



Qualitative Services at local level for Emigrants and Refugees

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The Circular Cycle of Mentoring Model: Step 2

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Q-SER Consortium

The Q-SER Consortium consists of:

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1. PAIRING – MATCHING MENTORS AND MENTEES

Step 2 includes a very important process: set up the pairs of the mentors and mentees. Preparation by organisation:

1. The pairing process: the pairing process can be completed either online or offline through a discussion process with a 3rd party. If online, the mentees should be able to complete a profile sheet with goals and objectives while the system would pair them to a fitting mentor. The mentor would follow a similar process where their profile sheet would contain information on their skills and competences, experience, and know-how but also, willingness to bring about a change.

For the Q-SER project, the tested pairing methodology took place offline and the selected department to participate (MOE) was the kindergarden department. Since the participants knew each other, it was deemed optimal to do the pairing process offline. The pairing process should be characterised by impartiality, neutralism and objectivism. It is important that the mentees feel that their needs are met and that they will be matched to a mentor that will understand and guide them properly.

2. The actual matching: once the pairing process has been successful the matching is done. Both parties are introduced to each other. If on an online environment, this should cater to include communication tools such as a chat room (for personal conversations), a forum which may be public or private, a database where documents can be uploaded for review.
3. The agreements: each paired couple should sign a written agreement where goals and achievements are mentioned and where the characteristics of the mentoring are written. This should be treated with importance as it constitutes an agreement that both parties should adhere to. This agreement should be printed, read and signed and if possible uploaded scanned into an online folder for both parties to have access and re-visit when needed.
4. The rules of cooperation: as in all agreements, written or not, the rules of cooperation should be mentioned. This relates very much to the organisation and its structures and how their internal processes work.
5. Reporting formats: as in all partnership, training programmes, mentoring structures etc. a reporting structure should be put in place. The reporting tools should cover each session but also an overall evaluation should be provided in order to allow for impact. The pairs should evaluate each other, and the mentor should use the good practice templates available in IO3 to create good practices and case studies that will be re-fed into the system (mentoring model).

2. SUGGESTED USEFUL TOOLS

2.1. Establish the relationship between mentor and mentee: Stage of preparation

To establish a genuine and creative relationship between mentor and mentee(s) it is important from the outset of cooperation to explore the goals and expectations of both parties. Following are two areas of inquiry that will be the subject of discussion between the mentor and the mentee and which will lay the foundations for further collaboration¹.

Stage 1: Mutual understanding

It is important for both parties to know each other. So here are some suggested discussion and introduction areas for the mentor and mentee:

- Personal Background: Life history, career history, experiences, core values, personal motto...
- Skills and Abilities: What you do best, what you want to do more of, what you want to learn to do...
- Areas of interest
- Goals: Personal, career, progress toward achieving, obstacles in achieving...
- Perspectives: Keys to success, development needed, about work, about organizations, commitments. Challenges at work (emphasis on the subject of Q-SER project)
- Thinking Process: Preference to the way of learning, solve problems, or make decisions. It may also include information about evaluating training or work experience that has been helpful over the years.

Stage 2: Expectations and goals

At the beginning of the relationship it is also very important for both parties to have clear goals and expectations of their cooperation. Below are some questions that are useful to be answered:

- Motivation (mentor and mentee)
- What one side expects from the other?
- How they want the relationship to work?
- How much time can they spend?
- How long will the mentoring be?
- Which areas will need support?
- What are the basic rules of cooperation (e.g. confidentiality, respect, commitment, etc.)?
- When the process is completed (achievement of goals)?

Specific questions for mentors:

¹ Adapt from «*Mentor toolkit*», The Ohio State University.

- What do you see as the main benefits of mentoring a mentee?
- How much time can you make available (per week/month) to mentor a mentee?
- What strengths do you identify in yourself that would make you a good mentor?
- What obstacles do you think could jeopardize the process or reduce your effectiveness as a mentor?

Specific questions for mentees:

- What objectives do you hope to achieve through the mentoring relationship?
- What areas do you wish to work on with your mentor? How might your mentor help you develop competence?
- How much time do you expect to be able to allocate to tasks set by the mentor?
- What proposals would you make to your mentor in order to ensure you take best advantage of the opportunities on offer?
- What would you like to get out of the mentoring relationship?
- What do you think might be the opportunities and obstacles of the mentoring process/ relationship/program me?

