

Mentor Handbook

Welcome

Welcome to our Mentoring Programme. It's great that you've decided to volunteer your time to help someone start or grow their business. There are over 4 million small businesses in the UK with up to 500,000 new startups each year, many of whom can benefit from help such as yours.

Research has shown that of those new starts, 25% are more likely to succeed if they're involved in a structured development programme such as mentoring. Your support is invaluable!

Will I get anything from it?

Not only will you be helping someone else develop their skills but you'll get a lot from it, too. Mentoring can give you new skills and allow you the opportunity to develop your existing skills.

Getting in touch

We're always here if you've got a question or if you want to tell us what you've been up to. You can get hold of us by ringing <insert telephone number> or if it's easier, email <insert email address>

And last, but not least, we hope you enjoy your mentoring experience.

Best wishes,

Mentoring Team

About Us

<Enter description of your organisation or programme here>

What is mentoring?

To us, the term 'mentoring' describes a relationship supporting someone through a learning or developmental journey. It's about reflecting, encouraging and supporting the new or existing business owner to make the most of themselves and their business.

Mentoring is about mutual trust and respect. It's a two way relationship - you both get the chance to learn new things. Don't think you're the only one getting something from this. You'll both further your personal development. You've probably got lots of life experiences that your mentor can learn from. It's also a great way for them to develop and improve communication and planning skills.

Every mentoring relationship is different, but each will present the opportunity for both mentor and mentee to learn from each other.

You will now have attended the introductory training session and I'm sure you will now be clear about what is involved in becoming an enterprise mentor. We will now look at the process in more detail and explain how we can help you on your road to becoming an accredited mentor.

You and your mentee

As a mentor, you're the person who guides and supports your mentee. Your mentee is the person that is supported and encouraged to achieve their goals.

What should a mentor do?

A mentor is normally someone who has more entrepreneurial business experience and who acts as a trusted confidante over a flexible period of time. It is a closer and more meaningful relationship than is seen in coaching. A true mentoring relationship is a mutually beneficial learning experience where the mentor shares their personal knowledge and experiences and promotes a self discovery approach. A mentor **should**:

- Provide an outside perspective on both the business owner and their business
- Listen, confidentially, to the things that are worrying the business owner about their business
- Help by sharing their own experience of both failures and successes
- Give friendly, unbiased support and guidance

- Provide honest and constructive feedback
- Be a sounding board for ideas
- Facilitate decision making by suggesting alternatives based on personal experience
- Provide contacts and networks to further personal and business development
- Inspire the business owner to realise their potential
- Provide ongoing support and encouragement

What shouldn't a mentor do?

There are many different business support roles which all have their distinct place in the world of business development and improvement. As described above, mentoring is only one aspect of business support and therefore a mentor **will not** be expected to:

- Give advice – this would normally be provided by a qualified business adviser
- Provide a counselling service
- Provide a training service
- Provide a coaching service (relating to specific business related tasks, goals and objectives)
- Provide therapeutic interventions
- Sort out all problems
- Take the responsibility for making the business successful – the ultimate responsibility for making the business successful is down to the business owner.

You should be prepared to commit to at least two hours a month. We recommend that your mentoring relationship usually lasts for about twelve months - this is the time we think it takes to work with your mentee to be able to achieve their goals - it might be shorter or longer. Whatever is best for you and your mentee.

Mentoring Journey

Throughout the Mentoring Journey, we are here to support both you and your mentee. The journey includes:

- Initial profiling of suitable mentors
- Working with our partners to recruit suitable mentees, who are local small business owners who have expressed interest in being mentored
- Mentor and mentee matching
- The mentoring process (first meeting and sessions)
- End of relationship

Mentor and mentee matching

To begin with you'll complete your profile form. Once completed, the Mentor Manager sits down and takes their time to find you a good match. We don't like to rush it because it's really important.

