationship. It also works when mentors and mentees find it difficult to meet face to face, e.g. due to geographic reasons. In the case of online mentoring, business mentors use forums and websites - similar to social networks - where they share their knowledge and experience. The mentee can then contact the mentor. Once this relationship is established, there is no reason why it cannot develop into a more formal mentoring relationship.

Many European organizations have developed mentoring programs to complement traditional training. In recent years, many organizations have emerged to promote mentoring as a training methodology in various fields. Especially since in some countries there was not a very rich tradition of mentoring (e.g., Italy). It must be admitted, however, that mentoring has often brought good results, especially in the face of economic crises (e.g., in Greece).

Until recently, mentoring activities were carried out at universities and various types of schools (e.g., career counselling), internships (e.g., specialization training, career paths), entrepreneurship training (e.g., setting up new companies, management, social marketing) or in the social sphere (e.g., professional integration of disadvantaged people).

An important stage in the development of the idea of mentoring was (and still is) the activity of global corporations that develop a mentoring culture. These companies have developed their mentoring procedures, formalizing this process where all elements are well defined (e.g., preparation stage for the mentor role, criteria for selecting a mentor, setting goals and expected outcomes). These professionally developed mentoring projects gave a very important impetus to the development of mentoring as an important activity to increase the professional competences of employees. The formalization of mentoring activities also appeared at the national level, as some countries adopted systemic solutions to support companies, entrepreneurship or start-ups using this method (e.g., France).



Nowadays, the concept of mentoring has evolved to broaden the scope and new organizations have introduced and promoted many ideas related to entrepreneurship and business training.

Mentoring is growing in popularity rapidly, and debates and research on it show good practice and effectiveness. Today, in many companies, mentoring is a natural method of introducing new employees, preparing successors for managerial roles or preparing professionals to enter the expert level. Practice shows that this is an effective way to improve skills. In recent years, the concept of mentoring has been constantly evolving in various directions, looking for new solutions.



There are many public and private organizations in Europe that offer mentoring programs, for example in Spain (e.g., Aula Mentor, Mentoring Network Spain, Spanish Mentoring Association), in Italy (e.g., Italian Association for Mentoring, Association of Professional Mentors, Scuola Italiana di Mentoring), in Poland (e.g., Polskie Stowarzyszenie Mentoringu).

3. Keyword definitions

For a better understanding of the concept of mentoring and the entire mentoring process, it is important to define the meaning of the key terms associated with them:

Career transition – A career transition is defined as the period during which an individual is either changing roles (taking on a different objective role) or changing orientation to a role already held (altering a subjective state). This definition indicates that a career transition takes place in a certain period and there is a change going on. The duration of the period differs per transition and depends largely on how the changer experiences the difference between new and old roles, or new and old role orientations. The impact of a career transition depends on the nature of the boundaries crossed. In general, it will take longer if the difference between the roles is very big.

For example, the transition to an entirely unfamiliar role is likely to take longer than a somewhat familiar role. That is because it is very difficult for the changer to anticipate on his or her reaction in a new situation.

Communication – Communication is simply the act of transferring information from one place, person or group to another.

Every communication involves (at least) one sender, a message and a recipient. The transmission of the message from sender to recipient can be affected by a huge range of things. These include our emotions, the cultural situation, the medium used to communicate, and even our location. The complexity is why good communication skills are considered so desirable by employers around the world: accurate, effective and unambiguous communication is actually extremely hard.

Entrepreneur – An entrepreneur is an individual who creates a new business, bearing most of the risks and enjoying most of the rewards. The process of setting



up a business is known as entrepreneurship. The entrepreneur is commonly seen as an innovator, a source of new ideas, goods, services, and business/or procedures.

Entrepreneurs play a key role in any economy, using the skills and initiative necessary to anticipate needs and bringing good new ideas to market.

Entrepreneurship – Entrepreneurship is the act of creating a business or businesses while building and scaling it to generate a profit.

But as a basic entrepreneurship definition, that one is a bit limiting. The more modern entrepreneurship definition is also about transforming the world by solving big problems. Like bringing about social change or creating an innovative product that challenges the status quo of how we live our lives on a daily basis.

Entrepreneurial resilience – Entrepreneurial resilience includes the processes entrepreneurs utilize to develop and deploy their capabilities in order to adapt and respond to adversity encountered in their role as an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurial resilience may be conceptualized as a set of capabilities, as a process, and as an outcome. The idea of entrepreneurial resilience as a set of capabilities implies that resilience is comprised of certain psychological and behavioural capacities or tendencies that allow an entrepreneur to overcome adversity. Entrepreneurial resilience as a process is the demonstration of those capabilities in action and is exhibited as entrepreneurs encounter and then recover from a stressor. Finally, entrepreneurial resilience as an outcome is often conceptualized as a lack of negative outcomes from an adverse or stressful event.

Evaluation/assessment – Evaluation is the systematic assessment of the design, implementation or results of an initiative for the purposes of learning or decision-making.

Goal – Future state, desired and designated by the person, something that you hope to achieve.

Idea generation – Idea generation is described as the process of creating, developing and communicating abstract, concrete or visual ideas.





It's the front-end part of the idea management funnel and it focuses on coming up with possible solutions to perceived or actual problems and opportunities. Ideas are the key to innovation. The new ideas are necessary for making any kind of improvement. It's obvious that ideas alone won't make innovation happen, it's necessary to be able to build a systematic process for managing those ideas. The point of ideation isn't just about generating tons of them but about paying attention to the quality of those as well.

It can sometimes be difficult to come up with more of those high-quality ideas. It's not unusual to get stuck in our old habits and routines when we're supposed to be creating something new.

Ideas is a first step towards making improvement, making progress as individual human beings depends on new ideas. From the perspective of an individual, new ideas can help you to move forward if you feel stuck with a task or are unable to solve a certain problem.

Innovation – Innovation is a process by which a domain, a product, or a service is renewed and brought up to date by applying new processes, introducing new techniques, or establishing successful ideas to create new value.

The word "innovation" is derived from the Latin verb *Innovare*, which means to renew. In essence, the word has retained its meaning up until today. Innovation means to improve or to replace something, for example, a process, a product, or a service.

The creation of value is a defining characteristic of innovation.

Long term unemployed – Long-term unemployment refers to the number of people who are out of work and have been actively seeking employment for at least a year.

An unemployed person is defined as being aged 15 to 74 (or aged 16 to 74 in Spain, Iceland and Norway as well as the United Kingdom) who was without work during the reference week, was currently available for work and was either actively seeking work in the last four weeks or had already found a job to start within the next three months. The unemployment period is defined as the duration of a job search, or as the length of time since the last job was held (if



shorter than the time spent on a job search). This definition follows International Labour Organization guidelines.

Management – Management is essential for an organized life and necessary to run all types of management. Good management is the backbone of successful organizations. Managing life means getting things done to achieve life's objectives and managing an organization means getting things done with and through other people to achieve its objectives.

Management is a set of principles relating to the functions of planning, organizing, directing and controlling, and the application of these principles in harnessing physical, financial, human, and informational resources efficiently and effectively to achieve organizational goals.

Mentee – A person who is helped by a mentor (= a person who gives a younger or less experienced person help and advice over a period of time, especially at work or school).

Mind mapping – Mind mapping is a way of linking key concepts using images, lines and links. A central concept is linked via lines to other concepts which in turn are linked with other associated ideas. It is similar as a technique to concept mapping and spider diagrams, the difference being that true mind mapping involves constructing a hierarchy of ideas instead of pure random association.

Mind mapping uses the concept of "radiant thinking" – that is, thoughts radiate out from a single idea, often expressed as an image. Branches flow backwards and forwards from and to the central idea.

Mind mapping is generally linked with the popular psychologist Tony Buzan, although in fact similar approaches have been used by Porphyry of Tyros in the 3rd century to conceptualise the ideas of Aristotle, by Leonardo da Vinci and by Picasso, to name but a few. Tony Buzan however did much to popularise and schematise mind maps in the 1960s and 1970s and his books, provide an authoritative account on how to use the technique.

Mission – Mission is the core purpose of an organization or a company. It is a summary of the aims and core values. A mission clearly tells what you as an organization does for customers. A mission is comprehensive but also very specific to set you apart from other organizations. A mission can be seen as a



great tool to develop business goals and objectives with. A mission should fit your identity. If it doesn't it is very hard to executive your mission.

Participation – the fact of taking part in, or being involved in anything, an act of participation event or activity.

Skill – The ability to use one's knowledge effectively and readily in execution or performance, dexterity or coordination especially in the execution of learned physical tasks, a learned power of doing something competently: a developed aptitude or ability.

SMART principles – SMART is an acronym that stands for specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based. Each element of the SMART framework works together to create a goal that is carefully planned, clear and trackable.

Creating SMART goals can help solve these problems. Whether you're setting personal or professional goals, using the SMART goal framework can establish a strong foundation for achieving success.

- **S = Specific** → Be as clear and specific as possible with what you want to achieve. The narrower your goal, the more you'll understand the steps necessary to achieve it.
- **M = Measurable** → What evidence will prove you're making progress toward your goal? For example, if your goal is to earn a position managing a development team for a start-up tech company, you might measure progress by the number of management positions you've applied for or interviews you've completed. Setting milestones along the way will give you an opportunity to re-evaluate and course-correct as needed. When you achieve your milestones, remember to reward yourself in small but meaningful ways.
- **A = Achievable** → Have you set an achievable goal? By setting goals, you can reasonably accomplish within a certain timeframe will help keep you motivated and focused. Using the above example of earning a job managing a development team, you should know the credentials, experience and skills necessary to earn that position. Before you begin working toward a goal, decide whether it's something you can achieve now or whether there are additional preliminary steps you should take to become better prepared.



- **R = Relevant** → When setting goals for yourself, consider whether they are relevant. Each of your goals should align with your values and larger, long-term goals. If a goal doesn't contribute toward your broader objectives, you might rethink it. Ask yourself why the goal is important to you, how achieving it will help you and how it will contribute toward your long-term goals.
- **T = Time-based** → What is your goal time frame? An end-date can help provide motivation and help you prioritize. For example, if your goal is to earn a promotion to a more senior position, you might give yourself six months. If you haven't achieved your goal by then, take time to consider why. Your timeframe might have been unrealistic, you might have run into unexpected roadblocks or your goal might have been unachievable.

Vision – The ability to think about and plan for the future, using intelligence and imagination, especially in politics and business.

4. Target group

The BTO project focuses on all target groups related to blue tourism, in particular:

- University students who can find their professional place in blue tourism;
- High school students who are thinking about starting a business in the blue economy sector;
- Academics who can enrich academic programs with issues related to the blue tourism sector;
- Teachers of professions, teachers of entrepreneurship, for whom blue tourism creates opportunities to show new areas of professional activity;
- People involved in the blue tourism sector who can enrich their knowledge on the subject.

The target group is also created by institutions and organizations that can give a new impetus to the development of entrepreneurship in blue tourism:

- Universities that can enrich the program offer with classes related to blue tourism;



- Industry organizations that will receive an excellent instrument to increase the competences of their employees.

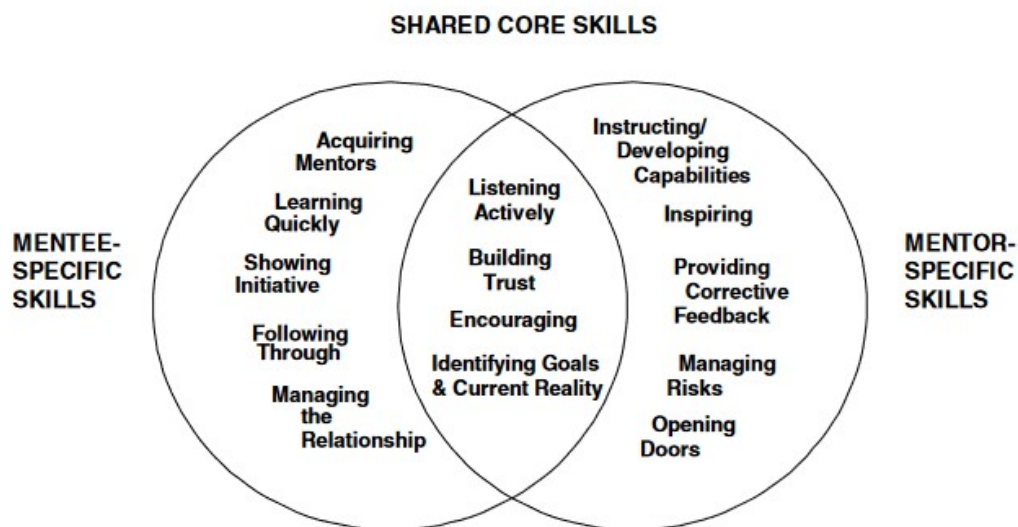
All people and organizations that constitute the target group are both entities that already have some knowledge about the world entrepreneurship acquired through work in companies, as well as those who have worked in other sectors (public or private) and want to gain new professional experience, as well as people who are just looking for their place on the labour market. The common point is the interest in improving or developing entrepreneurial skills in the blue tourism sector, as a way of finding a place in the labour market or a change in working life.