2.2. Partnership agreement / Mentoring contract

This is a statement of commitment to a mentoring relationship between: (the mentor) and (the mentee). The two parties reached agreement on the following:

They will be involved with the roles assigned to them in the mentoring program of (title of project / project) with duration Both parties are aware of the goals and objectives of the mentoring program and the methodology to be followed and they agree with them. In addition to:

- Both parties, mentor and mentee, will honor commitments, promises and will respect deadlines, privacy and boundaries
- Neither of the two parties will make excessive demands on each other's time
- The mentor will assist the mentee in achieving objectives, but will not be imposed
- The mentee will only use the mentor's authority with the mentor's consent.

Finally, mentor and mentee agree to commit themselves to the development of a strong, trust-based mentoring relationship

Mentor

Mentee

Name and Signature

Name and Signature

Place and date:

2.3. Suggested form for recording mentoring sessions

Date:

Duration:

Starting hour:end:

Mentor:

Mentee-s:

Topic(s) of discussion:

Agreements reached:

Mentor comments:

Mentee's comments:

Scheduled next session:

2.4. Suggested calendar of mentoring sessions

No. of session	Date and hour of the session	Place	Mentor	Mentee (s)	Topic of discussion (if applicable)

2.5. Session recording template

Use the template below as a template guide to record the session between mentor and mentee. The questions below serve to guide you towards a successfully recorded working session.

Meeting number:

Date:

Name:

Agenda and topics that need to be covered:

Progress identified by mentor since last session:

Action table until next session:

Action to be completed	By whom	By when	Completed YES/NO

Date of next session:

Signature:

3. EXTRA MATERIAL

Mentors and mentees in a mentoring process

According to the American Psychological Association, a mentor fulfills two main functions for the mentee: a) a career-related function, providing advice to enhance the mentee's professional performance and development, and b) a psychosocial function, as a role model and support system for the mentee².

The mentor and the mentee are the main contributors to the mentoring relationship. So it is necessary, their relationship to be characterized by honesty and confidentiality. The role of a good mentor in the mentoring process is not to impose opinions and solutions, nor to judge and compare the mentee. Instead, the mentor should support the mentee to acquire new knowledge and skills, clarify, define and prioritize goals and requirements, and clearly identify the obstacles he / she will be faced. At the same time, the mentor helps the mentee to develop self-esteem and self-confidence, his/her social and communicative skills, and supports him/her in exploring new perspectives and expanding networks.

In any case, we must not forget that the mentee always has control of his/her own learning process.



The role and the characteristics of a good mentor

The role of a mentor in working environment is multidimensional and complex. The best mentors adjust their role to meet the mentee's needs. An effective mentor must have a multitude of skills to fulfill his/her role which may include:

- a. Career Development: The mentor helps the mentee clarify his/her goals, identify opportunities, while facilitating decision making and networking.
- b. Guidance: The mentor encourages and supports the mentee, motivates him/her to act and promotes his/her autonomy

² <https://medium.com/west-stringfellow/mentor-roles-and-models-96edf9fefa29>

- c. **Counseling:** The mentor gives advices, encouragement for balancing family and professional life, etc.

The literature shows that effective mentors possess as individuals characteristics that favor interpersonal relationships. They are distinguished for their giving, their empathy, their positive attitude and humor, their flexibility, their support, their willingness to encourage. All of the above points to the fact that the ideal mentor possesses increased "emotional intelligence".



The key features of a good mentor can be described as follows:

- Distinguished for his/ her willingness to share experiences, skills and knowledge.
- Exhibits positive behavior and acts as an example to follow.
- Seeks continuous learning and improvement of his / her abilities, thereby motivating others to appropriate practices.
- Follows the principles of trust and respect.
- Demonstrates enthusiasm for a "collaborative leadership relationship"
- Provides guidance and constructive feedback.
- He/she is not critical, nor does he/she plays the role of a trainer
- Evaluates the views and initiatives of others.
- Listens, understands and proposes practical and realistic solutions based on his /her experience.

A good mentor SHOULD:

- ✓ getting to know the mentee and trying to understand his or her perspective,
- ✓ be positive, patient, honest and sincere,

- ✓ be consistent, reliable, confidential and straightforward,
- ✓ come to the meeting prepared, but also have the flexibility to face a change in plans;
- ✓ be an active listener,
- ✓ use intelligible language,
- ✓ respect the mentee's cultural background and diversity,
- ✓ be open to learning by the mentee,
- ✓ comply with its commitments and the "Cooperation Agreement",
- ✓ listen, understand and propose without imposing.

A good mentor SHOULD NOT:

- admonish, preach and / or moralize,
- telling the mentee what to do instead of encouraging, suggesting, and seeking out with him or her,
- refer to personal problems instead of just sharing his/her condition (e.g. fatigue),
- make promises that he/she cannot keep,
- Be afraid to admit that he/she cannot answer the question of a mentee,
- show more enthusiasm for the meeting – session than he/she really has,
- perceive the mentee's lack of interest or inability to understand the process as a rejection;
- Perform psychological support procedures for the trainee,
- Judge, evaluate, train.