Here's how it works

1 The Mentor Manager telephones all of the mentors and mentees. This helps us to see who might get on best.

2 We look at your interests with the mentee's interests, what skills you've both got and what you're both hoping to get out of it.

3 Once we're happy we've made a good match we'll get in touch with you and your new mentee to let you know about the other person. We'll check you're both happy too and then leave it to you to make contact and arrange your first meeting.

4 We'll be in touch again after your first meeting to make sure it went well and answer any questions you have.

Throughout the process your Mentoring Manager will be on hand to support wherever possible. You will by now have details of your Mentoring Manager, otherwise, please email <insert email address> for details.

Establishing a Successful Relationship with your Mentee

Now you have been matched to your mentee, we have a **4 step process** to help create an effective relationship.

1. Draw up a timetable in advance of regularly spaced meetings and establish a set of ground rules to which you will both abide.
2. Maintain a session log, including session sheets and action plans (all included in this toolkit) which will act as the basis for ongoing discussion.
3. Work towards developing a trusting relationship and establishing a good rapport with your mentee.
4. Aim at maintaining the relationship for at least 12 sessions and adopt the attitude that over that period you can both benefit from it.

Meetings need to follow a formal agenda, although this does not imply a rigid structure or approach. Effective mentoring meetings provide a sense of purpose and achievement.

When arranging a meeting with your mentee, please ensure this is in a suitable environment. This could be at a shared meeting venue, offices, etc. Ideally out of your clients direct working environment, but a meeting room nearby may be suitable.

Coffee shops and hotel meeting areas are also suitable places to run mentoring sessions with your client. Whatever works best for both parties. **It is never a good idea to have mentoring sessions at a home address of either Mentor or Mentee.**

Early Exit

Although every effort will be made to ensure a close match between you and your mentee, sometime this may still not work out. This may be no reflection on either party, and either party may finish the relationship, and exit the Mentoring Contract.

At this stage, the Mentor will be asked to complete the Early Exit Form, this will then be sent to us.

Both parties will be contacted to confirm the situation and support if required another suitable Mentor/Mentee may be arranged for both parties going forward.

The mentoring process

The Introductory Meeting (First session)

The relationship that evolves over a period of time is crucial to the success of the mentoring journey. Although your mentee will control what they get out of the relationship you are the guardian of the relationship because of your experience and knowledge. The first meeting is vital because it will set the tone of the relationship which will, ideally, get off to a swift and productive start.

You will need to let your Mentoring Manager know the date of the meeting, so we can confirm the relationship going forward.

You might feel a bit nervous about your first meeting but don't worry about it, a lot of people do. You might be thinking 'how will we start?' or 'what are we going to talk about?'

It's a good idea to have a think about your first meeting because it's really important. If you get off to a good start, you'll find everything else much easier.

So, to get started you could:

- Make yourselves comfortable, grab a tea or coffee and sit down and get to know each other.
- Tell your mentee something about yourself, this could include information about both your professional and your personal life. Whatever feels right for you.
- Explain why you got involved in the Mentor Programme, what you think you might be doing and what you both might get out of it.

Remember - if you don't hit it off straight away don't panic. It takes time to build any relationship and it will get easier the more you meet because you'll build up trust and get used to each other.

Again, if you're worried about anything after the first meeting just get in touch with us. We're here to provide you with all of the support you need at those early stages.

Before the session

Before your first Mentoring Session, spend a little time making sure you have all the basic information you need about your mentee, including:

- Contact details
- Background
- Any special needs or circumstances
- Venue for the first meeting

During the session

The first session is all about getting the relationship off to a good start by establishing some ground rules and acknowledging that the relationship is two-way. It's also the best time to agree what you hope to achieve and share your expectations of one another. You will need to mention confidentiality, responsibility, when you would like to meet and for how long, how you'll keep in touch to arrange other meetings and the best way to remind each other of your meeting.

