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Mentoring @ CSU

Mentoring @ CSU is a key developmental strategy which forms part of the University's objective to develop committed, high quality staff and empower them within a positive work environment (University Strategy 2007-2011). It is a core aspect of the culture of the University, where staff are encouraged to improve their own performance and the performance of others.

Programs and Activities

Mentoring @ CSU recognises that continuing support for all staff is required as they progress through the stages of their career at CSU.

Stage 1: Initial career mentoring

All staff will benefit from mentoring provided within their Induction and Development Program. The booklet, Initial Career Mentoring: A Guide for Mentors and Mentees, provides an overview of how mentoring assists staff that are new to the University, moving into new roles or returning from extended periods of absence.

Stage 2: Ongoing development

After this, it is the responsibility and choice of individual staff to pursue the mentoring relationships that they believe will be of benefit to them in their current roles and future careers. Staff can choose mentors at various stages in their careers to enhance their professional practice and for their future career development. This may be through formal mentoring relationships (for example, in CSU leadership programs) or informal support systems in developmental activities such as:

- Performance management planning
- Career development activities
- Periods of secondment
- Working in project teams.

For academic staff, mentors can be sought in:

- During probation
- Preparing for academic staff promotions
- Professional Mentoring [DOC]
- Banksia Program for Women Researchers.

These mentors may come from within the discipline, through research partners and contacts, across disciplines within the University, through contacts and networks, from leadership and management programs, external to CSU and from the professorial ranks.

Purpose

The purpose of this program is to explore the fundamental qualities of a mentoring relationship, and provide relevant and practical methods to successfully do so, including:

- Developing a sound understanding of the roles of a mentor and a mentee
- Providing relevant and practical methods to successfully do so
- Identifying personal development goals and strategies to develop a sound mentoring relationship.
Outcomes
The key outcomes of this program are:
- To develop an understanding of the benefits and importance of mentoring
- To achieve confidence in establishing and maintaining a productive mentoring partnership
- To be equipped with the tools to develop, implement and successfully make progress with a mentoring relationship.

Content
The topics that will be addressed in the program include:
- Mentoring @CSU programs and activities
- What is mentoring?
- Benefits of mentoring to CSU, mentors and mentees
- Roles and responsibilities of mentors and mentees
- Skills of effective mentors
- Choosing a mentor
- Stages of the mentoring process
- Effective mentoring meetings.

ICONS
The following icons appear within this Learning Resource. They highlight important information as well as activities that can be completed:

- These are the outcomes that relate to a section of the resource
- An activity or exercise
- A key message or important point
- Reflection
- A workplace activity
SECTION 2 – FUNDAMENTALS OF MENTORING

At the completion of this section you should be able to:

- Define mentoring.

- Explain the benefits of mentoring to the organisation, the mentor and the mentee.

What is mentoring?

The term “mentoring” is used widely now in our society and people are often encouraged to seek out a mentor. So, what is mentoring?

Activity – What do you understand mentoring to be?
Develop and visually present a definition of mentoring.
Definitions

Mentor: “A wise and trusted guide”.

The Macquarie Concise Dictionary (2nd edition)

“Mentoring is a relationship which gives people the opportunity to share their professional and personal skills and experiences, and to grow and develop in the process. Typically, it is a one-to-one relationship between a more experienced and a less experienced employee. It is based upon encouragement, constructive comments, openness, mutual trust, respect and a willingness to learn and share.


Mentoring is "... the facilitation of an individual's learning process, enabling the individual to take ownership for their own development."


Formal mentoring

All of these definitions would agree that mentoring is:

- A collaborative engagement
- Voluntary
- Centred around an agreed expectation
- Mutually valuable.

However, it is important to recognise that:

- Formal mentoring is different to coaching or buddyng, although all can co-exist within Mentoring @ CSU
- Formal mentoring is not supervision, although managers do play a role in supporting staff in developing their mentoring relationships.

Informal staff support

Informal staff support practices are different from mentoring. Most informal staff support activities will centre on induction of new staff into the context of the University, the school and the workplace. These activities may also include mentoring-type relationships, where people come together to provide guidance and support others, for example, initial career learning and support, a buddy system or peer support programs.

Any informal staff support practices should ensure equity of opportunity and an assured quality of guidance, advice and assistance provided for all staff. Whilst informal staff support is generally a more short term activity, the aspects of formal mentoring still apply, that is, it is a collaborative, voluntary activity, which is centred around an agreed expectation and benefits all parties.
Benefits of mentoring

Activity – Reflection on benefiting from mentoring in the past
Reflect and think about benefits you received from being a mentor or mentee in the past.

For mentors:
What were the main benefits you have received from mentoring someone else?

For mentees:
What were the main benefits you have received from being mentored by someone else?
Activity – Brainstorming on “What are the benefits of mentoring?”
Brainstorm ideas on what you believe are the benefits to the following from mentoring.