This target group does not have an age limit and the offer is aimed at anyone who uses ICT and has at least a basic understanding of social networks and the most popular applications. This group receives a modern qualification improvement tool in the form of a course and mentoring platform available to the participants of this project.

The course and platform are an innovative solution for promoting entrepreneurship in the blue tourism sector, which allows you to prepare for professional activity in this area.

II. INTERPERSONAL SKILLS IN MENTORING

THE MENTORING SKILLS MODEL



The mentoring manual will give an overview of measures that mentoring team of the Blue Tourism Opportunities project can take to keep their service users, volunteers and staff safe during this time. The mentoring system has the main aim to help you in order to understand clearly and easier the main results of the intellectual outputs. The general objective is support entrepreneurs the blue tourism business to use the knowledge obtained from MOOC course in the development of new blue tourism business.

To develop and manage a successful mentoring partnership, it is required that the partnership to have a number of specific, identifiable skills that enable learning and change to take place.

The Identification of Mentoring Skills is a process that occurs many years. It was established starting from the definition of a skill: „a learned, observable behaviour you perform that indicates (to someone else) how well you can do something. The set of skills described here constitutes your overall ability to mentor and to be mentored." Here there are shared a core skill used by both mentors and mentees and the unique skills needed by each group.

Both mentors and mentees should utilize the following core skills in their mentoring partnerships.

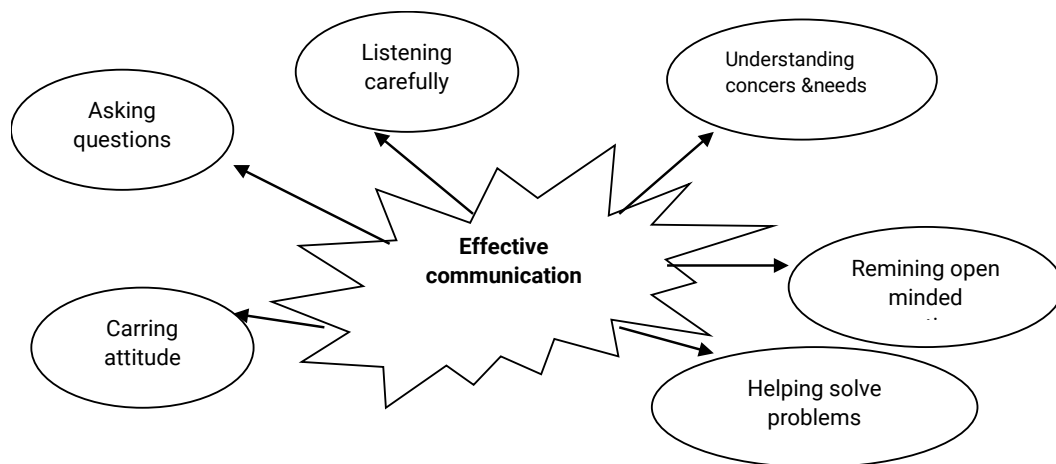
Following there will be presented in a summary of the main skills that mentoring partnership team will be able to have them in from different aspects:

1. Communication

Communication skills are important not only for individuals in the communication industry but also for educators, young people and entrepreneurs who need to present not only themselves but also their ideas.

Effective communication is essential to building a trusting and strong mentoring relationship. Young people are still learning how to communicate successfully and they often rely on their mentors to take the lead and teach them how to communicate in this unique relationship.

Effective communication requires: asking questions, listening carefully, trying to understand a mentee's concerns or needs, demonstrating a caring attitude, remaining open-minded, and helping solve problems.



The process of communication between the mentor and the mentee is called interpersonal communication. This process involves an interaction between two or more people, usually with a direct connection and with some sort of assumed relationship. A sufficient understanding of the communication process by the mentor is essential for proper collaboration between the mentor and the mentee.

Active listening is the most basic mentoring skill; the other skills build on and require it. The action of listening demonstrates to the audience (mentors and mentees) that their concerns have been heard and understood. As a result of this action the audience felt accepted and started to trust.

LISTENING INTENTLY CAN BE DISTINGUISHED like:

- Nonverbal language: looking directly into people's eyes, nodding your head, leaning slightly toward them, frowning, or smiling where appropriate;
- Avoid interrupting mentors and mentees while they're talking;
- Making encouraging responses such as: "Hmmm..." and "Interesting..." or sometimes reflecting back (para-phrasing) certain comments to show you've grasped the meaning and feelings behind the message;
- Remember and show interest in things they've said in the past ("By the way, how did the meeting with your manager go?");
- Summarize the key elements of what each of you said.

Building trust is the process that takes a long time. Between the partners it is a crucial aspect, it is developing over time. If mentors and mentees are able to observe certain appropriate behaviours on your part, then things will be resolved much easier.

Tips: What to do to become **TRUSTABLE**:

- Keep confidences shared by your mentors and mentees;
- Spend appropriate time together;
- Follow through on your promises to them;
- Respect your mentors' and mentees' boundaries;
- Admit your errors and take responsibility for correcting them;
- Tactfully tell your partners if and why you disagree or are dissatisfied with something so they'll know you're honest with them.



Encouragement is the most valued mentoring skill; this includes giving your mentoring partners recognition and sincere positive verbal feedback.

Successful mentees make a point of positively reinforcing their mentors, which serves to keep the mentors focused and motivated. Provide genuine, positive feedback to your mentors and mentees on a regular basis.

