

Training and Development

by Susan Hughes

Mentoring - the story so far

Ashcroft International Business School have welcomed 17 delegates from Networking Women in the Fire Service to participate in a series of mentor training and development workshops. Delegates from across the UK wanted to be part of this pilot programme of mentor training and as such bring with them a wealth of experience and insight into the Fire Service through what is a time of transformational change



The attendees of the workshops held at the AIBS building, part of the Anglia Polytechnic University

THE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY of a programme of mentoring training and support has been an ongoing activity of the Fire Service Research and Training Unit within APU throughout 2004.

Throughout this period I am very fortunate to have had the opportunity of working with Xanthe Bevan, who has provided much insight and guidance into what members of NWFS really wanted from a formalised mentoring system.

The focus of the programme has been to underpin what is often an existing, yet informal, process of mentoring which exists within the Fire Service. Very often this informal mentoring takes the form of a friend or colleague to whom we turn to for advice, support and guidance.

As with any informal process there are limitations to what can realistically be achieved; mentoring in this sense is no different. The ability to seek advice is easy when you know who has the information you seek – an organisation is not intimidating when you are part of the culture and career decisions are often clearer when all the options are made available.

Key issues such as planning a

mentoring session, identifying objectives for the sessions and considering the expectations of both participants throughout the mentor/mentee relationship were raised during these interactive sessions.

How Do We Take This Forward?

Since June 2004 AIBS have been running a number of two-day workshops on behalf of NWFS, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and London Fire Brigade to introduce the ideas which support the notion of mentoring, the processes which can be adopted throughout the mentor/mentee relationship and the opportunities for overall organisational development.

The workshops held at the AIBS building part of the Anglia Polytechnic University Campus at Chelmsford have been managed throughout by Susan Hughes (Principal Lecturer in Business Psychology).

Susan's approach to the workshops has been based upon the development of a partnership based approach to the process.

By making the overall process interactive the intention is to identify the exacting needs of delegates and respond through the delivery of training and development content which meets these needs.

During the training days held in September, input from delegates led to the inclusion of a number of development initiatives including role play activities, the exploration of body language and the obligations of mentors and mentees within the organisational context.

Our most recent training days have covered such issues as assertiveness, monitoring the process and knowing when to let go of your mentee.

The final two days of the training programme will be completed in January 2005 where we will be inviting

all delegates to bring issues, successes, concerns and development needs for us to consider as the basis for our interactive workshop activities as well as providing feedback to us at AIBS to support the planning of future mentor training activities.

Ongoing Activities

As part of the long term commitment to the development of the mentoring programme by the Fire Service Research and Training Unit of AIBS a number of ongoing activities are taking place.

The learning outcomes of the mentor training programme are currently being mapped against the learning requirements of the IPDS helix in respect of the necessity for the acquisition of new knowledge. This we consider to be very much part of an integrated approach to the development and delivery of training and development programmes, with the focus placed firmly on meeting the needs of the individual.

Upon completion of the mentor training programme all delegates will receive a certificate of achievement from APU.

Additionally APU are also in the final stages of agreeing a credit tariff for the content of the knowledge and skills elements of the mentor training programme. This, in conjunction with the application of mentoring activities to the workplace, may then form part of the process of Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL).

This in reality means that, upon submission of appropriate evidence APU will be able to award credit at level M (Masters) which can be used against the Postgraduate Certificate in Management currently run by AIBS.

We are very much looking forward to meeting other members of NWFS who are interested in taking part in future mentoring training and development programmes.