The mentor:

The mentee:

The organisation:
Benefits of mentoring continued

(Britnor Guest, 2001)

For the organisation

- Greater productivity and profitability
- Improved communication
- Two-way loyalty - collegiality
- Reduced staff turnover.

For the mentor

Professional

- Satisfaction of being able to transfer skills and knowledge accumulated through extensive professional practice
- Opportunity to re-examine own practices, attitudes and values
- Refinement and development of skills of observation, listening and questioning
- Opportunity to discuss professional issues
- Investment in the future
- Professional assistance on projects
- Revitalised interest in own work
- Fulfilment of own development needs
- A shared teaching and learning endeavour.

Personal

- Enhanced self-esteem
- Enhanced emotional intelligence
- Close relationship with mentee
- Feeling of sense of purpose and shared values
- Pleasure in seeing the mentee grow
- Feeling of less isolation as a professional.

For the mentee

Professional

- Recipient of accumulated organisational wisdom
- Access to mentor's professional networks
- Advice and support around specific individual situations
- Practical insights into the real world
- New insights into own behaviour and practices
- Understanding of current and future organisational parameters
- Socialisation into a new professional role or organisation
- Improved promotion opportunities
- Acquisition of fine-tuning of skills, knowledge and understandings
- Recognition of and an opportunity to achieve potential.

Personal

- Increased self-confidence
- Increased self-awareness
- Enhanced self-esteem
- Enhanced emotional intelligence
- Reduced feelings of isolation
Notes

- Support and reassurance.
SECTION 3 – ROLES OF THE MENTORING PARTNERS

At the completion of this section you should be able to:

- Describe the roles and responsibilities of mentors and mentees.
- Outline the critical skills required by mentors.

Activity – Clarifying roles
Brainstorm ideas on what you consider to be the roles and responsibilities of each of the mentoring partners.

Roles/responsibilities of mentors:

Roles/responsibilities of mentees:
The mentor's role

A mentor is someone who...

"... listens objectively, facilitates (a mentee) working out the best course of action and then helps reflect on the outcome. In other words, mentors offer a clear thinking space, challenge assumptions and 'raise the bar' in terms of realising their potential."

( Britnor Guest, 2001)

Mentors may act as a...

- Catalyst: role model, confidante, sounding board
- Linkage Broker: networker, door opener, sponsor
- Solutions Guide: counsellor, advisor, facilitator, listener
- Problem Solver: tutor, teacher, coach, protector, trainer

(Bolam, McMahon, Pocklinton & Weindling, 1993)


The mentee's role

A mentee is someone who...

"Takes responsibility for their own learning, planning a learning contract, establishing goals, reflecting on the learning process and outcomes and managing upward through positive initiative."

"A mentee may act as a...

- Conduit: facilitates mentors insights into own organisation
- Linkage broker: networks on behalf of the mentor
- Advocate"

(Mellish and Associates, 2001)

Activity – Drawing from experience

Think of a personal mentoring experience (this can come from any stage in your life and can be connected to a formal or informal situation). Answer the following questions:

What were the characteristics/skills of the mentor supported success?

What were the characteristics of the mentor impeded success?
Skills of effective mentors

(Clutterbuck, 2004)

An effective mentor has been described as one who:

M – Manages the relationship
E – Encourages
N – Nurtures
T – Teaches
O – Offers mutual respect
R – Responds to the mentee’s needs.

M – Manages the relationship

- Has high level self-management skills
- Is assertive
- Has good knowledge of the organization
- Models effective leadership and management skills
- Has excellent interpersonal skills.

E – Encourages

- Motivates others
- Is a good role model
- Able to provide clear and objective feedback.

N – Nurtures

- Able to promote personal growth
- Has ability to maintain work-life balance
- Acknowledges need to maintain health
- Respects higher goals, values and spiritual needs.

T – Teaches

- Able to undertake needs assessment
- Able to facilitate learning
- Provides resources.

O – Offers mutual respect

- Accepts differences in values, interests etc.

R – Responds to the mentee’s needs

- Does not seek to impose advice on the basis of one’s own needs.
Workplace Activity – Self-assessment
Rate your need to develop the key skills of mentoring:

*Clutterbuck, 2004*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Need to Develop</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
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<td>Self management</td>
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<td>Assertiveness</td>
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<td>Respects higher goals</td>
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<td><strong>Teaches</strong></td>
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<td>Facilitates learning</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responds to mentee needs</td>
<td>1</td>
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Reflection:
Skills I want to develop further:
Choosing a mentor

A good mentor is a person who will be committed to supporting the mentee develop skills and knowledge. According to *Employment Equity and Diversity* (2004), when a potential mentee sets out to identify and approach a potential mentor, whether the relationship is formal or informal, the following factors need to be considered:

- The mentor should be a person with greater experience and knowledge.
- The mentor should have a flexible and progressive management style, particularly in people management.
- The mentee must trust the mentor, and know that their confidence will be kept.
- The mentor needs to be a person who will be committed to helping the mentee develop skills and knowledge, and be able to share knowledge and experience openly and honestly.
- The mentor acts as the mentee's confidante, consultant and coach. While friendship may evolve, it is not the primary goal of the relationship.
- It is recommended that the mentor be someone other than the mentee’s immediate supervisor/manager, in order for the mentee to expand networks, and to avoid potentially conflicting roles. It is important, however, that the manager be involved in the process and kept informed, so that she/he can contribute to the process.
- Mentoring requires good interpersonal skills. The mentor may require training to support them in their role, and
- The mentor needs to be a person who is aware of their responsibilities in supporting staff and may require training and resources to support them in their role.
Notes
SECTION 4 – THE MENTORING PROCESS

At the completion of this section you should be able to:

- Describe the potential stages in the process of a mentoring relationship.