Tips to **ENCOURAGE**:

- Compliment your mentoring partners on accomplishments and actions;
- Point out positive traits (such as perseverance and integrity) in addition to their performance and accomplishments;
- Praise them privately, one-on-one;
- Commend them in front of other people (being sensitive to any cultural and style preferences regarding public praise)-

2. Participation

Participation process into the mentoring system is related with some important actions from your side: *be certain that your praise and encouragement are sincere.*

➔ Identifying Goals and Current Reality

As a mentor or mentee, you should have a personal vision, specific goals and a good grasp of current reality. As a mentor you have to be clear on and talk to your mentees about their visions, dreams, and career/life goals. They'll be interested in your current reality (your view of your strengths and limitations as well as the current reality of situations within your organization) and want help recognizing theirs as well.



Tips for demonstrating interest in your **CURRENT REALITY**:

- Know what's important to you, what you value and desire most;
- Recognize areas in which you're able to perform well, very concrete examples of behaviors you can perform at the good-to-excellent level;
- Identify specific weaknesses or growth areas observed in yourself and ones noted by others;
- Set tentative one- to five-year goals to reach in your personal life and career;
- Describe accurately the reality of your abilities and situations.

Instructing / Developing Capabilities

Mentors will have to do some teaching or instructing as part of their mentoring. The skill is especially important in formal mentoring. This seldom means that you'll give formal speeches and lectures. Instead, your instructing will usually be more informal—from modelling specific behaviours to conveying ideas and processes one-on-one, in a tutoring mode.

Tips for you to develop instructioning capabilities:

- Be a "learning broker" as you assist your mentees in finding resources such as people, books, software, websites, and other information sources;
- Teach your mentees new knowledge, skills, and attitudes by explaining, giving effective examples, and asking thought-provoking questions;
- Help your mentees gain broader perspectives of their organizations including history, values, culture, and politics;
- Demonstrate or model effective behaviours, pointing out what you're trying to do;
- Help them monitor performance and refocus steps as needed;

3. Management

Interpersonal skills are the behaviours and tactics a person uses to interact with others effectively. In the business world, Interpersonal skills represent an



employee's ability to work well with others. Interpersonal skills range from communication and listening to attitude and deportment.

Success managers are able to lead teams, help them grow and maintain full control over their business and its performance at the same time. These are the persons who manage to constantly adapt to new situations, encourage others to reach their full potential, and deliver their best work, too

Managers should remain flexible and receptive to new leadership styles and ideas. There are a variety of ways management can improve the productivity and efficiency of a workplace.

Management tips to become a well-rounded leader:

- **Delegate responsibilities** – It's important to develop a balanced task plan that keeps each employee equally involved and actively engaged throughout the day.
- **Encourage open communication** – Strong managers know how to connect with employees on an individual level and open productive dialogues.
- **Focus on achievable goals** – managers have to identify short-term benchmarks that support the long-term mission of the team, recognizing key victories along the way and celebrating successes that exceed expectations.
- **Be decisive** – to be Decisive demonstrates a willingness to take an initiative that will help to inspire the confidence of others.
- **Offer professional carrier options** – Schedule one-on-one sessions with employees to get an idea of their career aspirations and offer guidance that may help them achieve those goals.
- **Foster a collaborative environment** – An effective management is based on the participation of the whole team, with each employee contributing in a meaningful way to an overarching mission.
- **Develop an organized approach to reviewing performance** – it is an important action to establish an annual employee's evaluation and look for areas that could be improved upon
- **Demonstrate strong leadership traits and habits** – Respectable leaders must have: confidence, integrity and a willingness to take on tough responsibilities



- **Remain commitment to learning** – For a strong management the ability to adapt to change and learn new concepts fast is vital, investing in training to remain knowledgeable of the changes in consumer behaviour, market trends and updates to technology are relevant to your business.
- **Consistent time management is important** – Managers should consider planning out the day or the week well ahead of time to stay organized. When time pressure makes it difficult to fulfil certain duties, consider delegating a few extra responsibilities to other leaders on the team.
- **Connect with each team member** – Successful managers will connect with their team members on an individual level and provide tactical advice on how to improve in their roles.
- **Embrace feedback** – Effective leaders encourage both positive and negative feedback from their team. Leaders need to regard feedback as an opportunity to introduce new solutions to old problems.
- **Maintain a positive behaviour** – Managers who have a positive attitude during difficult conversations encourage a company culture focused on honesty, positivity and confidence.

The primary job duty of a mentor is to provide guidance, so it's essential that they have abilities relating to leadership. For example, mentors must display honesty, which helps build relationships with the mentees because honesty inspires trust. Leadership skills such as decision-making, creativity and honesty are useful in strategizing how to prepare lessons for those they mentor.

Functions of mentoring are related with the roles played by the mentors. Those are divided in 2 categories:

- Career development (professional-level development: sponsoring, coaching, exposing, protecting, providing opportunities, etc.)
- Psychological support (personal level development: assist in self-efficacy through role modelling, counselling, friendship).

Coaching involves a relationship between a manager and his direct report to develop skills that may be expected by both the manager and the subordinate. While coaches have a very close personal relationship with their subordinates, sponsors may have few personal interactions with their protégés.

Sponsors locate and cultivate talent and suggest those individuals for opportunities in areas of the firm different than their current division or



department. A sponsor may be a manager or a high-ranking executive, even perhaps someone on the same level as the employee, but has influence and credibility so that his or her recommendation means something. Protégés do not usually work for their sponsors, as the nature of sponsorship is more of an intrinsically motivated assistance rather than suggesting that one's representative be added onto a team.

When a manager is acting as a sponsor, he risks the losing his best subordinate in recommending her for a new position. The sponsor acts as the public relations representative to specially chosen subordinates in the firm. In mentoring, there does not have to be a pre-existing relationship.

4. Innovation

A mentor enables innovators to focus on their project results while also learning about themselves along the way. Leaders can mentor innovators through any of the practical business steps in the value creation process itself:

- Connecting to emerging market trends and identifying the most significant opportunities;
- Gaining customer insights;
- Creating strong solutions and business models;
- Connecting to others who can help them create compelling value propositions;
- Learning how best to communicate and pitch their potential projects; and
- How to implement quickly once approved and funded.

Mentors can also encourage innovators to look inside themselves, to understand themselves as leaders or project champions. When is it time to stick to an idea, and when is it time to listen to others and change course? When is it time for individual vision and when is it essential to collaborate and build a strong team with a shared vision? Innovators face a wide mix of business strategy and interpersonal challenges on their road to success. Leaders who have experience in these areas can offer timely guidance to help innovators successfully navigate this multidimensional path.