As a 'starter for ten' we recommend you cover:

- Your mentee's ambitions and goals in relation to:
 - particular issues being faced
 - achievements so far and how to build on them
 - realistic expectations
 - scale of priorities
 - areas on which your mentee would find input most useful

And a few basic essentials:

- frequency of meetings
- venue for follow up meetings
- decision about email and/or telephone contact
- discussing and signing an agreement
- confidentiality
- how you will record progress and issues/targets for further development

Mentoring Contract

Once you have had your initial meeting, and agreed to move forward (this can also be covered on the phone if more suitable), a Mentoring Contract will need to be signed by both parties. This will be issued and managed by your Mentoring Manager.

Please ensure you have read and understood the Mentoring Code of Conduct.

If, for whatever reason, it is felt by either party that they are not suited for the mentoring relationship, your Mentoring Manager will look to rematch you.

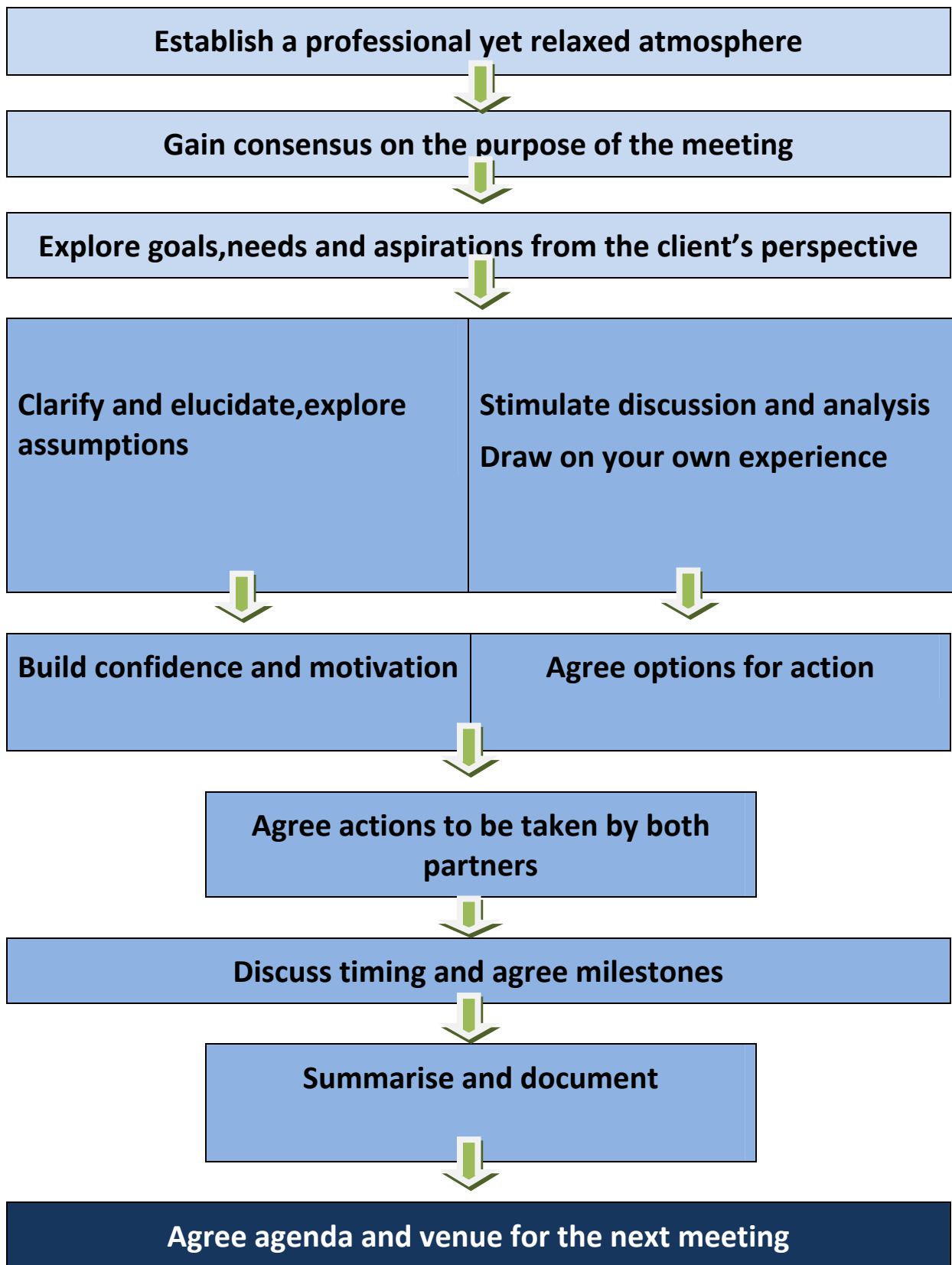
Subsequent sessions

Once you have made acquaintance with your mentee, your role as mentor will come into play. It is your responsibility to give frank and honest feedback with regard to your mentee's progress. By establishing a timetable of regularly spaced meetings, you will be in a position to review your mentee's success in achieving his / her objectives. Furthermore, through these discussions you will both be in a position to evaluate the effectiveness of the mentor/mentee relationship.

The frequency of meetings are expected to be monthly, but at times you may need to meet more often if it is felt the support would be of benefit of the mentee. This will need to be agreed by both parties and will need to fall within the guidelines provided by respective employers, where a mentor or mentee is employed as part of their 'day job' .

As a Mentor, the duration of the relationship with your Mentee should not exceed 12 sessions (typically over 12 months).

Session overview



Based on Clutterbuck 'Everyone needs a Mentor' 2001

Monitoring and documentation

Both you and your mentee are at liberty to conduct the mentoring relationship as you see fit. However, to ensure the effectiveness of the process as a whole, we will expect all mentors and mentees to review and complete the following documentation as a minimum:

Mentoring Contract

