



Overview of mentoring skills iHEA mentoring programme

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**HEALTH
ECONOMICS
UNIT**



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Departement Openbare Gesondheid
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Purpose of input

- Through reflective practice, and through sharing and applying mentoring concepts, to:
 - Promote an understanding of the concept and value of mentoring
 - Promote an understanding of key mentoring skills
 - Effective listening
 - Effective feedback
 - Negotiating conflict



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What is mentorship?

- Mentorship in the *Thinking Environment* model:
 - The person that holds the question holds the wisdom to answer the question – the mentor provides an **enabling** space (facilitation) for mentee to surface own wisdom

Developed by Nancy Kline, founder of Time to Think Inc.; author of *Time to Think* (1998), *More Time to Think* (2009), *The Promise That Changes Everything* (2020)



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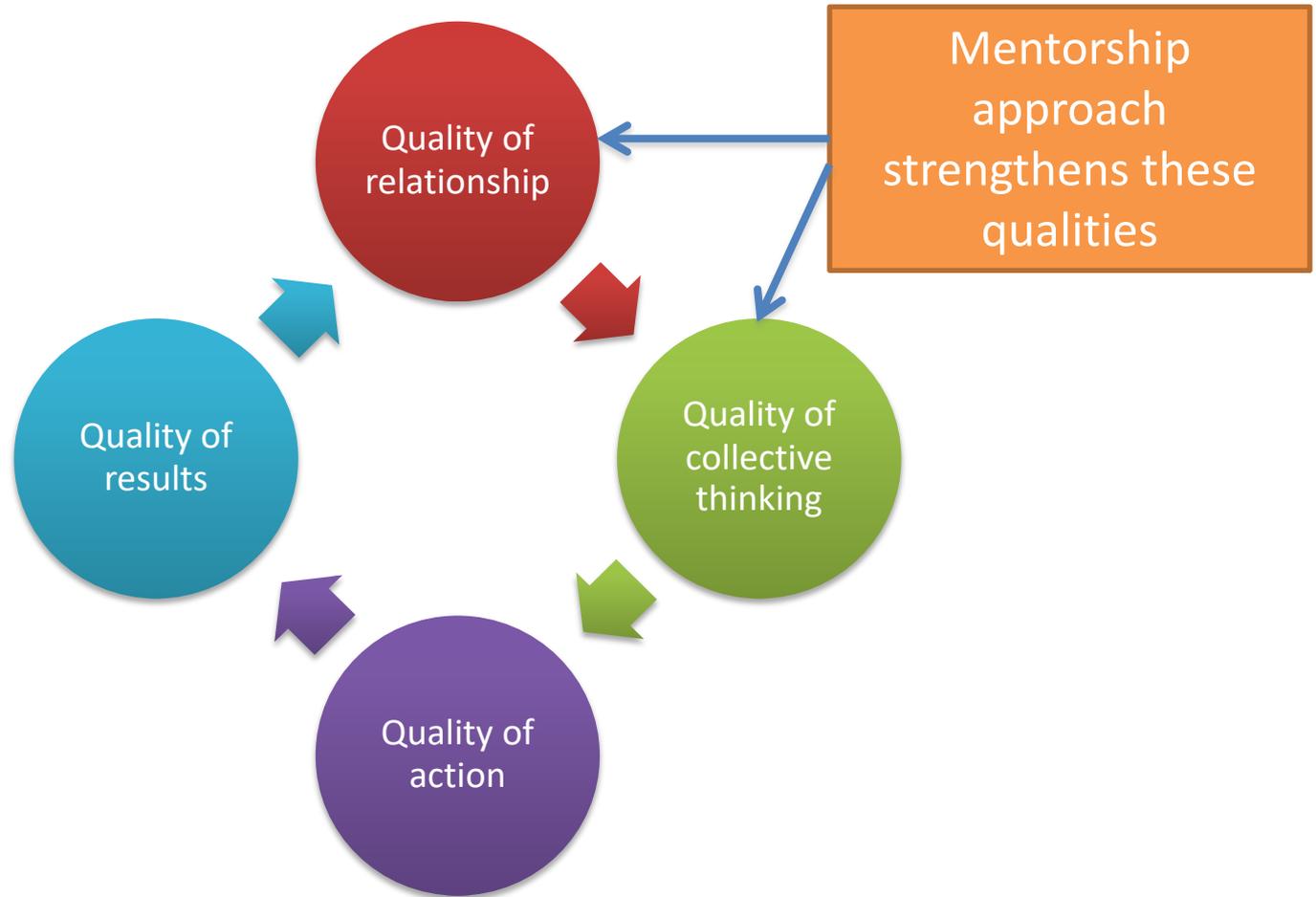


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What is mentorship?