Playing the role of mentor means to:



- Use innovation efforts as an opportunity to develop innovators' capabilities and careers;
- Coach an innovation champion and team through the entire innovation process;
- Ask tough questions and allow innovators to struggle, without taking over the project;
- Accelerate project team learning by encouraging experimentation, risk-taking, and iteration.

5. Financial issues

Collaborations exist to achieve certain specified results and outcomes. The process of developing a shared vision with appropriate goals and objectives should aim toward these clearly stated results. Accountability means specifying results anticipated at the outset, and then continuously monitoring progress so mid-course corrections can be made. An evaluation of collaboration efforts and results should be planned from the outset to help collaborators decide how various efforts should be modified, expanded or dropped. Attention to accountability in the early stages of building the collaboration helps avoid the temptation to over-promise and helps to set realistic expectations for the collaborators and those the collaboration seeks to serve.

A successful CEO must correlate excellent financial results with the positive impact created for team members and the community. CEOs need to know how to manage the company to ensure projected growth and profit. From this point of view, traditional skills such as strategic thinking, the ability to understand market forces, excellent financial insight, strong negotiation skills, and decision-making in uncertain environments continue to be the key skills that CEOs need to excel.

Skills that a mentor has to have them regarding the financial issues and to be able to coordinate a profitable business are the following:

The contracting process is essential in human relations. This has to be correct action when we are contracting, we know what we are doing, we know what we want to obtain and we are able to pay or to lose for the aim's obtaining.



A financial success is related with the ability of one person to be persevering in his actions, he is not giving up at the first obstacle, he is investing constant in himself and his projects.

The capacity to handle negative emotions is one important skill that has to have the mentor. The important financial decisions have to take when we are in an equilibrate emotional phase.

The mentor has to be able to read the numbers, the story that number are telling us.

Financial success is in hand with the quality relations that we have.

A mentor has to be able to see what are the real needs of others and what you have to offer is more valuable than they offered initially.

- Collaborative problem-solving skills. The general managers together with the other members of the team must find new solutions, predict the consequences of the various scenarios analysed and test their theories in low-risk work environments. He must then communicate openly, promptly and transparently with the entire team about the trends, results, issues and changes needed.
- Skills that generate positive social impact: Because company leaders need to manage value creation for all stakeholders, they start by listening to them and taking their opinions seriously. In this regard, CEOs need to learn to embrace the different perspectives of stakeholders that they may have preferred to ignore in the past.

Beyond financial results, agility and resilience, they are concerned with the well-being of people, especially in these demanding times. Empathy, compassion and self-awareness are also part of the new skills of leaders.



III. PHASES OF A MENTORING PROCESS

1. What are your skills?

An Important step for any mentor is to help mentees understand the skills they have and learn how to develop and adapt those skills to benefit their business. A key role for any mentor is to help develop this understanding with their mentee, through this process of exploring the mentee's skills, the mentor will gain a further insight into their partner which will hopefully strengthen their relationship and lead to more desirable outcomes for both parties.

The Importance of skill development in entrepreneurial education.

One of the main reasons for the failure of a start-up is lack of skills on behalf of the entrepreneur, this is apparent in the relative success of entrepreneurs who have previous business experience or education in the subject, when compared to those without it. The mentoring process can help bridge that skill gap and can provide the mentee with truly life changing inspiration and information that in the context of blue tourism can both provide economic development and a more sustainable approach to tourism. There is empirical evidence to suggest that entrepreneurial education can really be the difference between success and failure for a person's livelihood although admittedly more research is required in this field (Almahry and Sarea 2018).

Before we delve too deep into the world of entrepreneurial skills it would be beneficial to clearly define what we mean by both entrepreneurship and skills. Entrepreneurship is the process of creating a business, it involves taking risk in the hopes of reward and includes inherently the possibility of failure. A skill is a much harder concept to define, in its simplest terms it is the capacity to complete an objective but in the broader sense it encompasses the abilities gained through an investment into education and experience that are necessary to succeed. Entrepreneurial skills are thus defined as "those skills activities, or practical know-how, that is needed to establish and successfully run a business enterprise" (Mamabolo, Kerrin, and Kele 2017).

At this point it may be useful to outline the skills that are useful for entrepreneurs in an emerging industry such as Blue Tourism. The skills required to succeed as an entrepreneur have been divided into six categories by a piece of original

research published in The Southern African Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management (Mamabolo, Kerrin, and Kele 2017), they are as follows:

- **Technical Skills** – The technical skills referred to in this list include the knowhow to complete the operational requirements needed to run the business: Managing operations, managing supplies and supply chains, production space skills, managing plant and equipment, technology and production processes, management styles, written and oral communication and knowledge of manufacturing technology.
- **Business Management skills** – The Business Management skills mentioned in this list include the skills required to effectively and efficiently keep the business afloat and includes Planning, organising, supervising, marketing skills, financial management skills, legal skills, administrative skills, high order skills related to learning and problem solving, marketing, human resource management, marketing, networking, operational skills, business planning skills and negotiation skills.
- **Entrepreneurial Skills** – The Entrepreneurial skills introduced in this list by the authors refer to the skills necessary to “Birth, growth and performance of a business enterprise. These are skills needed to develop innovative products and services and to generate solutions to emerging needs in the marketplace” and they include, the ability to develop business concepts and a business plan, environmental scanning, opportunity recognition, advisory board and networking, innovation, new resource skills, calculated risk or risk propensity, change orientation, visionary leadership, inner control, creativity and persistence.
- **Personal Skills** – The Personal Skills referred to in this list are the self-reflective skills that any budding entrepreneur needs to either possess or develop in order to be successful in business and they include, self-awareness, accountability, emotional coping, creativity, change orientation, motivation, negotiating skills, learning skills, communication skills and self-efficacy.
- **Social and Interpersonal Skills** – The social and interpersonal skills are the skills needed for an entrepreneur to effectively deal with the other stakeholders in the business, a business cannot be started and run without a significant amount of interaction with others, whether they be suppliers, staff, consumers or members of the community, this means that social and interpersonal skills are some of the most important skills needed for any

entrepreneur and they include, persuasiveness, social skill, self-confidence, trust overconfidence, leadership, networking skills, impression management, social adaptability, social perception, self-promotion, expressiveness, perception and social influence

- **Behavioural or Motivational Skills** – Behavioural and Motivational skills are the skills required to consistently set and achieve goals which are needed to succeed and they include, self-discipline, intuition and vision, creativity, perseverance, rigorousness, meticulousness, commitment, stamina, energy, effort, motivation, achievement motivation and passion.