The Mentoring Contract will be issued following successful matching and prior to the start of your mentoring relationship. This document will be signed by you, your mentee and your Mentoring Manager and is a legal contract between the three parties designed to define the limits of your role and protect your liability as a mentor.

Mentoring Agreement

The Mentoring Agreement is not a legal document but demonstrates a commitment between you and your mentee to your mentoring relationship. This should be signed at your first mentoring session and sent to the Mentoring Co-ordinator.

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct sets out the professional standards required by us as a condition of mentor status. Before you begin your mentor relationship please review this document and make sure you understand and agree to adhere to its contents. Any reported breach of the code of conduct will be investigated by your Mentoring Manager.

Mentor Sessions Log

The Mentor Sessions Log is used to track the relationship between the mentor and the mentee for each session. After a session is completed, this should be signed and a copy sent to the Mentoring Co-ordinator, so the mentoring session can be logged.

Mentoring Session Sheet

The Mentoring Session Sheet is a vital part of the process for the following reasons:-

- It is the only written record of what the mentee has learnt and achieved over the specified period. It will have been validated as a true record by being counter-signed by you as the mentor.
- It forms a basis of discussion and comment during your meetings with the mentee.
- It will act as a reference point for later use in the mentee's journey

Once each session is completed, the Session Sheet should be kept on file by the mentor and may be required by us for review at any stage.

Mentoring Relationship Outcome Form

The Mentoring Relationship Evaluation Form will be issued to your mentee following the successful conclusion of the mentoring relationship. It is used to review the success of the relationship.

Early Exit Form

The Early Exit Form is issued if a mentoring relationship ends before the conclusion of the recommended 12 sessions.

Boundaries

All relationships need boundaries (even though you might not have thought about them) and a mentoring relationship is no different. It's down to you both to be consistent and respectful. You should think about:

Time - mentoring works best when you've talked about how many hours you'll undertake and when it's best to meet. That way, you're both clear about timings.