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Thinking Environment

- Quality of everything we do depends on the quality of the thinking we do first
- The quality of our thinking depends on how we are treated [by *self* and other] when we are thinking
- Components of attention, equality, appreciation, ease etc create a level of safety that the thinker can access a level of insight that is unusual



<u>Component</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Mentoring example</u>
Attention	Listening with palpable respect	Reinforce in all engagements
Equality	Treating each other as thinking peers	Everyone has potential to contribute and think well; mentees ultimately need to find their own solutions
Feelings	Emotional release to restore thinking	Especially important to acknowledge validity of feelings in stressful environments where burnout is a risk
Appreciation	Genuine acknowledgement of a person's qualities	Actively seek to find attributes to appreciate; not the same as saying thank you
Encouragement	Giving courage, beyond competition	Create a safe space so colleagues can innovate, ask questions
Place	Creating a physical space that says to people 'you matter'	Bring beauty into physical spaces [even online?]
Ease	Offering freedom from urgency	Close unneeded apps, programmes, phone on silent
Information	Supplying facts, data, avoid advice giving	To avoid inadvertent advice giving: "In my experience what worked for me was..."
Diversity	Welcoming divergent thinking & identities	Develop awareness of prejudices, develop ease with different views
Incisive questions	Removing limiting assumptions	"Academia is too hard" versus "given the challenges, what would help to move forward now?"

Mentoring skills

1. Effective listening:
 - a) Learning to offer generative attention
 - b) Offering respect & equality
 - c) Appreciating, celebrating
2. Effective feedback:
 - a) Enabling independent thinking
3. Negotiating conflict



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Component 1a: Attention

- Developing the ability to offer ‘generative’ attention
- Listening in a way that enables a creative spark & is respectful of the person speaking
- Listening without:
 - Interruption
 - Multitasking
 - Thinking of how to respond or fix
- In short: listening in a way that allows the thinker to think for themselves



Component 1a: Attention

- “The major aspects of practice and personality are her ability to listen patiently, even when she knows better, and to point the mentored person to a more complete understanding of the issues...this she does with deceptively simple questions...”

Lee A, Dennis C, Campbell P. Nature's guide for mentors. *Nature*. 2007;447(June):791–7



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Component 1b: Equality

- A sense of equality and respect is present in groups that think and work well together
- Even in hierarchical relationships, we can treat each others as thinking equals
 - Everyone has the potential to have great ideas
 - Everyone benefits from having an opportunity to express their views
- Important given potential power dynamics in mentoring relationships



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Component 1c: Appreciation/Celebration

- In reading drafts, we may focus on what's wrong or missing (e.g. critiquing – even if constructively)
- Miss opportunities to celebrate the good parts
- Appreciation makes it safer to think independently

“The first time a person comes up with a novel idea or experiment on their own. This should be an occasion for public recognition...as it is a milestone of great significance for most young scientists”

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Component 1c: Appreciation/Celebration

Examples of appreciation:

- I admire your tenacity /discipline/motivation in continuing to grapple with these issues
- I really appreciate your honesty in raising these concerns about x/y/z
- I have learnt so much from our discussion, x/y/z was a new way of seeing things for me



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Practice: Thinking Pair

- A structured conversation between two people that ensures:
 - Reciprocity
 - Equality
 - Attention
- The thinker thinks out loud for a pre-specified amount of time; the listener provides generative attention
- **NO INTERRUPTING!** [READ: Nancy Kline on interruption here: <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/oct/24/let-me-finish-how-to-stop-interrupting-and-change-the-world>]
- Then swop roles



Practice: Thinking Pair

- Decide who will listen first
- Set a timer for 3 minutes
- Emphasise that the listener will do their best not to interrupt the thinker
- The listener asks an opening question [press go on the timer]
- The thinker goes ahead and expresses his/her views for 3 minutes
- The listener provides generative attention
- If thinker finishes before 3 minutes, listener asks “Is there anything more that you think, feel, or want to say?”. If not, that’s fine!
- Once 3 minutes are finished (or thinker has finished), swop roles, and repeat the above exercise
- Do not go into a dissection or dialogue on what has just been shared [the thoughts are owned by the thinker and not the listener; this needs sensitivity]



Practice: Thinking Pair

- Thinking partner asks:
 - How have you been impacted through a relationship you have with someone who treats you as an equal?
- If thinker runs out of steam, ask:
 - Is there anything more that you think, or feel, or want to say?