- List the important components to include in an initial mentoring meeting to enable it to be effective.

- Describe an important part of the closing meeting of a mentoring relationship.

Stages of the mentoring process

Case study – The mentoring process

Review the information provided in the case below. Record what you believe are the stages Susie will need to progress through when entering into a mentoring relationship.

Scenario

Susie is an Administrative Officer for the Division of Finance and is undertaking part-time studies for a business degree. She had recently undertaken the Leadership Development for Women Program, as career progression is of importance to her. Susie is striving to move into a role of Executive Officer in the future.

An important component of the Leadership Development for Women Program is to obtain a work-based mentor.

Discussion question

What do you think are the potential key stages that Susie will work through when she enters into a mentoring relationship?
Stages of the mentoring process continued

The mentoring relationship is described by Dr. Linda Phillips-Jones (2003) as exhibiting the following process:

**Exploring the possibility of working together**

- Other commitments and how this relationship could enhance or hinder them
- Does the potential relationship link with your personal vision and core values?
- What are the expectations of both the mentor and mentee?
- Time commitments and constraints.

**Building the relationship**

- Parameters of the relationship
- Building in mutuality, trust and productivity.

**Negotiating the arrangement/agreement**

- Goals, objectives
- Logistics
- Confidentiality
- Measurement strategies for the process and outcomes
- Process for reflection.

**Mentee/mentor development**

- Monitoring the learning process and outcomes
- Sharing resources and networks
- Determining levels of planning and spontaneity.

**Ending the formal relationship**

- Measurement of outcomes
- Appreciative feedback
- Future pathways and options.
Effective mentoring meetings

Early stage meetings
The purpose of the initial meeting is to establish the trust between the mentor and the mentee on which mentoring depends.

Once rapport has been developed, the mentor and mentee should negotiate the operational details of the mentoring relationship in the first few meetings. As outlined in Mentoring @ CSU Guidelines, some issues for consideration include:

- What are the expectations and roles of the mentor and mentee?
- How formal/informal and how flexible would the mentor and mentee like the relationship to be?
- What are the mentee’s objectives for the mentoring relationship?
- When, where, how often, and how long will the mentor and mentee meet?
- What kind of issues, tasks or projects would the mentee like to work on with the mentor?
- What types of activities would the mentee find valuable, in addition to meeting and talking with the mentor? For example:
  - Observing the mentor in action
  - Shadowing the mentor to see what he/she does on a typical day
  - Asking the mentor to review the mentee’s work
  - Asking the mentor to observe the mentee in action and provide feedback
  - Working on a joint project or task together.
- What kind and how much contact will the mentor and mentee have in between meetings, for example, by email or phone?
- How will the mentor and mentee keep the relationship going if either party is away or if meetings have to be cancelled or rescheduled?
- What are the confidentiality requirements?
Workplace Activity – Preparing for an initial mentoring meeting

Take some time to think about what preparation you can undertake for your first meeting with your mentee (or mentor). The first meeting is particularly important because it will set the tone for subsequent meetings between the mentor and mentee. The following questions may assist.

1. Where will the meeting take place?

2. What will you take with you?

3. What will you need to discuss in the first meeting?

4. Who will run this meeting?

5. What do you hope to accomplish during this meeting?
Activity – Role playing an initial mentoring meeting  
(For workshop only)  
In groups of three, one person is to take on the role of mentor, another the role of mentee, and the third person be an observer.

Act as if an initial mentoring meeting is taking place. The observer is to identify:

What was done well?

What aspects showed a need for improvement?
Effective mentoring meetings continued

Closure of the mentoring relationship

Closure is an inevitable part of every mentoring relationship because mentoring is a goal-oriented process, which is driven by attaining certain professional outcomes. Once a mentee has attained his/her learning goals, or in cases where a relationship is counterproductive, it is time for the relationship to end.

An important part of closure of a mentoring relationship is a review of the learning goals/outcomes from the mentoring partnership. The focus of should be on the mentee’s learning goals, but it is also a time for the mentor to reflect on his/her learning from the process and the relationship.

Regardless of resistance to closure, mentors and mentees should plan ahead and anticipate that the relationship as such will eventually dissolve or form a relationship. The individuals may redefine their relationship as colleagues, peers, and/or friends.
Notes
REFERENCES