Place - we recommend that you meet in public places, such as a coffee shop or library. It's our policy that you shouldn't meet at each other's homes.

Getting in touch - it's up to you both to decide how it's best to keep in touch. Let your mentee know which number or email address is easiest to get hold of you on. Don't forget to chat about which times you'd both prefer to be contacted.

Money - don't feel that you have to pay for food or drinks for your mentee. Do not accept gifts from your mentee. You should also never ask for payment for your mentoring services. Entering into a financial arrangement is outside of the boundaries of this mentoring relationship.

If your mentee is behaving inappropriately or something else crops up that you're unsure about, then give your Mentor Manager or our Mentor Co-ordinator a call. We're here to help.

Confidentiality

It's really important that you respect each other's confidentiality. Remember that anything you talk about when you meet up is between the two of you so you shouldn't talk about it to someone else. But, legally, you should report any criminal conduct or possible harassment or bullying. Speak to your Mentor Manager if you're worried about anything like this.

Confidentiality - four things to think about:

Concerns - if you've got any, chat to your Mentor Manager or our Mentor Co-ordinator.

Secrets - don't promise to keep secrets. Make that clear from the beginning and remember to ask your mentee if situations arise that may involve you sharing confidential information with anyone else.

Information - keep any information about your mentee, like a phone number, somewhere secure. Do not share any financial details.

You - confidentiality works both ways. Be aware of which personal areas of your life you're prepared to share with your mentee.

How do I know if I'm being a good mentor?

You might wonder before you start if you'll be any good at it. Don't worry, remember, you don't need to be a business expert to be a good mentor. You just need to be patient, open-minded, good at listening, positive and, of course, enthusiastic.

Unfortunately, there's not a test that can tell you if you're getting it right, apart from your mentee telling you that you are. You are probably getting things right if:

- Your mentee is meeting up with you (that might sound silly but if they didn't want to they wouldn't turn up).
- You have good rapport.
- You feel like your mentee has opened up about their goals and objectives.
- Your mentee has learned new things from your sessions.
- You're really listening to them (not just pretending to).
- Your mentee appears to be developing both personal and business skills.

Is it working?

Don't worry if meeting some of the goals seems to be going slowly. This doesn't mean you're not a good mentor. Things take time, often it takes a while before you see a change. Concentrate on the little things and remember they can make a big difference.

If things don't seem to be going too well, speak to your Mentor Manager or our Mentor Co-ordinator and we'll see how we can help. You might want to try:

Calling your mentee before meetings to confirm them (if it's a case of missing sessions).

Reviewing your initial plan to see if you can agree more tangible or realistic goals.

End of Relationship

There will be a time when the relationship will begin to draw to an end. At this point you must both 'let go' so that the mentee can maintain their independence.

It will then become the responsibility of the mentee to put what they have learnt into practice. Although the two of you will probably continue to have some form of interaction, it should be on a more casual basis, where you consider each other as equals.

Let your Mentor Manager know when you've arranged your last session so that we can arrange a final review of both you and your mentee's experience.

Here are some tips for successfully ending your mentoring relationship:

Fixing a date for your last meeting - have a chat to your mentee beforehand and decide on a date. Remind each other of the date of the last session in the meeting before this so that you can prepare for it.

Other ways to support - You might like to encourage your mentee to look at ways that they can continue their learning.

Celebrating your success - have a look back at the goals you set when you first met - you can pat yourselves on the back when you see how far you've come.

Saying goodbye - imagine how you can end the session on a positive note so it's not awkward. You could have a chat about the thing you most enjoyed, something you'll remember or the most important things you've learned.

Evaluating - don't forget to complete your final session evaluation form. It shouldn't take too long and it's really helpful to see how you got on and for us to identify any improvements we can make to the mentoring journey.

The Mentee will have a chance to review their progress at this point and will need to complete the Mentoring Relationship Outcome Form, which will then show the progress the mentee has travelled over the period of the mentoring relationship.