It may be useful for mentors to examine some of these skills with mentees and choose some skills for the mentee to rank their own perception of their ability in those areas, in order to assess the mentee's strengths and weaknesses and to lend a focus onto areas that need particular development. Once the self-assessment of skills has been completed, the focus can then turn to adapting the mentee's business idea to suit their own strengths.





2. Idea Generation and Implementation

In general start-up businesses have very long odds stacked against them, there is no way of knowing the exact figure, but it is estimated that as few as one in ten start-up businesses actually survive. This rate of failure puts into sharp relief the importance of starting out on the right footing, and the beginning of any start-up is of course the idea behind the business. It is vital for mentors to direct mentee's ideas in the direction of a viable business, after all for a business to benefit its stakeholders, it must survive. One of the most important tools required for starting a successful enterprise is Market Research, the more information a mentee has, the greater chance of happening upon an opportunity or more importantly avoiding a costly mistake. By conducting market research an entrepreneur gives themselves a significant leg up when it comes to idea generation as they can tailor the original idea that inspired them to become an entrepreneur to the context of the existing market or lack thereof to give themselves the greatest possible opportunity for success.

You can split market research into two main categories, Primary and Secondary. Primary research also known as field research is the process of collecting and analysing original data, the main advantages to this type of research is that as the primary researcher you can collect information that will be specifically relevant for yourself, for example a piece of primary research could include scoping out competitors in the industry you aim to enter. This gives you the opportunity to see what competitors are getting right and wrong, which could go a long way in helping you develop your business idea, the downside of primary research is that it can be time intensive. It could be helpful for mentors to mention pieces of primary research that you conducted to your mentees and for you to help them brainstorm ideas for primary research that they can conduct themselves. Some examples of primary research could include:

- Researching existing supply chains in chosen industry.
- Conducting consumer questionnaires to gauge demand.
- Assess issues facing competitors.

Secondary research, also known as desk research, is the process of analysing information that has already been published by a third party. The advantage of



conducting secondary research is that it can be less costly in terms of time and money than primary research and some information that you are looking for may already have been published, the main disadvantage of secondary research is that the information you find may not be specific enough to your business or may be out of date. As a mentor you can again mention some examples of secondary research you have completed yourself. Some examples of secondary research could include:

- Competitors public reports.
- Existing studies and surveys relevant to the mentee's business.
- Journalism related to issues in the local community.

Innovation

For a start-up to succeed it must meet the needs of consumers demands, this can be achieved through innovation through providing new services or by providing existing services in a unique way or more efficiently in order to engage in price competition. Innovation does not need to be an entirely new idea that's never been tried before, it can be as simple as an improvement in supply chain management that gives you the edge over competitors or taking an idea that has worked well in a different location or context and adapting it to a new area.

An important factor in a start-ups success with innovation is making it a part of the culture within the organisation, innovation is not a top-down process that comes from on high, it is important to convey to your mentees that innovation can come from any member in the business and fostering an environment where employees feel their ideas are appreciated. After all, an employee fulfilling a specific role within a business is likely to be the most familiar with the issues they are facing in that role, and are likely to have suggestions on how to streamline the part of the business in which they are familiar. Below have been listed along with a short description, seven types of innovation from the journal Business Horizons (Kahn 2018), that mentors can use to help mentees apply to their own ideas.

1. **Cost Reductions** – Providing goods and services at a more attractive cost to consumers than direct rivals in their chosen industry.
2. **Product/service Improvement** – This includes increasing the quality of a physical good or adapting a service to be more convenient or enjoyable.



3. **Line Extensions** – Adding products that complement existing products or adding something extra to a service to make it more attractive.
4. **New Markets** – Taking existing products and services and delivering them to a new market in order to increase demand.
5. **New Uses** – Finding additional demand for a good or service by positioning it for a different use than originally intended.
6. **New Category Entries** – This requires expanding the business into a new but related sector where demand is not being fulfilled.
7. **New to-the-world products/delivery** – This is the most radical form of innovation and includes developing new products or services or delivering them in a new way.

Implementation

Once you have run through the process of idea generation with your mentees, it's now time to turn those ideas into the beginnings of a business. Two crucial elements of turning an idea into a business are access to capital and access to markets. In order to start a business, the mentee will need access to capital, whether this be from their own resources or far more likely through a financial institution. For the business to be viable the mentee will have to ensure that their business has the requisite access to markets so that they can sell their goods or services.

Access to Capital

Capital is the financial resources a business needs to function, capital can come from many different sources and is specific to each business, capital can come from the entrepreneur themselves but in the majority of cases an entrepreneur will not have the resources available and will need to access capital from financial institutions or alternatively if the business has a community development aspect it can seek fundraising through the community. Here are some factors related to accessing capital that you can discuss with your mentees.

- Timing, accessing capital can be a very time-consuming endeavour which is best conducted long before you plan to begin trading.
- Research, there are often grants and initiatives available from governments and other institutions that can help you start a business, help your mentee learn what is available for their situation.



- Repayment capability, if your mentee plans to take out a loan ensure that they are aware of interest rates and help them calculate how much they can realistically repay

Funder Expectations, different sources of capital have different expectations for example if a government grant is received it may include strings attached so ensure the mentee is aware of these strings and able to meet the requirements:

Access to Markets

For a business to exist it needs access to its consumers, in this day and age this can be a physical outlet or an online space where they can show the goods and services they provide to customers. Here are some factors relating to accessing markets that you can discuss with your mentees:

- **Know your Market** – It is important that you have a good idea of the market you are entering so that you can access it in a way that will be successful for you and accessible for your consumers.
- **Research Regulations** – To operate in some areas you may need permissions such as permits; it is necessary that this information be gathered before continuing with your plans.
- **Know your Business** – By tailoring your access to the market to your own business you increase your chances to thrive.