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Practice: Thinking Pair

- What is your freshest thinking about the importance of equality in mentoring relationships?



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Mentoring skills

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Skill 2: Effective feedback

- The mind that holds the question holds the solution
- Role of mentor is to enable mentee to answer their question
 - “M displays the right balance of direction in a project and letting someone discover and develop insights for themselves”
 - “Supervisors who micromanage their students or have very specific ideas of how the science in a lab should be done can stifle the student”
 - “His advice was almost always given in the form of suggestions...with hindsight I recognize this as a deliberate strategy designed to encourage independence of thought...M made me feel like his collaborator”

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Spectrum of independence

Mentee expects mentor to direct, to teach, to chair meetings, to correct mistakes

Mentee expects mentor to support, enable, inspire, and treat him/her as a thinking equal

Dependent thinking

Changing mindset, gaining courage to act differently, practicing, learning from mistakes, trying again

Independent thinking

Mentor may control and over-direct mentee, cannot resist 'telling them what to do'

Mentor understands role to be one of enabling and supporting mentee to forge their own career



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Skill 2: Effective feedback

- Tips of how to avoid over-directing and advice-giving:
 - When I was grappling with this, what helped me was to do x/y/z
 - In my experience of this issue, what I did is x/y/z
- In effect, trying to speak from own experience at least some of the time instead of ‘have you done x’ or ‘you should do x’



Skill 2: Effective feedback

- Examples of useful mentoring questions:
 - What more would you like to achieve from this meeting/session?
 - Given what we have discussed so far, what is the key/burning question/issue on your mind at the moment?
 - What is the key question that you would like to have answered today?



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Skill 3: Negotiating conflict

- Thinking Environment approach:
 - Agree with partner to tackle issue using Thinking Pair
 - Repeat Thinking Pair until both parties feel they are done
 - Conclude with dialogue, appreciation [if possible] and agreed actions
 - Challenges
 - Partners need to agree to TP, with attention and equality of time as minimum conditions
 - Helps to have a mediator who can set the rules



Putting it all together

Part	Suggested framing / question from mentor
Opening	<p>I would like to start with hearing from you. What are your thoughts and feelings in relation [to x]</p> <p>[Enable mentee to express their views. If they pause early, can encourage them to continue]</p> <p>Is there anything more that you would like to add?</p>
Focusing	<p>Given what you have raised so far, what would you like to achieve with the rest of our time together?</p> <p>[Encourage mentee to craft a question/goal]</p>
Providing input	<p>[If mentee asks for your inputs, try to speak from own experience]</p> <p>In my experience, when faced with this challenge/situation/issue, what helped me was x/y/z</p>
Closing	<p>[Try to finish with mutual appreciation. If not mutual, then at least try to offer appreciation to the mentee]</p> <p>What I really appreciated about our conversation was the new way of looking at x; I really admire your tenacity in tackling x/y/z; I learnt a lot from your experience</p>

Appendix 1: Dialogue interview to initiate mentorship

Guidelines

Decide who will go first.

Set the timer for 20 minutes

The speaker uses the 4 questions below as a prompt but can also speak about whatever topic, in whatever order they choose

The listener provides generative attention (listening with palpable respect and without any interruption either verbally or through body language)

Questions

What is your family background (where did you grow up, brothers and sisters, parents, etc)?

What are 2-3 life events, choices, people, that shaped your life?

What drew you into this kind of work?

What is brewing in your life now?



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Appendix 2: Thinking Pair

- Decide who will listen first
- Set a timer for 3 minutes
- Emphasise that the listener will do their best not to interrupt the thinker
- The listener asks an opening question [press go on the timer]
- The thinker goes ahead and expresses his/her views for 3 minutes
- The listener provides generative attention
- If thinker finishes before 3 minutes, listener asks “Is there anything more that you think, feel, or want to say?”. If not, that’s fine!
- Once 3 minutes are finished (or thinker has finished), swop roles, and repeat the above exercise
- At the end, remember to thank each other! [that’s the component of appreciation]
- Do not go into a dissection or dialogue on what has just been shared [the thoughts are owned by the thinker and not the listener; this needs sensitivity]



Appendix 3: Reflective questions for mentors

- At end of each mentoring meeting reflect/journal:
 - How was the quality of my attention?
 - How was the power dynamic between me and my mentee and how can I enhance equality?
 - How did I feel about the amount of direction I am giving?
 - What can I appreciate?



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Thank you

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