IPDS Standard	APU Learning Outcome	Content
Interview Techniques	<i>Participant should be able to:</i> Use a range of interview techniques in order to build, manage and maintain, an effective mentoring relationship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating a relationship with your mentee Questioning and listening Develop verbal assertiveness skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and use body language appropriately. Plan meetings with mentees - Give effective feedback
Equality and Fairness	<i>Participant should be able to:</i> Develop and use a range of behaviours, in both the mentoring and employment relationships, that recognises individual rights in the workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and identify the basic rights of employees in the workplace. Develop and use appropriate behaviours. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be assertive while prepared to accept responsibility for own behaviour and taking into account the rights of others.
Personal Development	<i>Participant should be able to:</i> Engage in a process of self assessment followed by personal development which supports his/her role as a mentor, and enables he/she to empathise with the role of the mentee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to self assessment. Creating a personal mentoring development plan Identifying your preferred learning style <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing different approaches to learning and development Producing a personal mission statement and producing personal goals Developing assertiveness skills
Planning and Leading Meetings	<i>Participant should be able to:</i> Effectively plan and facilitate meetings with his/her mentee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan meetings with mentees. Question and listen effectively <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the production of goals and objectives. Monitor performance towards those goals.
Planning Techniques	<i>Participant should be able to:</i> Use a range of planning tools and techniques to enable his/her mentee to gain the most, with respect to personal development, out of the mentoring process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare mission statements Identify goals and objectives Manage time effectively Reflect on and monitor performance against goals/objectives.
Managing People's Performance	<i>Participant should be able to:</i> Support his/her mentee in the management of their performance with respect to personal development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating a relationship with your mentee Managing the mentoring relationship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting others to set goals and identifying ways of meeting those goals. Encouraging reflection on performance Giving effective feedback
Identifying and planning development needs	<i>Participant should be able to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify his/her own development needs, with respect to mentoring, and plan an action plan accordingly. Support his/her mentor to identify their development needs and produce a personal development plan. Identify any planning or development needs, arising from the mentoring process, which may be of importance to the Fire and Rescue Service as a whole. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Producing personal mission statements and setting goals. Supporting others to set goals and objectives. Helping mentees to set goals by questioning, challenging and facilitating.
Coaching and mentoring	<i>Participant should be able to:</i> Perform as an effective mentor.	NWFS Mentoring Training Programme
Negotiation skills	<i>Participant should be able to:</i> Effectively use a range of negotiating skills to manage the mentoring relationship and support his/her mentee to gain the most from this learning opportunity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating a relationship with your mentee Effective interpersonal communication Effective asking and listening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questioning, challenging and facilitating Developing and using appropriate body language.
Managing Yourself	<i>Participant should be able to:</i> Manage him/herself as an effective mentor by engaging in a number of reflections, and by utilising a variety of appropriate techniques.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Producing personal mission statements and setting goals. Using a process of self assessment Using time management effectively Identifying your own learning style. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop alternative learning styles and approaches to learning. Use reflection in professional development. Seek effective feedback
Support the development of colleagues	<i>Participant should be able to:</i> Support the personal development of his/her mentee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting others in setting goals and objectives. Understanding and identifying different approaches to learning. Knowing your mentee's preferred style. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage reflection on development Give effective feedback
Facilitating learning and development	<i>Participant should be able to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the different approaches to learning and learning styles that individuals can use. Support the mentee in identifying his/her own learning style. Understand the role of feedback in effective learning and be able to give effective feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding and identifying different approaches to learning and how this can influence individual development. Knowing your mentee's preferred style. Giving effective feedback
Information collection methods	<i>Participant should be able to:</i> Collect information from their mentees by using a number of questioning and listening techniques.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting information on, and from, your mentee. Questioning and listening techniques.
Managing conflict	<i>Participants should be able to:</i> Maintain the mentoring relationship by dealing with the possible barriers to the relationship, possible relationship breakdown and the effective termination of the relationship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring the possible barriers to effective mentoring Maintaining the mentoring relationship Managing relationship breakdown Ending the relationship effectively
Continuous improvement in the workplace	<i>Participants should be able to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the continuous development of his/her mentee, using a range of behaviours and techniques. Effect his/her own continuous improvement as a mentor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role of reflection in professional development. Giving and receiving effective feedback. Setting goals and objectives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and reflection on performance against goals set.
Report Writing	<i>Participants should be able to:</i> Keep effective records of the mentoring relationship in an appropriate confidential form.	Appropriate record keeping
Support policy development and implementation	<i>Participants should be able to:</i> Identify the role that a mentoring system could play in the implementation of national and local policies in the fire service, with respect to the development of staff and the management of diversity.	The role of a mentoring scheme in the Fire Service - relationships between mentees, mentors, line managers and the organisation

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