3. Business Model

A business model is a company's plan to generate revenue and survive, it outlines a business goods and services that they plan to provide to consumers, it outlines the target market that the goods and services are aimed at, and it includes an overview of the costs related to delivering these goods and services. A business model is a key part of the business development process and it is required to present in the process of applying for capital. A key part of a business model is the value proposition, this is a statement that explains why a business's goods or services are attractive to customers and what differentiates them from other competitors in that industry, this often includes a U.S.P, A unique selling point explains how your business can provide a good or service in a unique way that gives them an advantage over competitors and will attract customers.



A benefit to creating a business model is that it can be useful for attracting investment and new talent into the business and it can provide existing management and staff with a clear idea of the purpose of the business and the direction that you plan to go in. A business model can be helpful for your mentee to get their ideas and plan for the business onto paper which can provide clarity on the direction they choose to go with their business, a useful exercise to conduct with your mentees would be to get them to write their ideas onto a piece of paper and to talk through them and provide advice from your own experience.

There are several different types of business models, the type your mentee will need to create is dependent on the planned structure of their business. Some of the most common types of business models will be listed below, as a mentor you should help identify which business model is right for your mentee:

- **Retailer Model** – This is the model related to businesses that purchase goods from suppliers and sells to consumers at a price that covers total costs.
- **Manufacturing Model** – A business that takes raw materials and processes them to sell as products either directly to consumers or other businesses.
- **Leaser Model** – A business that purchases equipment and leases it out to consumers.
- **Subscription Model** – Where a consumer pays a monthly fee for access to a business goods or services.

According to [entrepreneur.com](https://www.entrepreneur.com), there are 7 elements of a successful business model:

- Identify a specific audience, A business can't be all things to everyone so it's important to narrow your focus down to a core customer base;
- Establish a business process, outline the key activities that the business will conduct such as product delivery and marketing;
- Record key business resources, write down the key things that the business will need to operate such as a website or warehouse;
- Develop a strong value proposition, clearly define what differentiates the business from competitors;
- Determine key business partners, a business needs partners to function efficiently so outlining planned partners is a necessary step;

- Create a Demand Generation Strategy, create a plan to get your business noticed and plan the journey of the customer from recognition to purchase;
- Leave room for Innovation, at this point in planning the business there are still a lot of unknowns so it can be advantageous to leave room to adapt later on.





IV. ONLINE MENTORING

Over the last decade was a shift from conventional training and mentoring into new approaches where the Internet plays a key role. Online training and mentoring have become an integral part of professional development, reshaping the traditional learning method (Graves et al., 2009). Traditional and online mentoring have similar features such as reciprocity, evolving benefits, and interaction. However, researchers state that online mentoring has two special qualities that differentiate it from in-person format: boundaryless and egalitarian (Dorner et al., 2021).

Online mentoring uses technology-mediated communication which provides learning, advising, encouraging, promoting, and modelling (Neely et al., 2017). This distinctive approach that transcends the limitations of time and space, has become a viable alternative to face-to-face mentoring since it gives mentees the opportunity to receive assistance that would not be possible other way (Dorner et al., 2021).

E-mentoring is defined by Akin and Hilbern (2007) as "the merger of mentoring with electronic communications to develop and sustain mentoring relationships linking a senior individual (mentor) and a lesser skilled or experienced individual (protégé) independent of geography or scheduling conflicts". Which supposes the transfer of knowledge and skills from an established professional to a junior or new member of the field (Rowland, 2012).

This type of mentoring is characterized by a less horizontal dynamic of hierarchy and method of communication having the possibility to combine synchronous and asynchronous communication, which reflects on more time for users to reflect about the topic and allows a better engagement (Dorner et al., 2021). Once the communication happens online, e-mentoring can take place anywhere and at any time as long as mentors and mentees have Internet access. This makes e-mentoring more cost effective and increase the amount of time participants spend on the mentoring platform. The interaction between mentors and mentees allows the creation of a structure with less boundaries compared to traditional mentoring, which reflects a positive relationship between participants (Neely et al., 2017).



The creation of an online mentoring platform assumes the interconnection of some ideas and knowledge such as the main element of voluntary participation. Each mentee participates of his/her own free will and spontaneously and it is important to adapt the content of the platform to the needs of participants. It is necessary to present orientation for mentees and mentors about the dynamics of mentoring in a clear way regarding to goals, expectations, and rules. Along with, it is pertinent to combine integrative formats of mentoring, such as one-to-one, peer, group and reverse mentoring. Final assessment methods are important too to stimulate continuous improvement and an understanding of the outcomes achieved (Dorner et al., 2021).

E-mentoring requires the use of some form of information and communication technology (ICT) and can work by sending emails between a mentor and mentee, texting using cell phones, chatting using a messenger program or social media, video conferencing (such as through Skype, FaceTime, or another video call platform), and posting messages forums. Most platforms of mentoring combine many of the features mentioned above, so that mentors and mentees can communicate in a space completely dedicated to their mentoring interact (Garringer et al., 2019).

4.1. The role of guidelines

To create a mentoring platform, it is necessary to define, first, the programme vision and scope. A clear vision and well-defined scope form the basis upon which the rest of the mentoring programme is built and influences all rules defined. Spending time with question such as “why” will save much time in identifying the “who,” “when,” “what,” “where,” and “how” of the development of the platform. The programme organisers must have a shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities that are creating the need for mentorship, and a unified vision of the intended impact and expected outcomes should be developed. Outcomes should be clearly defined and can include, for example, whether the programme seeks to create awareness, build knowledge or skills, modify practices, or lead to the development of a product (Treasureid et al., 2022).

After the outcomes are well defined, is time to develop the organisational structure of the mentoring program. This structure is built upon the programme’s scope and outcomes, and different roles and responsibilities among

administration need to be determined. Such a strong structure will facilitate and drive the development of the mentoring programme and facilitate the accomplishment of the rules defined a priori. Once the structure is taken care, the planning of activities to achieve programme goals must take place. Planning support processes should be designed to enable interactions between mentors and mentees, provide equitable access to resources and aid in monitoring progress. With this in mind, and for the programme to effectively achieve its intended outcomes, a set of activities should be designed to support effective mentor–mentee engagements. These activities can supplement mentor–mentee interactions and should provide further opportunities for professional development for both mentors and mentees (Treasureid et al., 2022).

4.2. When to use them

Communication processes are a crucial aspect in any mentoring programme, essential for developing methods and strategies that are inclusive for everyone in the platform. The communication strategy impacts the technologies used, being a website, social media, or an online repository can be effectively used to share documentation, communicate ways of working, make announcements, and enable access to relevant information as needed. Communication tools selected for the platform should facilitate asynchronous interactions which is beneficial for online programmes (Treasureid et al., 2022).