Ways to match mentor with mentees

Mentoring in working environment, is a dynamic interpersonal communication and collaboration between the mentor and the mentee, the person receiving the services, with the aim of helping to acquire skills that will help him or her perform better at work. Communication and collaboration, on the other hand, is interpersonal because it requires the involvement and responsibility of both, otherwise, if the mentor monopolizes the discussion, the relationship is not advisory but a mere provision of information, and advice, which want the individual to play the role of "passive and helpless" for active involvement.

In order for a mentoring relationship to be successful, it is important, in addition to a good mentor, that the mentee is aware of his or her role and the process. Thus, indicatively, mentee must know the objectives of the mentoring and to some extent formulate them. The mentee also needs to know what he/she wants from the relationship with his/her mentor and make it easy for him/her to discuss how the mentor can be helpful³. During a mentoring program, it should be a priority for

³ Ludwig S, Stein R. Anatomy of mentoring. J Pediatr, 152(2):151-2, 2008.

the mentee to be consistent in meetings with the mentor. The mentee should also be open to suggestions, other points of view and in learning new skills. Finally, the feedback he/she receives from the mentor will be a source for improvement and further development.



There are many different ways to combine and match mentor to mentee. The two parties can be connected in a digital or physical environment.

In the case of the physical environment, the mentee can meet the mentor at an organized event or workshop, where they will have the chance to get to know each other and discuss. The mentee may express his or her needs and expectations from a mentoring relationship, and the mentor can present himself /herself, talk about the experience he or she has and discuss with the mentee the opportunities that their potential collaboration will provide.

In the case of the digital environment, the mentee has the opportunity to get to know and communicate with his/her future mentor digitally, using either a communication platform, or email and other digital tools (e.g. Skype). The mentee may, for example, view his/her mentor's profile from a database where the mentor has posted his/her profile (knowledge, skills, experience, personality, etc.). When the mentee will identify the mentor who considers that he / she can meet his / her needs and expectations, can send him / her a request for acquaintance and discussion. This request should include a brief self-description, in the sense of a short resume, as well as mentee's expectations of the mentoring process. Then, once the mentor has accepted the request, the two parties exchange additional information and, if all goes well, finalize their cooperation.

In any case, matching mentor with mentees is a particularly important process as the right choice sets the bases for a successful future collaboration. Depending on the type, goals and duration of the mentoring, the appropriate process must be chosen.

In Q-SER project, the process of physical contact and acquaintance of the two parties is suggested as the most appropriate process of matching mentors with mentees. As the field of mediation is very specific (communication and interaction with immigrants) it was considered appropriate for both mentoring parties to be able to meet closely and exchange useful information from their experience and expectations.

Building a good relationship

The keys to establishing a successful mentoring relationship include creating a relationship of trust, clearly defining roles and responsibilities, establishing short- and long-term goals, using open and supportive communication, and collaboratively solving problems⁴.



1. Develop a relationship of trust

Relationships need to be built before any effective mentoring can take place. An environment of trust and mutuality must be established.



Tips:

- Begin the relationship with a getting-to-know-you session. The mentor should learn about the mentee's educational background and experience, and share information about his or her own background and experience.
- The mentor should encourage the mentee to identify his /her professional needs and goals.
- The mentor is suggested to continue to build upon the mentees strengths, needs, and goals throughout the mentoring period.

2. Define roles and responsibilities

Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of both the mentor and the mentee. Typically, a mentee is more receptive to feedback if he / she feels like an active participant in the relationship.

⁴ Byington, T. (2010). Keys to Successful Mentoring Relationships, Journal of Extension, Vol. 48, No 6, <https://www.ioe.org/joe/2010december/tt8.php>

**Questions to be considered:**

- ? What will the role of the mentor be?
- ? What are the responsibilities of the mentor?
- ? What are the responsibilities of the mentee?
- ? Monitoring and evaluation.

3. Establish short and long term goals

Mentors and mentees should work together to develop mutually agreed upon goals. These goals are the basis for the mentoring activities. Mentors need to provide constructive feedback to mentees on goal progression. Mentees should have an opportunity to be reflective on their actions. Open, respectful, and supportive communication is essential to this process.

4. Collaborate to solve problems

Mentors need to allow mentees the opportunity to identify concerns and potential solutions. Mentors should encourage mentees to take risks and do things differently by implementing creative solutions. The mentor can offer ideas, but the mentee should be allowed to choose which plan to put into action.