

Effective Mentoring for ITE Trainees: Principles of Good Practice

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What is Mentoring?

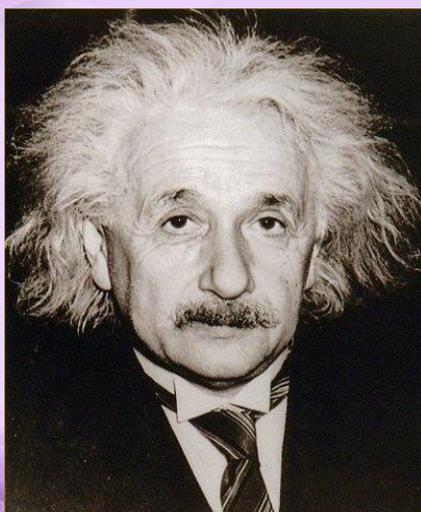
- “To know and not to act is not to know”
(Chinese proverb)
- Mentoring is always about your work. If it is not about your work, it may be counselling or therapy, but it is not mentoring.



Educational Mentoring

- Educational Mentoring is a working alliance between two professionals, where mentees offer an account of their work, reflect on it, receive feedback and guidance, if appropriate.
- The purpose is to enable the mentee to gain in ethical competence, confidence and creativity, so as to give the best possible service to learners.

Adapted from Inskipp, F, & Proctor, B, 1993, *Making the Most of Supervision*, Cascade Publications.



"I never teach my pupils; I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they learn"

Albert Einstein



Southern House, January 2010

Non-Directive Educational Mentoring

- Is transformational, *not* transmissional.
- Involves helping the mentee to find *their own* voice.
- Is conversation-based.
- Follows the mentee's agenda.
- Utilizes the "here-and-now".
- Involves movement from "I-learning" to "we-learning".
- Mentors should regularly ask mentees for feedback –eg. What am I doing that is helping your learning/development? What am I doing that is hindering your learning/development?
- Recognizes that "shifts" can take place in the mentoring room, or when the mentee is back at the chalk face.
- Mentor's role is like that of a nurturing parent: the mentor recognizes that the task is to allow the mentee to become the teacher they need to be, rather than a clone of the mentor.



Pitfalls of Non-Directive Educational Mentoring

- For example, in non-directive mentoring, the mentor works to the mentee's agenda and only mentors on the basis of what the mentee tells them – which may not reflect reality.
- What other pitfalls can you identify with a non-directive approach to educational mentoring?
- How might these pitfalls be overcome? (eg. In the example above, the mentor could ask the mentee on what basis they selected the issues to bring to mentoring, and how typical these are of their general teaching practice).



After Action Review (AAR)

This is a military de-briefing strategy, developed by the US army

It is also a v. good directive process for reviewing teaching in educational mentoring.

- What did you set out to do?
- What happened?
- What went well?
- What went badly?
- What have you learned?
- What will you do differently?

Reflecting *on* the past, *in* the present, *for* the future.

- Exercise: In pairs, Mentor use AAR to direct mentee's discussion of a particularly memorable teaching session + swop roles.



The Teaching Matrix

- 5 questions to ask mentees during a mentoring session
- Who are you teaching?
- What are you teaching?
- How will you teach it?
- How will you know the learners have 'got it'?
- How will you improve your teaching next time?



Pitfalls of Directive Educational Mentoring

- For example, mentees coming from a background in which shame has been a feature (at home, at school, or in the work place) can react v. negatively to challenging feedback & either attack themselves (“I knew I’d be no good as a teacher”) or attack the mentor (“You’re no good as a mentor”)
- What other pitfalls can you identify with a directive approach to educational mentoring?
- How might these pitfalls be overcome? (eg. In the example above, the mentor could ask the mentee if they feel ready to receive some constructive feedback before offering it).



The Best of Both Worlds

- In reality, it is more accurate to think of a continuum between Non-Directive and Directive Mentoring
- Non-Directive-----Directive
- Ideally (for me) educational mentors should be able to run up and down this line as required.
- Ideally (for me) educational mentors should be accommodating ie. able to adapt their supervisory style to the learning needs and preferences of their mentees (rather than insisting that their mentees adapt to how *they* like to practise mentoring)
- In my experience, mentees like mentors who share their work with them, but not who share how brilliant they are with them.



Negotiating the Mentoring Approach

- In pairs (mentor + potential mentee):
- Mentor asks:
- How do you like to learn?
- How could I best facilitate your learning?
- How could I best block your learning?
- How might differences between us block your learning? (eg. gender, age, professional background, etc)
- What suggestions do you have to help me to mentor you?



Useful Questions for Educational Mentors

(before mentoring begins)

- Why do you want mentoring?
- What are you looking for in mentoring?
- Would you come for mentoring if you didn't have to?
- If you were going to sabotage mentoring, how would you do it?

(during mentoring)

- What are you hoping to learn from this mentoring session?
- What am I doing that's helping your learning?
- What am I doing that's hindering your learning?
- Are there any issues or concerns that you're not bringing to mentoring?