4.3. The mentoring processes

Academic institutions and industry have been giving attention to online mentoring due to its ability to nurture more effective communication between mentors and mentees. Mentoring is a strength relationship between a senior individual who is a mentor, and a lesser skilled trainer with the goal of improving the latter's own knowledge or getting advice (Kang et al., 2012).

Mentoring includes benefits such as supporting participants academic and professional success, and personal psycho-social development. Furthermore, mentoring has become one of the crucial methods to transfer intangible assets to the next generation, like know-how, skills, and the knowledge and wisdom of mentors. In specific, mentoring facilitates learning motivation, provides information, offers role models and emotional support (Kang et al., 2012) (Jung & Tak, 2005) (Bierema & Merriam, 2002).



A personal relationship between the mentor and the mentee is on the base of mentoring; secondly, mentoring is about a process-oriented program rather than a task- or result-oriented method like learning, coaching, and similar activities. Lastly, mentoring mutually enhances participants and mentors. The mentoring process has been used more and more since 2000, but there are also some challenges with it since searching for a right mentor and nurturing a relationship may be constantly challenging, and virtual intimacy could be difficult to achieve, particularly if two people have never met in person (Bierema & Merriam, 2002) (Kang et al., 2012).

To meet the goal of mentoring, the participants of a mentoring platform need to possess proactive attitudes and make effort to maintain a beneficial relationship. If most of the participants of a mentoring program disregard the website, websites for online mentoring may be wasted, and the range of the administration of a mentoring program can be limited. Therefore, some strategies are needed to support the online mentoring activities (Kang et al., 2012).

Achieving the goals of a mentoring program depends on how actively the mentor and mentee make an effort to find a mutual communication topic and maintain the relationship (Sproull & Keisler, 1986). That's why, facilitating strategies are needed to assist the online mentoring: 5 Easy-to strategies are presented to promote online mentoring (Kang et al., 2012).

First is the Easy-to-join which represents an entrance strategy to help participants to easily join a program. The best option is to provide various forms of mentoring, such as group mentoring, peer mentoring, and open mentoring as well as individual one to one mentoring. Second, Easy-to-find is an intelligent strategy providing a matching algorithm between mentors and mentees. Third, Easy-to-mentor is a catalyst strategy that provides greater accessibility to an online mentoring site and activates mentoring.

Before beginning mentoring, an orientation or workshop is recommended to inform participants of the value of mentoring, to help them find their mentoring goal, and introduce ways to mentor others. Fourth, Easy-to-share is a diffusion strategy that creates knowledge consisting of mentoring information, and shares it with other mentors, mentees and potential participants (Pyeon et al., 2007). Lastly, Easy-to-make a virtuous circle is a nurturing strategy that provides a foundation for the growth of both mentors and mentees in the community, which is a human network with cohesion according to their major, work field, interests, etc. This “circle” allows the mentoring to be not just a one-time event, but a



sustainable system (Kang et al., 2012).

Regarding benefits for mentors and mentees, outcomes to the e-mentor have been reported as a secondary effect of e-mentoring. This mentor benefits in technological skills, professional assessment, social benefits, and psychological benefits. Technological skills refer to electronic communication skills learned as ideas, practices and techniques are shared via an electronic medium. An e-mentor benefit from professional assessment from the viewpoint which bosses have upon the e-mentor as a respectable and committed person. Mentors on online mentoring platforms also gain personal satisfaction from offering support



and advice to others, from influencing the future of a field or profession, or from knowing that knowledge and expertise are valued (Williams et al., 2012).

Challenges to mentors have been identified in communication, technology use, and itself role. Communication challenges refer to the characteristics of electronic media as the central communication vehicle between mentor-mentee pairs. Mentors can have difficulty manipulating or operating the electronic technology in which e-mentoring takes place due to individual factors (age, gender, ethnicity) or situational factors (perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness) which can difficult their ability to join the platform the best way possible (Williams et al., 2012).

4.4. Who is the mentor

The word mentor comes from the Greek language and has its roots in the terms “steadfast” and “enduring”. Recently, the term mentor has been synonymous with one who is a wise teacher, a guide, and a friend. A mentor is someone committed to invest time to assist the development of the mentee, he or she will discuss educational opportunities, career options and professional development (E - Mentoring Program Guidelines for Students, n.d.).

Mentors focus on a mentee's achievements and areas for growth through a one-on-one relationship that is non- threatening and non-judgmental. The mentor/mentee relationship is a partnership, and both parties need to agree upon a framework defined (Rowland, 2012).

Through technological means, knowledge transfer between the mentor and mentee is gradually increasing and adds value between groups, field expertise and leaders globally who wish to identify and incorporate new techniques. Knowledge transfer in a virtual reality can impact organizations and organizational performance at various levels such as individuals, products, and processes and the overall performance of the organization (Rowland, 2012).

4.5. Good mentoring relationship

E-mentoring is unique in the fact that the interaction between mentors and mentees can be synchronous or asynchronous. The first one refers to when interacting happens via a video call or chat program. Asynchronous communication means the use of emails or forums where there may be a



significant time gap between sending and receiving messages. Some mentoring programs don't schedule meeting times, allowing mentors and mentees to communicate any time they desire. On the other hand, there are other platforms where interactions take place at regularly scheduled times, especially when the program is tied to a classroom lesson or time-based project (Garringer et al., 2019).

Interaction between mentors and mentees can be totally virtual or blended, which means e-mentoring provides flexibility to meetings occurring entirely through the technology or including some in-person contacts (Garringer et al., 2019).

Mentoring has been found to help to improve mentors' skills in providing constructive feedback to others; to develop their coaching skills and learning of up-to-date technical skills; to develop innovative approaches to their work; and to promote reflection on, and improvement in, their own practice (Shrestha et al., 2009).

The flexibility in mentoring hours through e-mentoring emerges as a positive factor for mentors. Flexibility was one of the factors that had attracted a number of mentors to the scheme, particularly those with dependants and in part-time employment. The impersonality of the electronic medium may be perceived as beneficial for mentees, but less so for mentors, highlighting that mentor and mentee do not benefit equally from the aspects of electronic communication and that it has different implications for each (Shrestha et al., 2009).

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