



An Essential Guide from
Literature Wales

Mentoring Resource for Participatory Projects

This resource aims to act as a guide for individuals when considering mentoring and being a mentee (specifically regarding participation). It will provide some information and tools as well as signposting to other resources and organisations.

What does Mentoring Mean?

Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their knowledge, and become the person they want to be.

Effective mentoring takes effort, and creating successful mentoring relationships requires specific skills, sensibilities, and structure from both the mentor and the mentee. Success happens when both parties take responsibility for making it work.

A successful mentoring programme requires clear, defined goals. Taking the time to set attainable and measurable goals will guide the relationship as well as provide direction for mentee and mentor. A successful partnership should also encourage each pair to set their own specific goals.

What makes a good mentor/mentee?

A good mentor must not only have a wide range of experience but also have the desire and temperament to want to help other people develop. It requires a willingness and openness to reflect on and share one's own experiences, including one's failures.

Qualities of a good mentor:

- Relevant expertise or knowledge
- Enthusiasm for sharing that expertise
- A respectful attitude
- A clear sense of their own creative journey
- Eagerness to invest in others
- The ability to give honest, and sensitive feedback
- Reflective, active listening skills and empathy
- Willingness to be a support for others

Qualities of a good mentee:

- Committed to learning new skills
- Clear about their goals, needs, and wants
- Open and receptive to learning and trying new ideas
- Willing to ask for help, show vulnerability, and explore different paths and perspectives
- Able to seek and accept constructive feedback
- Be personally responsible and accountable
- Ready, willing, and able to meet on a regular basis

What is the difference between a mentor and a coach?

Mentor	Coach
A mentor is a more skilled or experienced person (usually in the same field of work) working with a less experienced person.	Coaches need not have first-hand experience of the coachee's line of work. The coach can be an independent external professional with expertise in coaching.
Mentors will often provide direction and advice and should 'open organisational doors' for Mentees	Coaches will ask 'powerful' questions and not offer or give advice.
Mentors can provide a neutral 'sounding board', assure total confidentiality, and have no agenda other than assisting their Mentees in their development and to reach their goals	Coaches can be found with a variety of backgrounds and expertise; if relationships are brokered by an organisation or employer, the services they provide tend to be informed by the organisation's objectives
A mentor helps a mentee to develop their career, skills and expertise often drawing upon the experiences of the Mentor in the process.	Coaches intend to help you to learn rather than by "teaching" you. By engaging with an experienced coach, the coachee will develop insights, making them more effective in their work

What is a mentoring agreement?

A mentoring agreement is basically a sample plan that determines the activities and goals of the mentor and mentee relationship. It acts as a guide to develop the partnership and explore the needs and wishes of the individual whilst also supporting the organisation's aim to help develop early career writers.

By making sure the goals you set are aligned with the five SMART you set criteria: (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound), you have an anchor on which to base all of your focus and decision-making.

A mentoring relationship is for the personal growth and development of both the mentee and mentor. Unlike a social relationship, which is normally not focused on achieving goals, mentoring relationships are focused on achieving goals: specifically, the mentee's goals.

Several factors should be covered in a mentoring agreement:

- The mentee's learning needs and development goals
- Contact and response times: Who contacts whom? How?
- Meetings: Where, when, and how often? Are you meeting in person? On the phone? Virtually?
- Focus/goals: what are the parameters of the mentoring?
- Ways the mentee will be held accountable for their development (both by the mentor and themselves)
- Areas of the relationship that the mentee and/or mentor want to remain confidential.
- Respect both mentor and mentee's time. Be explicit about the 'norms' for your meetings and your own needs and limits (e.g., time, style of interfacing, etc.). Always ask if you can suggest or offer feedback.

What are some examples of mentoring goals?

- Build confidence skills
- Develop public speaking/presentation skills
- Address Life/work balance
- Develop approaches to running workshops – icebreakers/writing prompts
- Develop career trajectories/next steps/5-year plans.
- Develop people skills
- Commitment to grow a professional network
- Improve creative writing skills

What makes a good mentor?

Good mentors are enthusiastic people, enjoying the role they play in helping others achieve their goals. There are many qualities for a good mentor including expertise in a specific field, respect for others, enthusiasm to help and empathy.

Seven ways to become a good mentor:

1. Communicate and listen. Your mentee should ultimately take responsibility for their own career path
2. Offer constructive criticism
3. Be empathetic
4. Let your mentee make decisions
5. Tell your mentee that you don't expect them to follow all of your suggestions
6. Invest in your mentee – research potential opportunities and links specific to their individual needs
7. Acknowledge and reflect back on achievements

What makes a good mentee?

A good mentee will be committed to learning new skills and respect and appreciate the time spent in mentoring. They will also respect the relationship and opportunity. A mentee who is willing to learn will invariably accomplish more than one who isn't willing to learn.

How to prepare for a meeting with your mentor:

1. Prepare yourself with an issue to discuss that's important to you
2. Be committed
3. Be open to sharing
4. Keep expectations realistic
5. Be open to both learning
6. Don't be afraid of your mentor's silence
7. Reflect on advancements and share with mentor at each session

Mentoring is a great opportunity to deliver a rewarding and potentially life-changing experience for both the mentor and mentee and is one of the most important things a person can do to enhance their career and personal development. It takes both time and commitment and whether you are the mentor or mentee, it's a

win-win for your career.

Mentoring Signposting – External Resources*

[UCL Mentoring Handbook](#)

[University of Sussex Guidance for Mentors](#)

[Forbes 5 Steps to Building Successful Mentoring Relationships in the Digital Era](#)

[Forbes Mentoring Matters – 3 Essential Elements of Success](#)

[Artworks Cymru](#) Coaching Pathway cohort

*Literature Wales is not responsible for information/resources provided by third parties.

This Mentoring Resource was compiled by Literature Wales, with thanks to **clare e. potter** for her contribution.

Mentoring Agreement sheet – Example

Responsibilities/commitment	e.g., We are both committed to a productive, confidential and respectful relationship which fosters learning and professional development for both of us
Meeting logistics When, where, how often, length of session etc	
Contact between meetings	
Agreed methods of communication	
Boundaries of confidentiality	
Learning objectives: Coachee / Mentee	
Learning objectives: Artist-Coach / Mentor	
Achievements/learning	
Signed: Coachee / Mentee
Date:
Signed: Artist-Coach / Mentor
Date: