

**SKILLS EVALUATION FOR EFFECTIVE MENTORING IN THE
PROJECT ENVIRONMENT OF ESKOM ENTERPRISES**

By

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Colossians - 3:16

“Let the word of the Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing, in psalms, hymns, spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.”

D M Möller

Middelburg

November 2005

Declaration

I hereby declare that this research is my own unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Masters of Commerce at the University of Kwazulu-Natal, Durban. It has not previously been submitted for any other degree or examination at any university or educational institution.



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Practitioner identity

I am employed at Eskom in the Capital Expansion Department that is structured under the Enterprises Division. I currently hold the position of Turbine Project Manager for the return to service project at Komati Power Station. I recently transferred to this position from being the Common Plant Engineering Manager at Camden Power Station. I was involved in developing the Project Scope and budget for three 'Return to Service' power stations, namely; Camden, Grootvlei and Komati. Prior to this I was employed at Majuba Power Station in various positions in the Maintenance, Projects, Operating, Engineering and Production departments.

I have a passion for engineering, especially in a Project environment. I enjoy a challenge, as well as attempting to incorporate People Development and Learning into my work.

ABSTRACT

The word 'mentor' is derived from the character Mentor who, according to Greek mythology, was the trusted counsellor of Odysseus, under whose disguise Athena became the guardian and teacher of Telemachus (*Great Illustrated Dictionary*. 1984).

In today's world changes are taking place at a rapid rate. In addition, the increasing complexity of the working environment has made it necessary that employees have a role model, teacher, coach and trusted counsellor to assist them in coping with these changes. Mentoring has become essential to the development of new and experienced staff and the enhancement of their performance in a challenging environment. This study evaluates the skills needed for a mentor, mentee and organisation to be successful in a mentoring program.

In the first section of this document, problems regarding the shortages of power supply currently experienced in South Africa will be clarified. These problems are aggravated by a shortage of skills in the project environment. Mentoring may be a possible solution in the management of this problem.

In the second section, a literature study which was conducted to determine which skills are necessary for a successful mentee-mentor relationship, will be discussed. Mentoring can only succeed if a good relationship exists between the mentor and mentee. The two developmental areas upon which mentoring can have the greatest impact on employees in organisations are the career development- and skills development areas.

In the third section a case study initiative will be described which involves the implementation of a mentor-mentee relationship in a Project environment. This case study pays specific attention to the effect which certain skills have on the success of a mentor-mentee relationship.

In the fourth section of this study questionnaires which were completed by employees within the Eskom Enterprises Division will be evaluated. The questionnaires focused on the views of staff regarding their own skills as mentors and mentees as well as the skills of the organisation. The questions were grouped and evaluated according to skills identified in the literature review.

According to this study mentoring seems to be a viable option for organisations to enhance the performance of their employees. Role-players need to develop their skills in order for them to be able to fulfil the various roles involved in mentorship. Organisations need to recognise and reward successful mentee and mentor participation.

The outcome of this research will hopefully assist the Management of Eskom in establishing a process with which to accelerate the development of Project managers through effective mentoring practices.

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1. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM AND PROBLEM CONTEXT

1.1 General problem context

A shortage of Project Management skills can be linked to a large system involving the rapid economic growth of a country that in turn is linked to global changes. Ackoff (1974) first coined the term 'mess' which refers to problems which are taken up by, not given to, decision makers. These problems are extracted from unstructured states of confusion or complex situations. There are many aspects involved when looking at a 'mess' from a holistic perspective, making it impossible to discuss all these aspects in detail.

South Africa is currently experiencing a 'mess' with regard to its economy and the availability of project management skills. There are many factors influencing companies and individuals in South Africa which are not seen in other parts of the world. The current implementation of Affirmative Action and the many cultural differences encountered are just two of the unique situations in South Africa that need to be taken into consideration. This study focuses on one of the aspects of the 'mess' namely, the skills required for effective mentoring in the Project environment of a large company like Eskom.

In some instances mentoring programs are very effective, but in others, not at all. In most situations they are not as successful as they should or could be. This study will discuss the skills that mentors, mentees and the organisation should possess in order for mentoring to be successful.

These skills will be measured by sending out a questionnaire to employees to measure their own perception of their skills as mentors and mentees. A section of the questionnaire will be used to evaluate the views staff have of the organisation's status on mentoring. The employees of Eskom Enterprises Division will be the main respondents to this questionnaire but staff from other divisions will also be asked to complete the questionnaire. The findings of this study are specific to mentoring in Eskom as a company and the generalisability thereof to other businesses or institutions can not be confirmed.

1.2 Specific problem manifestation

As a result of the sudden change in economic growth in South Africa during the past three years, numerous new projects are being executed and more are being planned for the near future. This sudden escalation of up to 5.5% growth has led to a demand for electricity that has exceeded all expectations. The shortage of electricity in South Africa is an issue of great concern and therefore numerous projects are being planned which will provide an additional supply of electricity.

In the past ten to twelve years virtually no Capital Expansion projects took place in the country, making it unnecessary to build new generating plants. Young people did not consider involvement in 'Projects' to be a viable line of work and new skills were not developed. This has led to the current problematic situation of a shortage of Project skills in a time when economic growth is high and numerous projects in the country are being planned which will take place concurrently.

For Eskom the problem is even greater. Finding individuals with Specialised Electricity Industry experience and Project skills is virtually impossible. Employees need to undergo training with regard to Project skills at an alarmingly fast rate in order to make a skilled labour force available to answer to the aforementioned demands.

Correct mentoring will aid the 'Fast tracking' of training in Project skills and improve current skills. Eskom does encourage mentoring through programs like the 'Young Professionals Drive'. Programs such as these are, however, not always as successful as they should be. In Eskom there has as yet been no measurement of the success of mentoring as part of the current six monthly performance appraisal system. From my involvement in class discussions during this course and other discussions with Eskom staff I have deduced that older employees are of the opinion that they had to learn the 'hard way' and that younger employees should as well. They also harbour the fear that mentoring a younger employee may lead to a situation wherein this mentee may become competition for them. These factors prevent successful mentoring, making it necessary that an avenue be found to change the culture of the organisation. It is therefore necessary that Eskom pay special attention to the implementation of effective mentoring programs within the company.

1.3 Purpose statement

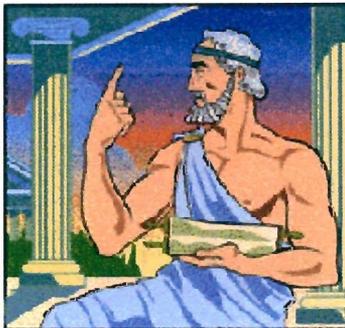
The purpose of this research is to better understand the status of mentoring processes in Eskom (specifically in the Enterprises division). This will be done by determining the reasons for successes and failures using literature (theories and organisational culture) and personal interviews (questionnaire). The outcome of this research will hopefully assist the Management of Eskom in establishing a process with which to accelerate the development of Project managers through effective mentoring practices.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 History of mentorship

men·tor (men'tôr', -ter)

1. A wise and trusted counsellor or teacher.
2. Mentor, according to Greek mythology, was Odysseus's trusted counsellor, under whose disguise Athena became the guardian and teacher of Telemachus.



"Mentors are guides. They lead us along the journey of our lives. We trust them because they have been there before. They embody our hopes, cast light on the way ahead, interpret arcane signs, warn us of lurking dangers and point out unexpected delights along the way."

L.A. Doloz (Date unknown)

The word 'mentor' has gained popularity in the professional world where it is thought to be a good idea to have a wise and trusted counsellor to guide one's career, mostly in the upper reaches of the organisation. A mentor therefore helps people to develop by forming them. African scholars have noted that mentors were commonplace in Africa, long before the ancient Greek civilisation (<http://www.psu.edu/dus/mentor/>).

Mentoring has become an effective method for businesses to help employees with orientation, career advancement, problem solving, coaching, and support. In addition, mentors can assist employees in dealing with the challenges associated with successful, productive and meaningful work life. (<http://www.mentors.ca/mentorrational.html>). Clutterbuck (2003) identifies greater complexity and rapid change, together with increased use of performance measurement, as being the reason why mentoring is more commonly used today.

According to Meyer and Fourie (2004:2) mentoring is defined as a dynamic and reciprocal relationship in a work environment whereby a more advanced and wiser career incumbent (mentor) helps a less experienced person who is not his direct subordinate (mentee) and has developmental potential to evolve in some specified capacity.

Figure 1: The mentoring relationship. (Meyer and Fourie, 2004:38)

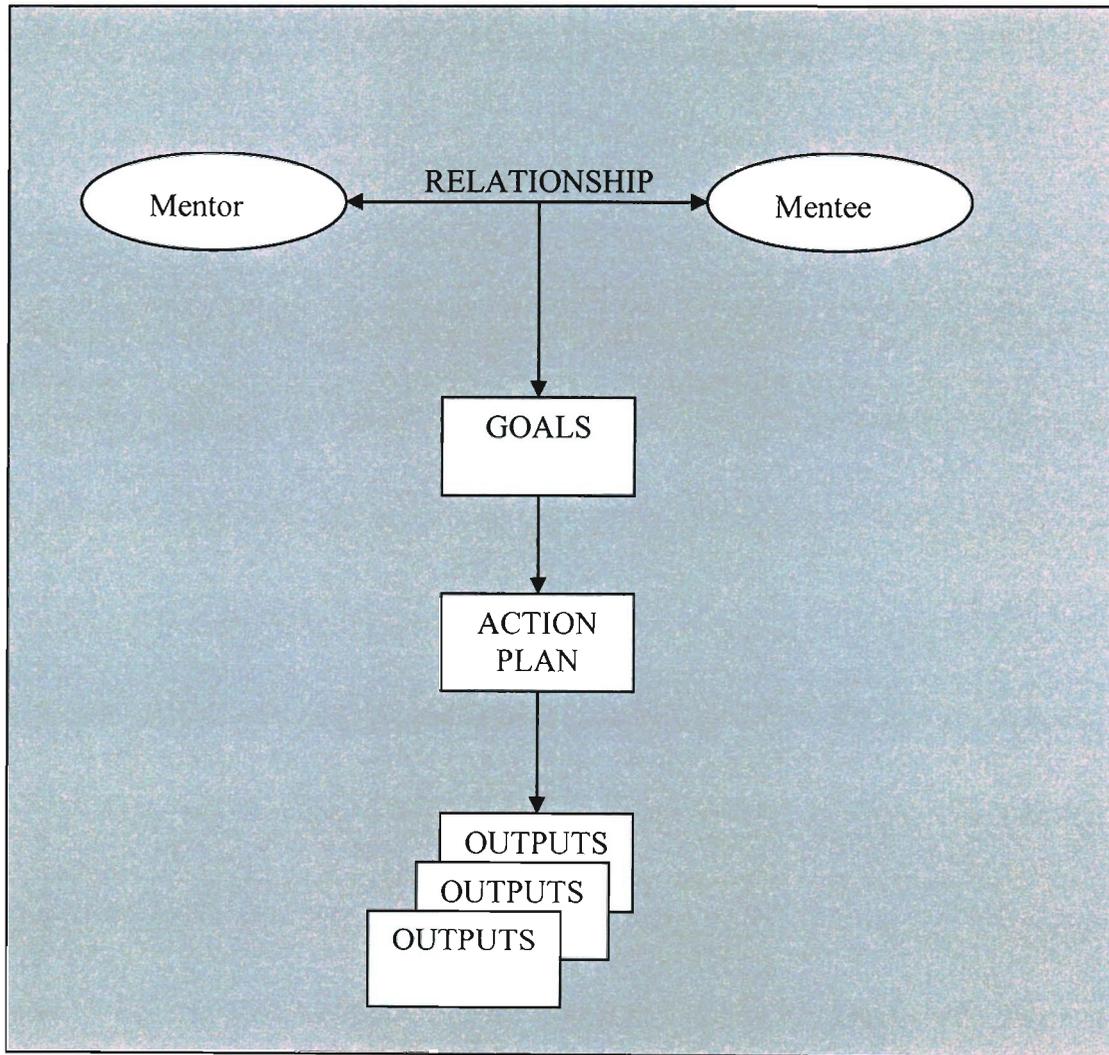


Figure 2: Mentoring characteristics and relationships. Cited at <http://www.uwosh.edu/mentoring/tools.html#characteristics>

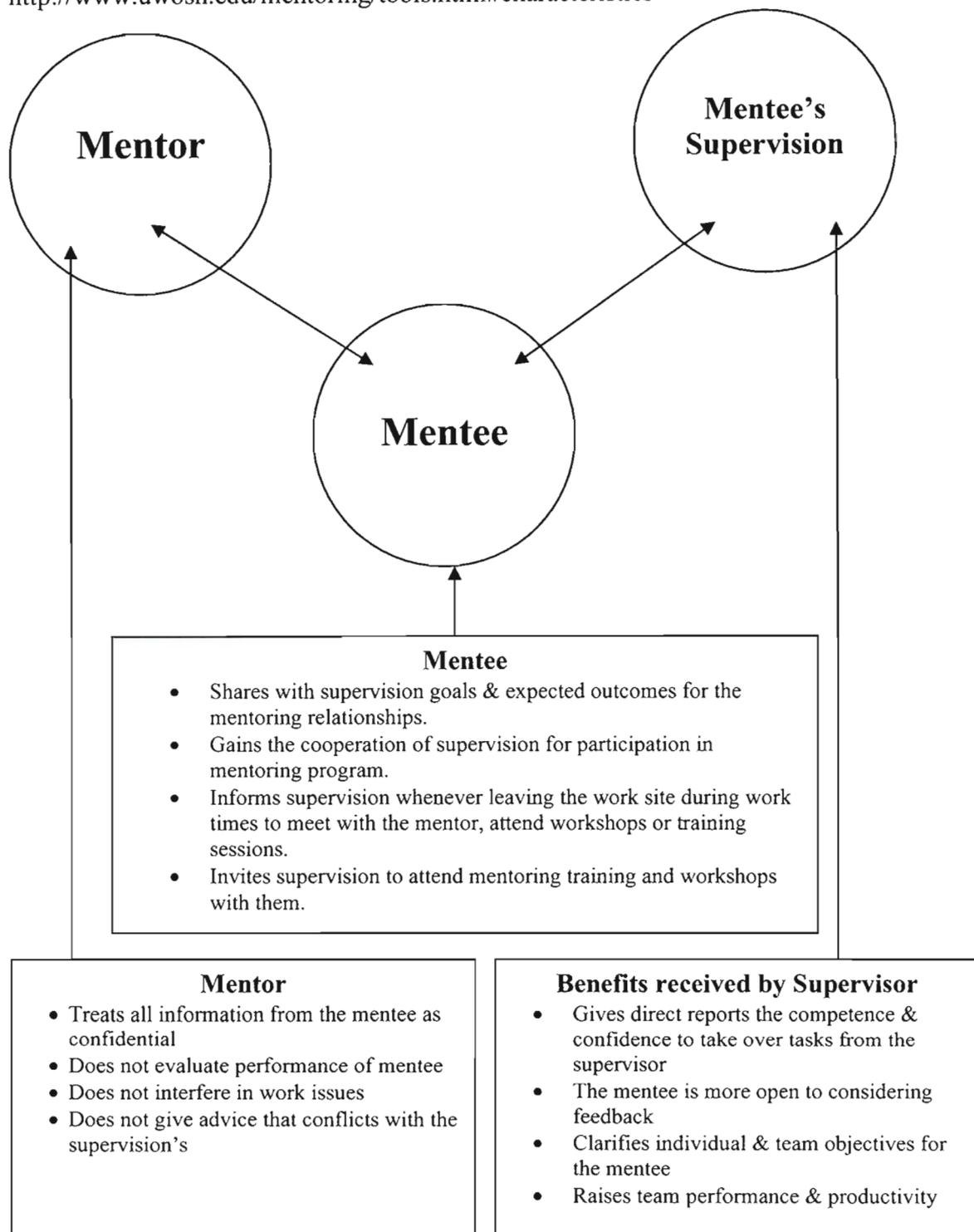


Table 1 below from Meyer and Fourie (2004:7) indicates the difference between the related concepts. A good mentor, leader and manager are required to master all these concepts.

Table 1: The difference between related concepts. (Meyer and Fourie, 2004:7)

Concept	Origin	Definition
Management	Management science	The process of planning, organising, leading and control to achieve the objectives of the organisation in the most effective and efficient way.
Leadership	Management and behavioural science	The ability to inspire people and influence their behaviour so that they contribute towards the goals of the organisation.
Counselling	Psychology	A two-way relationship between a counsellor and an individual in which the counsellor helps the individual to overcome barriers to performance and fulfilment.
Training	Education	Providing skills to employees so that they can do their jobs more effectively.
Consulting	Management	The process of forming a relationship with a client in order to provide a specialised consulting service to help the client to find a particular solution to a work space problem or issue. A consultant is not necessarily expected to transfer knowledge to the client.
Mentoring	Mythology	A dynamic and reciprocal relationship in a work environment whereby a more advanced and wiser career incumbent (mentor) helps a less experienced person who has developmental potential (mentee) to develop in some specified capacity.

Coaching	Sport	The systematically planned and directed guidance of an individual or group of individuals by a coach to learn and develop specific skills that are applied and implemented in the workplace, and therefore translates directly to clearly defined performance outcomes that are achieved over a short period of time.
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Watt (2004) indicates that the two employee development areas where mentoring can have the greatest impact in organisations are:

- (i) Career development and
- (ii) Skills development

(i) Career Development:

When a worker lacks motivation it may be due to rust-out (under-utilisation of their skills), a need for a new challenge or the desire to take their career to the next level. A mentor can provide a new burst of energy by doing any of the following to 'shake up' the employee's outlook on his career:

- challenge him/her by sponsoring his/her involvement in new projects,
- support him/her in seeking fresh opportunities within other teams in the organisation,
- provide a broader perspective of the organisation to help him/her determine how and where he/she can contribute to his/her job satisfaction and where he/she will perform to the organisation's benefit.

According to Freeman-Bell and Balkwill (1996:332), having a mentor is a very successful teaching tool in a complex and specialised environment. They refer specifically to the Specialised Engineering field.

(ii) Skills Development:

Watt (2004) states that organisational promotion is very often used as a retention strategy for competent and loyal employees. They are often rewarded with a management-level job, but lack previous experience or formal training, making them feel ill-equipped to perform their duties competently. A mentor can help employees in this situation 'learn the ropes' by helping them develop the insight, knowledge, skills and behaviours necessary to be effective and able in a new role.

Peer mentoring for skill development is also an efficient learning solution when the requisite skill exists in the organisation and can be shared in a timely and cost-effective manner. An example of this would be managers developing their skills in Project Management.

2.2 Mentoring skills

2.2.1 Introduction

Mentors and mentees need to maintain a sound relationship for the mentoring process to be successful. For them to build, maintain and grow this relationship mentors need numerous skills to be able to fulfil the different roles required of them. Different skills are required in different scenarios, but a successful mentor should at least master most of the skills that will be discussed in this study.

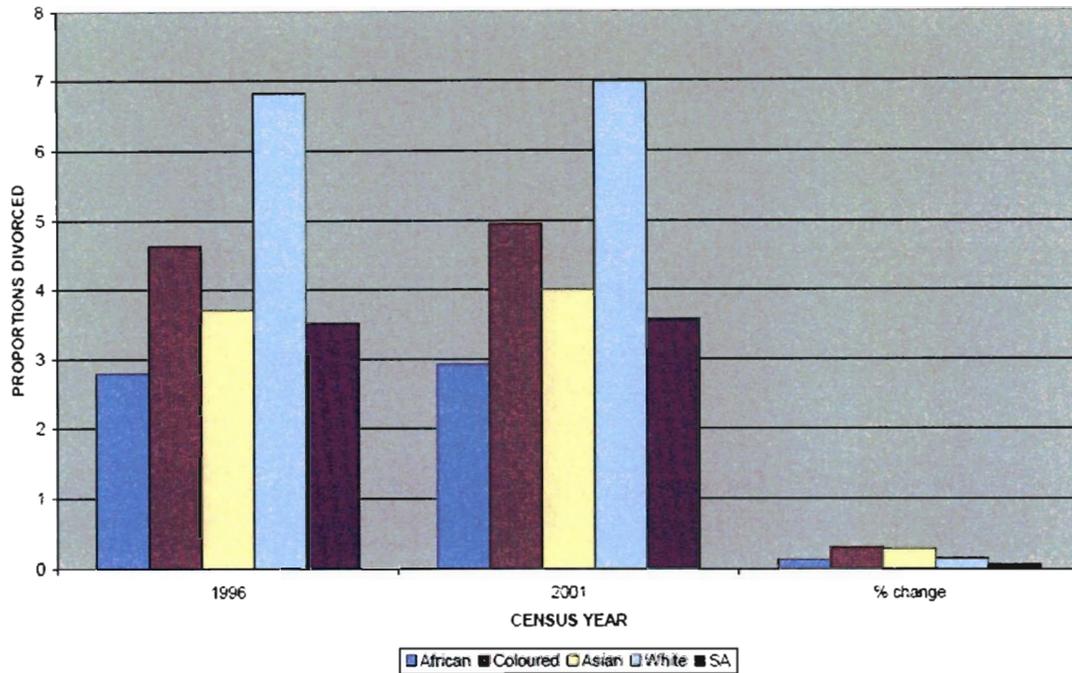
As part of the case study done in chapter three, some of the skills will be tested to observe the effect that these skills have on the success of a mentoring relationship.

2.2.2 Parenting

The first mentors we have in life are our parents. They provide us with guidance and teach us the difference between right and wrong. The family structure has deteriorated over the last few decades due to the high divorce rates, parents working far from home and numerous other reasons. “The average household size in developed countries fell from around 3.6 in 1950 to 2.7 in 1990. This rapid decline can largely be accounted for by ageing, rising divorce rates, rising age at marriage and increasing childlessness” (<http://atlas.aaas.org/index.php?part=1&sec=trends>). Amoateng (2004:16) stated in his report that since 1996 there has been a gradual but steady increase in the divorce rate for all race groups as seen in figure 3.

For this reason the mentor is required at certain times to fulfil the role of a 'father' and 'mother'. Meyer and Fourie (2004:41) state that the mentor is required to provide an environment where the mentee feels safe to learn and develop. It is the mentor's role to discipline the mentee in an appropriate way when required. In the 'mother' role the mentor is required to provide emotional support during highly stressful times. The mentor should make an effort to provide the resources for the mentee to be able to be successful. According to Meyer and Fourie (2004:42) feeling that someone cares about him/her and that he/she has a place to go to for support is vital to the success of a mentee.

Figure 3: Divorce rates, 1996-2001. (Amoateng 2004:16)



It is important that the mentor differentiate between his/her own perceptions regarding a matter and the actual facts. If a mentor's own feelings have been provoked, it is possible that he/she could allow these emotions to obscure the facts. As a result the mentor may become autocratic and begin to give the mentee instructions involving terms such as "must" and "should have" instead of providing guidance. This may have an effect on the listener, who may retaliate with a defensive attitude. Challoner et al. (1997) states that mentoring is more effective when a style is used that not only welcomes, nurtures and encourages questions, but also challenges students to develop critical thinking, self-discipline and good study habits.

According to Bell (1999:35) the master mentor is purposeful and humble, which means that he/she relinquishes efforts to control the results. The mentor should be curious, which means that he/she always asks 'get-behind-the-issue' questions. Bell (1999:35) continues to say that mentors need to be generous, which means giving value without expecting anything in return. He concludes by saying that the bottom line is, however, that providing advice can only work in a learning context.

2.2.3 Reviewing and advising

According to Kolb (1984) Double-Loop Learning occurs when fundamental or core organisational and personal goals and beliefs, are found to be incompatible with new strategies. They are then reconsidered through a collaborative inquiry leading to a significant restructuring of the organisation or person's theory of action.

In order for mentees to experience Double-Loop Learning they need to review their actions and look at past successes and failures in order to improve in the future. It is the role of the mentor to provide feedback about past actions. The mentor and mentee will be required to be open and honest toward each other during discussions. Meyer and Fourie (2004:43) state that it is very important that the mentor not try to solve the mentee's problems for him/her or use the information received during discussions outside of the discussion context. In my opinion it is better for the mentor to give the mentee different alternatives to consider and guide him/her to recognising other ideas with which to solve the problem.

One of the most important roles of the mentor is to provide the mentee with advice. This advice will help the mentee make better decisions and enable him/her to implement a particular plan correctly. Having a mentor should be like having someone who is loyal, interested, trusted and most importantly, experienced in areas that you may not be by your side.

According to Van Wert (2004:40) good intentions turn bad when ongoing management development is neglected. Correlating the employees' responses with information about a company's management-development practices consistently illustrates that companies that invest in upgrading management skills are far more successful. He further states that companies of any size can provide mentoring, thus providing new managers with experienced advisors that they can turn to when needed. I am of the opinion that companies are to invest in mentoring of all their staff and not only management. This will hopefully create a culture of learning within the organisation.

Chief Executive Officers who invest in the learning process schedule time to counsel managers and identify their developmental needs. They use popular business books as the basis for informal meetings that engage managers in discussions to identify best practices.

The Council of Graduate Schools (1995) cites Morris Zelditch's useful summary of a mentor's multiple roles: "Mentors are advisors, people with career experience willing to share their knowledge; supporters, people who give emotional and moral encouragement; tutors, people who give specific feedback on one's performance; masters, in the sense of employers to whom one is apprenticed; sponsors, sources of information about and aid in obtaining opportunities; models, of identity, of the kind of person one should be to be an academic."

Challoner et al. (1997) determined that a mentor communicates the informal and formal realities of progression in the organisation, recommends appropriate strategies for career direction and advancement, reviews the mentee's development plan on a regular basis and helps the mentee to identify obstacles to career progression in order to take appropriate action.

2.2.4 Encouraging and Developing

Mentors encourage mentees to achieve their goals and dreams. Smit and Cronjè (2003:22) claim that, in the area of management training and development, the managerial empowerment of previously disadvantaged people through a system of education, coaching and mentorship is what is most needed in South Africa. Sustainable economic growth will be possible for South Africa by empowering previously disadvantaged people.

Mentors are required to assist mentees in setting achievable and challenging goals and objectives. Meyer and Fourie (2004:44) state that the mentor is required to motivate the mentee to achieve and exceed the goals set and give the mentee the support required to continue even when things go wrong. If a goal or objective has been achieved the mentor is required to praise the mentee on his/her achievement.

The outcome of mentoring a mentee should be an improved mentee and mentor. It is therefore very important for the mentee to be able to make mistakes and learn from them. The mentor should point out the mentee's strengths, weaknesses, talents and skills in order

for development to take place. Reviewing the progress of development will indicate where there have been improvements as well as areas that still need attention.

According to Phillips-Jones (2003) it is important, during the longest phase in which the mentee is learning and growing, to keep track of:

- each goal and developmental activity your mentee is involved in,
- what you have agreed to do with each step,
- dates that have to be met and when goals have to be reached,
- resources (noting which ones are necessary and which ones to discard),
- people to whom you can refer or introduce the mentee,
- upcoming events in his/her life, your life, the partnership and the program,
- ways to build in spontaneity,
- good questions to ask,
- specifically how you are reacting and what you require (from your mentee or from other sources).

Meyer and Mabaso (2002) say: “The aim of a mentoring programme is the personal and professional development of a person to meet the needs of both the mentee and the mentor. As part of professional development the mentor points out the mentee’s strengths, abilities, talents, and promotes his feeling of competence and self-esteem, encourages and coaches the mentee and collaborates with mentees on workplace projects for professional development.”

Challoner et al. (1997:2) states: ”There is no single formula for good mentoring; mentoring styles and activities are as varied as human relationships. Different students will require different amounts and kinds of attention, advice, information, and encouragement. Some students will feel comfortable approaching their mentors; others will be shy, intimidated, or reluctant to seek help. A good mentor is approachable and available.”

Cohen (1995) encourages mentors to make statements that clearly encourage personal mentee actions to attain stated objectives. This motivates mentees as they manage personal changes and take initiatives in their transitions through life events as independent adult learners. He further suggests that mentees develop their talents and pursue their dreams.

Vorwerk (2002:40) says that support should be provided for mentees to improve mentoring and assessment techniques. He continues to say that “to encourage people to participate, we can register them on their own learning programmes.”

2.2.5 Role model

Each person has various role models from the day that they are born. Usually your first role models are your parents or close family. Later in life you select people you admire to be your role models.

It is important for the mentee to respect his/her mentor. Meyer and Fourie (2004:45) stresses the importance that a mentor always act and behave in such a way that the mentee will regard him/her as a role model. This puts a lot of pressure on the mentor. For mentors to sustain their credibility as good role models they need to practice what they preach. Meyer and Fourie (2004:45) add that mentors should share their values, beliefs and lessons learned with their mentees. They should always stay calm and professional and treat their mentees with respect and dignity.

A mentee might see or understand only part of what the mentor does to achieve his/her results. Mentors need to take the time for raising other topics that they are comfortable discussing with their mentees. Questions like, "what is a typical day, week, or weekend like for you?" should be asked. Mentors should also consider discussing administrative, entrepreneurial or civic activities or family obligations. The goal should be balancing the professional and personal aspects of life.

Mehta (2001:119) looks at mentoring as a means of assisting minorities in the corporate world. She sees herself as a role model to her white mentees and attempts to give them insight into managing diverse groups of employees. In the South African context this is a very important benefit of mentoring. People need to understand the different cultures and behaviours of various ethnic groups in the workplace. By having a role model to learn from this skill can be mastered in a much shorter time.

In his article Clutterback (1989:13) focuses on mentoring as the development of apprenticeship, involving the passing of management skills from experienced to more junior employees. Clutterback (1989:13) believes that the mentee sees the mentor as very competent, as a role model who gives him/her emotional support. A mentoring program should, as far as possible, have a flexible approach to allow for changes in people and circumstances. The mentor is drawn by the mentee's potential to learn and seeks to speed up his development.

Bell (1999:35) is of the opinion that project managers should develop their mentoring skills if they do not want to lose their best team members to the competition. As a master mentor, a project manager should be willing to reveal his/her own challenges and frustrations to his/her mentee. Bell (1999:36) says that a mentor should also be willing to show enthusiasm for learning, show enthusiastic curiosity and ask questions that will push the mentee to think and listen as though he was a "hero" the mentee has always wanted to meet and speak with.

The mentor should never rely on power symbols. He/she should provide support without rescuing and develop mentees who watch his/her every move because he/she has become a courageous role model.

2.2.6 Support building

There is no person who knows everything. It is therefore important for the mentor to realise when he/she does not have the skills or knowledge which a mentee requires. Meyer and Fourie (2004:47) suggest that mentors assist mentees in building a network of support structures around themselves for when specialised services are required. Meyer and Fourie (2004:47) continue to say that mentors are required to keep in mind that they are temporarily appointed as the mentor of a specific mentee. It is necessary for the mentee to be able to continue after the mentor has left, making the mentee's support structure very important.

Meyer and Mabaso (2001: Vol. 2, No. 13) state that any relationship involves emotions and that a mentoring relationship is no different. "The role of the mentor is to maintain mutual feelings of respect, admiration, trust, appreciation and gratitude, to share personal values and

other aspects of the relationship, and they should encourage and support mentees during difficult or stressful times.”

According to the web page on mentoring and the mentor-role (<http://www.uwosh.edu/mentoring/mentorrole.html>) the role of the mentor as supporter is described as being to: ”Encourage the participation of the mentee on committees to increase visibility; enhance the mentee's self-esteem through supportive, non-judgemental discussions and 'pep talks'.”

2.2.7 Information source

Mentors continuously need to study the latest developments and acquire the latest information. Meyer and Fourie (2004:47) feel that mentees see mentors as a source of information but should not depend on them for information only. Mentors should sometimes simply indicate where information can be found, seeing as the route to finding information can be part of the learning process.

Meaningful projects may give mentees an opportunity to develop and display their skills and knowledge. According to Page, Loots and Du Toit (2005), ”cross-cultural issues are often raised as matters affecting the ability of the mentee to derive benefit from a peer support program. This tends to be an issue within a mentor/mentee relationship, but not so in a tutor/mentee relationship as the primary focus (in the latter) is on academic matters, and mentees want to interact with the “best” tutor/mentors and thereby enhance their own performance.”

2.2.8 Communicating

Without communication no mentoring will be able to take place. Communication is the basis of a good relationship. Meyer and Fourie (2004:48) in addition state that two-way communication is essential for the mentor-mentee relationship to be successful. If either the mentor or the mentee is doing all the communicating, no transfer of knowledge will take place.

Mentors are required to discuss development and progress with their mentees. Meyer and Fourie (2004:48) continue to say that the mentor is required to be available for the mentee at all times when there is a problem he/she wants to discuss. If the mentor is constantly unavailable the mentee will lose trust in the mentor, which will obstruct communication. It is very important for the mentor to develop the mentee's communication skills.

For the receiver of communication to understand a message correctly the person is required to be a good listener. It is very easy to hear something different from what is being said. This could lead to the mentor reacting incorrectly and giving incorrect advice.

One of the skills required to be a good listener is being able to show the mentee that you are listening by exhibiting supporting body language and paying full attention. It is always good to observe the body language of the mentee for an increased understanding of what he is communicating. This is confirmed by Meyer and Mabaso (2001:48). The mentee should not be interrupted and the mentor should be open to the mentee's opinions. If the message is not clearly understood, the mentee should be asked to clarify the point he/she is trying to make. The mentor should indicate that he/she has understood what has been communicated.

Cohen (1995:<http://www.uwosh.edu/mentoring/faculty>) states that it is required to have an honest commitment and interest in the other people. "Empathy not sympathy" should be used when listening to the mentee. Cohen (1995) feels that this is best demonstrated by devotion of time and being a sincere, active listener. Being an effective listener means listening non-defensively which implies:

- having a willingness to hear what you might not like,
- not rejecting the ideas of others just because you disagree with them,
- trying to grasp how ideas make sense to someone else even when they don't to you,
- resisting the urge to talk or to interrupt the speaker,
- not debating with the speaker silently in your mind while he/she is talking
- believing that there is usually more than one way of looking at things,
- believing that there are far fewer "facts" and far more uncertainties and questions to be explored,
- valuing the exchange of ideas more than ideas themselves,

- knowing that if you don't listen, further communication is rather futile.

Cohen (1995:<http://www.uwosh.edu/mentoring/faculty>) continues to say that when on the receiving end of feedback the one should adopt the following behaviours:

- listen to what is being said without arguing or interrupting, no matter how much you disagree,
- make sure you understand by clarifying information rather than making assumptions,
- use your peer group to check the information you are being given, especially if you have doubts.

The formula from the United States Army's Mentorship Program for the Quartermaster Warrant Officer (<http://www.quartermaster.army.mil>, Chapter V) provides a good summary of what is necessary for mentoring to be effective:

“Communication + Availability + Predictability + Loyalty = TRUST”

2.2.9 Storytelling

Early in history a lot of mentoring took place around a fire at night when elders told stories about what they had seen and learned throughout their lives. Today this is still a very effective means of mentoring. Meyer and Fourie (2004:50) indicate that when you can relate a current situation to something similar in the past and learn from what was done to solve the problem, Double Loop learning will take place. Storytelling makes it easier for the mentees to understand what the consequences will be if certain actions are taken.

Bluen (2005:<http://www.saconference.co.za>) says that leaders can create a story that highlights specific actions they have taken and represents a powerful example of the culture they aim to build. The story acts as a platform for discussions involving the team to define the standards, values and goals required on the undertaking. This engages employees and therefore motivates them toward delivering on the team's action plan.

Aligning each individual with the company's values and business standards requires mentoring. Leaders can increase their staff's empowerment by having one-on-one

discussions with their team/internal partners regarding their personal contribution in achieving the action plan. This ensures a mutual understanding of the goals, the skill and the confidence needed for success.

Storytelling can be a powerful tool for group facilitators, teachers, therapists and life coaches. It gives them the ability to transmit ideas, values and insights in a non-judgmental way that will speak to the heart as well as the mind. Storytelling can assist the understanding of different cultures in the workplace without drawing any political aspect into the discussion. This links to Mehta's (2001:119) views of mentoring being a method of assisting minorities in the corporate world.

Nala-Partners (2005: <http://www.nala-partners.co.za>) view intercultural dialogue as the opportunity for relationship building and matching creative interests and skills to jointly develop meaningful and productive new ventures. Organisations and individuals in other cultures have much to offer in terms of knowledge and experience.

2.2.10 Teaching and Coaching

As a 'teacher' the mentor teaches the mentee certain skills and as a 'coach' the mentor demonstrates how the mentee should perform certain tasks. Meyer and Fourie (2004:50) state that mentors are required to clarify performance goals and teach skills that mentees will need in order to achieve these goals and perform a particular job. Due to the increased manifestation of broken families it has become important that mentors educate mentees about essential values and principles.

Meyer and Fourie (2004:50) continue to say that as a coach the mentor is required to show mentees how to perform their duties. It is recommended that 'on-the-job' training be provided to employees who have just started their careers. It may take a long time for an employee to understand exactly what he is required to do and even longer to discover how to do it. Part of coaching is recommending which specific behaviours the mentee needs to improve upon. This is also supported by the Quartermaster Warrant Officer Mentorship Program, (<http://www.quartermaster.army.mil>, Chapter II). To ensure that Double-loop

learning (Kolb 1984) takes place continuously, feedback should be provided about the performance of the mentee.

Meyer and Mabaso (2001: Vol. 2, No. 13) state that a mentor is required to provide career development opportunities such as coaching, delegate challenging assignments and foster the mentee's visibility.

“I rarely encounter managers who are required to participate in advanced training that will make them more effective in their work. Rarely do I see companies investing in executive coaching designed to identify managerial weaknesses and strengthen competencies. The need for both clearly exists,” (Van Wert 2004:40). This indicates the need for a mentoring program that will cater for new staff and as well as top management.

In a case study published in PM Network (2000) the mentor acted as a coach for assigned project leaders. He was responsible for raising awareness so that the leaders became more knowledgeable concerning the project management process. To prepare the mentor for the task, the project management team and its vendor partner created coaching sessions for the mentors. PM Network (2000: v 14, n 1, p 23-24) states that: “Finally, as far as competencies and skills are concerned, a project mentor is expected to be an integrator, educator, expeditor, coach, problem solver, quality manager, risk taker, visionary, and a worker in a non-hierarchical organization”. Having a mentor in a project management environment can have a beneficial effect on the staff and the project.

Dyer (2001:68) focuses on the advantages of business coaching and mentoring in New Zealand and the guidance of mentees in a financial environment through the decision-making process. This indicates that coaching is seen as a tried and tested method of training staff in various fields. Price (2003:52) warns against a range of issues that may arise in a mentoring relationship. Price (2003:52) stresses the importance of the need for executive coaching. This again is an indication that mentoring is seen by most people as a tool for senior staff development and not for all staff.

The web page (<http://www.uwosh.edu/mentoring/mentorrole.html>) describes the role of the mentor as coach as being to: "Advise mentees on how to accomplish their goals; provide feedback above and beyond what supervisors provide. Help the mentee develop alternatives

to address work-related problems or create learning opportunities. Teach the mentee organizational and professional skills and help 'decode' the university culture; create an atmosphere where mentees can learn from their own and each other's experiences, mistakes, and successes as well as from their mentor's experiences". As a teacher, it is important that the mentor share the wisdom of past mistakes. A mentee cannot only learn from the mentor's errors, but will also realise that no one is perfect.

2.2.11 Summary of mentor roles

Starcevich (<http://www.coachingandmentoring.com>) has identified six appropriate mentoring roles and summarised them in table 3. For the mentor to fulfil these roles successfully the mentor needs to continuously develop his/her skills.

Table 2: Summary of Mentor roles by Starcevich. (<http://www.coachingandmentoring.com>)

Mentor Roles	Purpose	Other's Role	Mentor's Teaching Style	Skills, Knowledge, Abilities	Uniqueness
Guide	Acclimate and integrate new employees	Peer	Tell	Knows the organizations, policies, practices, information—how things get done.	Only for the first 3-6 months of employment
Expert	Knowledge and experience transfer	Protégé	Tell and demonstrate	Leading expert in a professional discipline or unique process.	Knowledge that sets them apart from their peers.
Advisor	Development in a specific profession, e.g., Chemical Engineer	Junior member of the profession	Tell and discuss	Recognized as accomplished in a specific profession	Knows what it takes to be successful in a profession
Sponsor	Plan for moves to maximize career potential	High potential	Tell and discuss	Ability to influence selection decisions and career moves	Higher level executive

Role Model	Living example of values, ethics, and professional practices	Unique needs, population	Illustrate and discuss	Successful in job and life, enjoys working with others who need help.	A caring and concerned adult
Facilitator	Helping others think, learn and grow	Partner	Facilitate self discovery	Supportive, listener, questioner, and collaborator	A trusted ally

2.3 Skills of mentees

Some of the skills of mentees are similar to those of mentors. Due to the different roles played by mentors and mentees, mentees are required to possess certain unique skills.

2.3.1 Learning

The mentee needs to be willing to learn and the concept of Double-loop learning (Kolb, 1984), needs to be second nature to a mentee. For mentees to make the most of each meeting with the mentor they need to view each meeting as an information session (Meyer and Fourie, 2004:53). It is important that mentees do not let failures discourage them but use these as lessons to learn from. Reflecting on events that have taken place is a means of learning from your own mistakes and successes as well as those of others. Mentees are required to think of what they can improve upon to achieve their goals.

The Quartermaster Warrant Officer Mentorship Program (<http://www.quartermaster.army.mil>) states that the mentee, as a student, needs to absorb the mentor's knowledge and have the ambition to know what to do with this knowledge. The mentee needs to practice and demonstrate what has been learnt. According to this program a mentee is also a 'trainee' who is required to blend mentoring with other training approaches. The mentee is recommended to participate in training programs, in addition to seeking professional advice. By participating in other programs, the mentee becomes a well-rounded and versatile individual.

2.3.2 Researching

In the Quartermaster Warrant Officer Mentorship Program (<http://www.quartermaster.army.mil>) it is said that mentees need to keep in mind that they are not required to be an 'expert' on everything. A good mentee knows where to find knowledgeable sources.

Mentees need to keep up with the latest information. Meyer and Fourie (2004:55) state that mentees need to be able to collect information, analyse this information, draw conclusions

and apply new knowledge. Sources of information are the Internet, computers, books, textbooks, magazines, diagrams, charts and discussions with knowledgeable people.

2.3.3 Self-developing

Every person is responsible for his/her own development. Mentors provide direction and assistance, but mentees remain responsible for their own development. Meyer and Fourie (2004:55) indicate that mentees are required to set their own goals for their level of education and career path. When meeting the mentor, the mentee is required to be aware of what his/her developmental needs are. If the mentee is uncertain about his/her needs, it will be difficult to mentor the mentee. Mentees can improve their knowledge on self-development by learning more about motivational skills, setting goals and measuring themselves against these goals periodically.

According to Meyer and Mabaso (2001: Vol. 2, No. 13) mentees need to be creative in suggesting other developmental areas to their managers or mentors. “Here it is important to focus on the responsibility of the mentee for self-development. Whilst the mentor plays a developmental role in his or her relationship with the mentee, the latter is also responsible for his or own self-development.”

According to the Quartermaster Warrant Officer Mentorship Program (<http://www.quartermaster.army.mil>) “a mentee has a strong desire to learn new skills and abilities or a desire to develop existing skills and abilities. A mentee seeks educational and/or training opportunities whenever possible to broaden his or her capabilities. A mentee strives to elevate his or her level of technical skills and professional expertise to gain a greater mastery of the job.”

“The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can’t find them, make them” (George Bernard Shaw Date unknown).

2.3.4 Communicating

Communication is the basis of a good relationship. As mentioned before no mentoring can take place without communication. Communication is as important for mentees as for mentors. Meyer and Fourie (2004:56) say that if either the mentor or the mentee is performing all the communication, no transfer of knowledge will take place. Mentees should attempt to retrieve as much information as possible from their mentors by communicating with them.

For the receiver of communication to understand a message correctly he/she is required to be a good listener. The sender, however, is required to send the message clearly. For the message to be communicated clearly, certain guidelines are helpful if followed. Prepare for the communication before it takes place, communicate clearly when speaking, attend a communication course and ask your mentor to assist you in developing your communication skills (Meyer and Fourie, 2004:56).

Meyer and Fourie (2004:56) indicate that it is very important for mentees to pay full attention when listening during communication with mentors. If something is unclear the mentee should ask that the point of discussion is to be clarified.

According to the Quartermaster Warrant Officer Mentorship Program (<http://www.quartermaster.army.mil>) the mentor and the mentee become professional partners in a mentoring relationship. All partnerships face natural barriers. Natural barriers may include miscommunication or an uncertainty of the other's expectations. Taking notes can assist the mentee in the listening process. The mentee should prevent interrupting or criticising the mentor and is required to not indicate through body language that he/she is not open to the ideas or advice of the mentor.

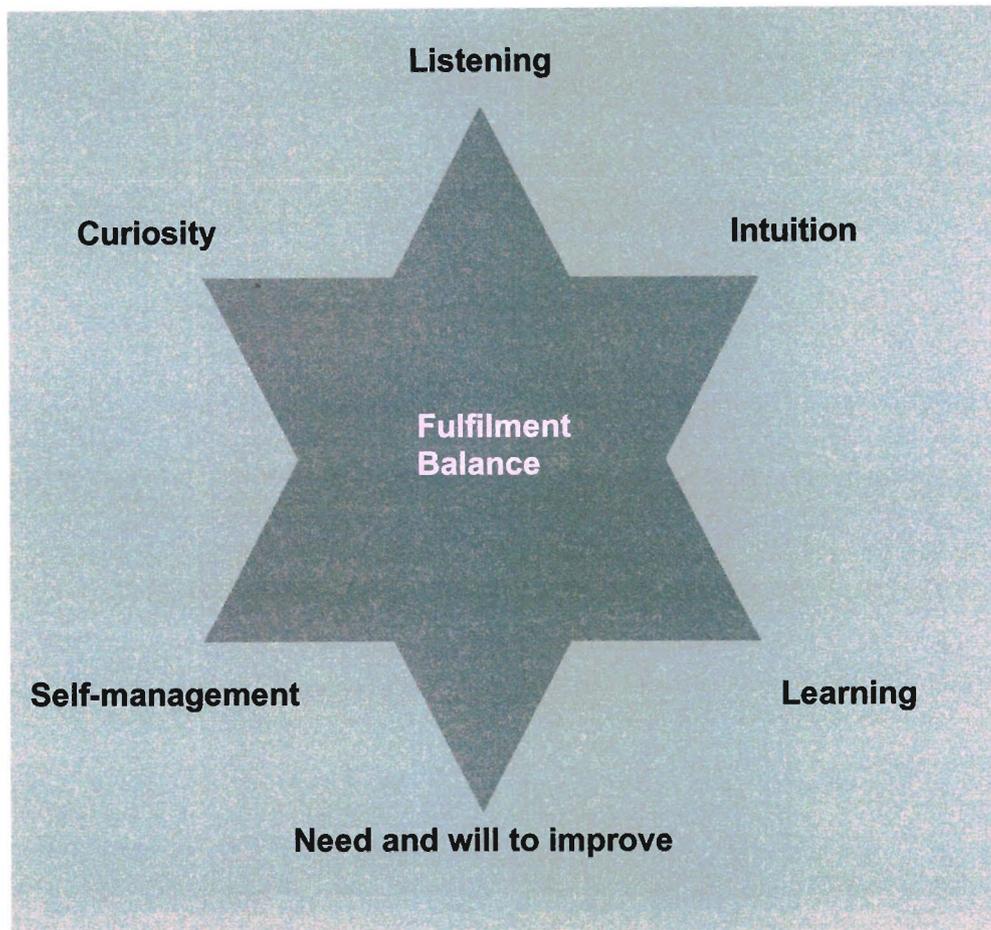
After communication has taken place, the mentee should confirm with the mentor that he/she received the message correctly. At times the mentor might purposefully test whether the mentee made the correct conclusion during the discussion. When the mentor tells a story the mentee should be able to interpret the story correctly, make his/her own conclusions and apply the new information.

Listening is very important towards finding a balance during mentoring communication, specifically for the mentee, as seen in figure 4. During a meeting between a mentor and mentee the mentee is required to show his/her curiosity by asking questions. If the mentee does not listen to the mentor, the mentor will lose interest in the relationship and eventually will not share his/her experiences and advice. The mentee will need to use his/her intuition when deciding on which areas need to be focused on for development. In the relationship the mentee is required to manage the learning process and not wait for someone else to manage him/her.

From personal experience gained in Eskom while being part of the 'Young Professional Drive' at Majuba Power Station and as mentor for various people, I found that no relationship will be sustained if the mentee does not have the need and will to improve himself/herself. I have therefore seen the need to change the model to include the component "need and will to improve". The mentees are very quick to say they need mentoring, but when they are required to deliver certain outputs they suddenly fade away. This to me is an indication that the mentees are not willing to make an effort in learning from the experienced people. They are under the impression that the 'system' will create the learning for them.

Figure 4: Mentoring communication balance.

Whitworth and Shook (2003) cited by Meyer and Fourie (2004:126) modified by Möller (2005).



2.3.5 Implementing

Communicating, learning and reflecting will have no effect if nothing gets implemented. According to Meyer and Fourie (2004:57) this is probably the biggest shortfall of mentoring. People talk and listen, but nothing really happens. During meetings between the mentor and mentee actions are planned and goals set. Follow-up meetings are required to ensure that these actions were performed. It is required that the action plans are checked at regular intervals to verify that they are in line with long-term goals set by the mentee and mentor.

Mentees are implementers. “This means that the relationship between the mentor and mentee is not merely based on interaction and communication. The real yardstick for the success of the mentoring programme is whether the mentee is implementing the action plans decided on with the mentor. Implementation refers to specific action plans and activities that have taken place” (Meyer and Mabaso, 2001: Vol. 2, No. 13).

The medical college of Wisconsin (<http://www.mcw.edu>) is of the opinion that it is the responsibility of the mentee to take initiative and make things happen. This is supported on the University of Montana’s web page (<http://pace.dbs.umt.edu/mentoring/Mentorroles>), where it is considered that the mentee should listen to advice and criticism with an open mind and put the advice of the mentor into practice.

2.3.6 Networking

No person knows or is a specialist in everything. For this reason it is very important that a mentee should acquire a network of people with specialised skills in respective fields. Meyer and Fourie (2004:46) see the mentor as a gateway that will enable the mentee to start building his/her own network. The mentor may introduce the mentee to people who could possibly be included in this network. Mentees should make use of these opportunities to start building relationships with people.

Meyer and Fourie (2004:46) warn that a bad relationship with an influential person could cause much more damage to a career than what a good relationship could. It is therefore important that the mentee always respect the people around him/her and maintain positive relationships. The mentee should always show his/her appreciation to the people he/she learns from.

Mentors use networks to help mentees recognise their abilities and limitations, to seize opportunities and come to terms with career realities. This enables them to learn from experience. Developing a network is not a replacement for conventional training, nor is it intended to undermine supervisor/subordinate relationships. It is particularly beneficial to young employees, but applicable to employees at any level where career development is an issue (Clutterback, 1989:13).

According to Challoner et al. (1997: Chapter 1) building a professional network is a lifelong process that can be crucial to finding a satisfying position and career.

“Women, particularly those in management, are in a unique position to assist one another. Women’s networks provide an excellent opportunity for women to offer support to other women in their companies. Some companies are realising that facilitating this type of communication and co-operation can have significant impact on talented women's progress through their organisations” (The Corporate Leadership Council, 2003).

2.3.7 Problem solving

Mentees should learn to help themselves. For this reason Meyer and Fourie (2004:59) say that mentors can only provide mentees with guidance on how to resolve their problems. Mentors should ask mentees how they think a problem should be solved. The mentee then provides solutions whilst the mentor guides him/her toward discovering the best solution.

Innovation becomes an important skill to use and develop once the mentee starts looking for solutions (Meyer and Fourie, 2004:46). Every problem may have its own solution. The mentee should persevere even if it takes time to find a solution.

2.4 Conclusion

According to the Quartermaster Warrant Officer Mentorship Program (<http://www.quartermaster.army.mil>) it is important to remember that the abovementioned characteristics are the desired characteristics of an 'ideal' mentor and mentee. “If a mentee has only two or three of these characteristics, this does not mean that the mentoring relationship will fail. However, it may take extra effort by the mentee to overcome possible obstacles that could arise from lacking one or several of these characteristics.”

The relationship between mentor and mentee is of the utmost importance for successful mentoring. In this chapter the various skills of mentors and mentees were highlighted and

explained. Checklists will be used to assess mentoring potential, talents of mentees, as well as readiness of the organisation for mentoring on two different experience levels in Eskom Enterprises. Mentors, mentees and the organisation are responsible for successful mentoring in the workplace.

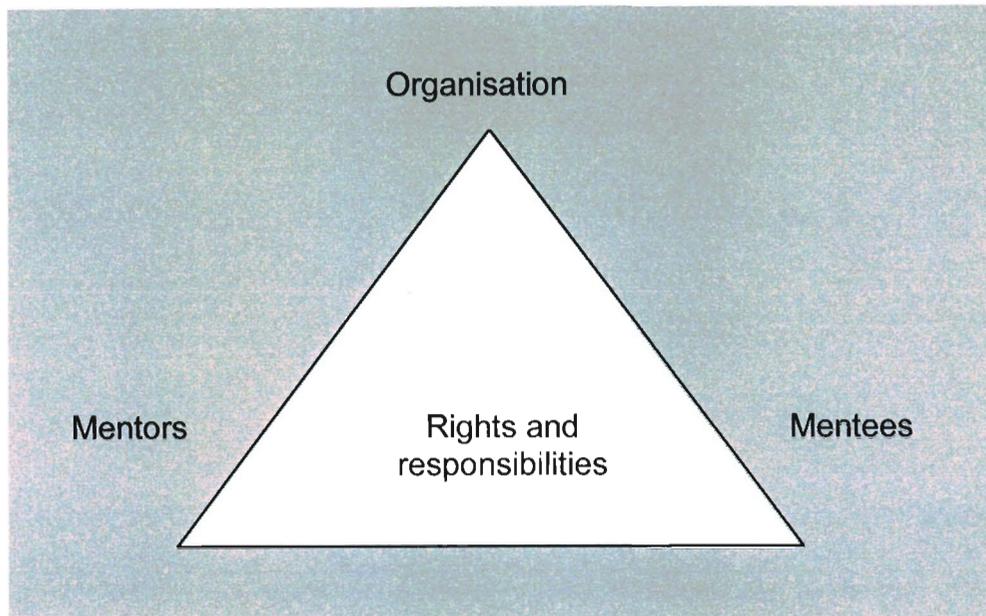
2.5 Mentoring options and implementation

According to Goldsmith (2000) proven methods of creating a successful company mentoring program are:

- creating a learning culture by being open about your own mentor/mentee relationships,
- building relationships of trust with participants,
- listening to the experiences and ideas of participants,
- celebrating small victories,
- placing mentor/mentee relationships under the spotlight,
- initiating company-wide training,
- obtaining wide recognition for your team and sharing the results as widely as possible.

For a mentoring program to be successful all the role players need to add value to the mentoring program. If the mentor is skilful and committed, but the mentee is not, there will be no benefit from the program. The other role player is the organisation and the same argument is applicable in this relationship. When the mentor and mentee are willing to commit themselves, but the organisation is not the program will not be successful. These relationships are better explained in a triangle as in figure 5. If one of the role players is not participative, the triangle will be distorted.

Figure 5: Balanced rights and responsibilities in the mentoring relationship (Meyer and Fourie, 2004:165).



There are many different types of mentoring, each designed for a different scenario. In table 3 below there is a summary of the most commonly used types of mentoring.

Table 3: Most commonly used types of mentoring. (Meyer and Fourie 2004:112)

Mentoring options	When to use
Informal mentoring	When the onus is on the mentee to informally select a mentor that he/she could learn from.
Formal mentoring	When you want to use a third party or a mentor to structurally develop an employee for a higher level position; very appropriate for accelerated development and employment equity.
Professional mentoring	When a professional body appoints a mentor to help a mentee to develop in a specified capacity to achieve the professional standards of a profession.
Reverse mentoring	When the roles of mentor and mentee are reversed for a specific purpose in order to help the mentor to understand the mentee better; very useful in cross cultural mentoring relationships.

Multiple mentoring	When the mentee has more than one mentor to help him/her to accelerate development by developing a broader and wider set of skills that cannot be learned from one individual only; very useful for employment equity.
Electronic-supported mentoring	When it is not always possible for the mentor and mentee to meet face-to-face, electronic supported mentoring can be used; useful when the mentor and mentee are in different locations, even in different countries.

According to Watt (2004:14) mentoring relationships typically evolve through four stages:

- (i) **Initiation:** It is important for the two people involved in the relationship to clarify the goals, objectives, processes and the length of the engagement. It doesn't matter how the relationship was initiated (be it sponsored by the organisation or begun at a personal level) it is key that these terms are discussed up-front. This helps give the engagement a structure so that both parties have a common understanding and expectations of the desired outcomes and plan of action.
- (ii) **Cultivation:** Guided by the objectives, the two parties work together to determine and carry out the plan of action and build the mentor-mentee relationship. Actions and activities may include things such as; dialogue, observation, role-plays or brainstorming.
- (iii) **Separation:** At this stage, the two parties decide to end the mentor-mentee engagement, hopefully because they agree that the mentee has met the task or skill objectives set at the outset.
- (iv) **Re-definition:** At this stage, the two parties seek the answer to the question, "how are we going to be now?" To avoid false expectations or disappointment, they discuss the nature of their relationship moving forward.

Meyer and Fourie (2004:69) see the phases of mentoring as consisting of the following phases as seen in figure 6:

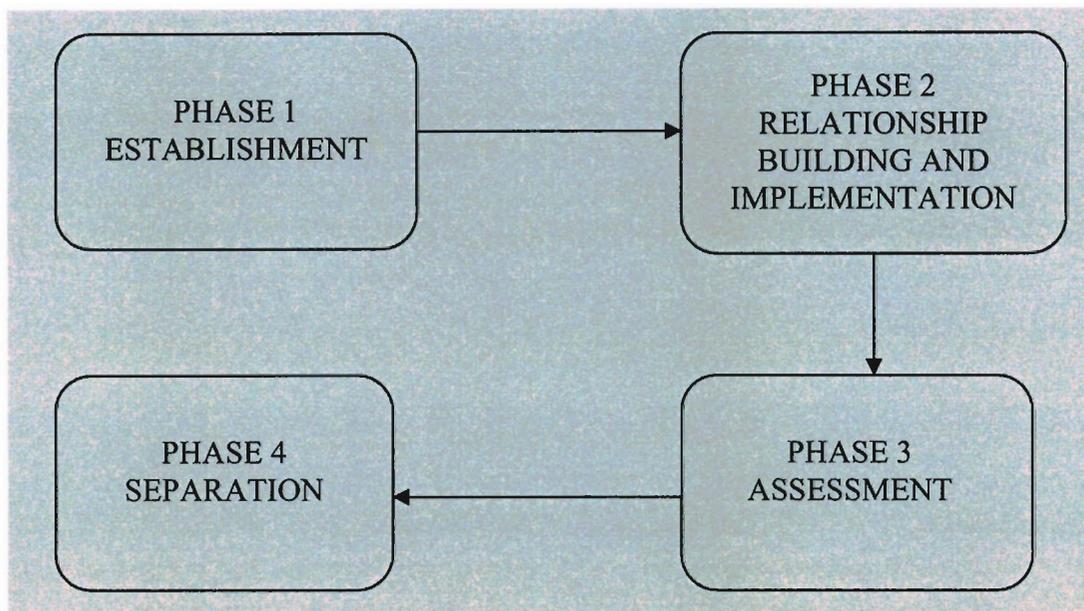
Phase 1 (Establishment): Mentor and mentee get to know each other.

Phase 2 (Relationship building and implementation): Establish relationship and define boundaries.

Phase 3 (Assessment): A comprehensive assessment is done to determine whether the objectives of the relationship have been met.

Phase 4 (Separation): The mentee begins to become increasingly confident and independent. The mentor plays a lesser role and begins to disengage.

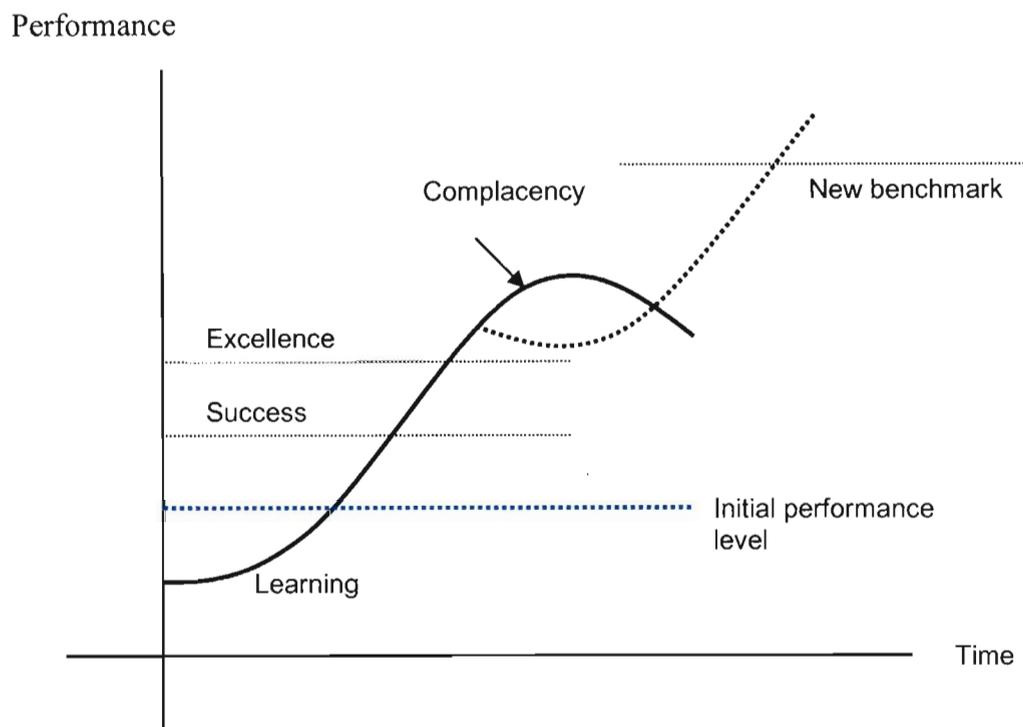
Figure 6: Phases of the mentoring relationship (Meyer and Fourie, 2004:69)



During the implementation of a mentoring program the mentor, mentee and organisation will develop through different stages over time. Upfront measurement criteria need to be agreed upon with which to measure the success of the mentoring program. Learning will most probably take place before a mentoring program is implemented. When the mentoring program starts off, the first aim will be to increase the learning performance from the initial performance level to a level of acceptable learning performance. Once that is achieved the next goal for the mentoring program is to reach a level of excellence.

With the fast changing corporate environment it is important not to become complacent with the performance of the learning process. The mentoring program needs to benchmark itself against the latest performance levels and constantly set higher goals to achieve.

Figure 7: Mentee, Mentor and Organisation development stages model (Möller and Turner, 2005).



2.6 Assigning mentors and mentees

According to McGee, vice president of Triple Creek Associates who has set up mentoring programs for Citigroup, Motorola, and the U.S. Air Force, among others (as cited in Fisher 2004:72), assigning mentors to your employees "offers the certainty of a match being made on some kind of objective criteria". He says, however, that "people are inherently subjective creatures, and the trend is moving toward mentors and mentees being actively involved in selecting each other". The reason for this is firstly that "both mentors and mentees can have suspicions and questions about why they were chosen for each other and tend to blame the matching party for any problems in the relationship. Secondly, there is the risk of using faulty matchmaking criteria, "the assumption that people participating in diversity mentoring

programs are looking for someone of the same race or gender has been proved wrong in many cases." Thirdly, "most businesses now are cutting back on lockstep classroom training" and lastly a program where the matches are imposed from above is "likely to be expensive, time-consuming, and out of sync with your company's other, more self-directed training efforts".

According to the Quartermaster Warrant Officer Mentorship Program (<http://www.quartermaster.army.mil>) differences in styles between the mentor and mentee can pose obstacles. Both of you need to understand each other's styles. Be flexible, but remember that disorganization and sloppiness warrant improvement rather than acceptance."

2.7 Stumbling blocks of mentoring

Mentoring is seen as a system with dynamics relying on the context in which they are operating. It is not possible to make a general comment on why mentoring fails and if mentoring will be a success if those issues are solved. It is therefore important to understand that mentoring fails due to various reasons and combinations of reasons. The following items, which will be discussed under this section, will only look at the common high level causes for mentoring to fail.

Watt (2004) states the following about what produces a positive mentoring relationship: "Clarity on what we will accomplish, our commitment, how we go about it, and how we will relate to one another, emerge as clear indicators of a satisfying mentoring relationship. Planning and management of the relationship is critical. A commitment of time, having a game plan/goal and rules of engagement as well as listening, being open-minded and patient seems to be central ingredients for any mentoring relationship, not just a reverse relationship."

Watt (2004) continues by saying that for mentoring programs to be successful within dynamic contexts, there are several factors that organisations will need to pay attention to. First and foremost is the need to assess the situation and determine if mentoring is the most effective course of action. Generally, mentoring is an effective learning solution where there

are specific tasks to be mastered or skill-sets which employees need to develop to cope with a changing situation.

Meyer and Fourie (2004:56) and Watt (2004) support the concept that the driving force of mentoring is the relationship between two people involved in a learning process. Mutual trust, respect and open communication form the foundation for the relationship. The underlying effectiveness of the learning process comes from the dynamics and the quality of this relationship.

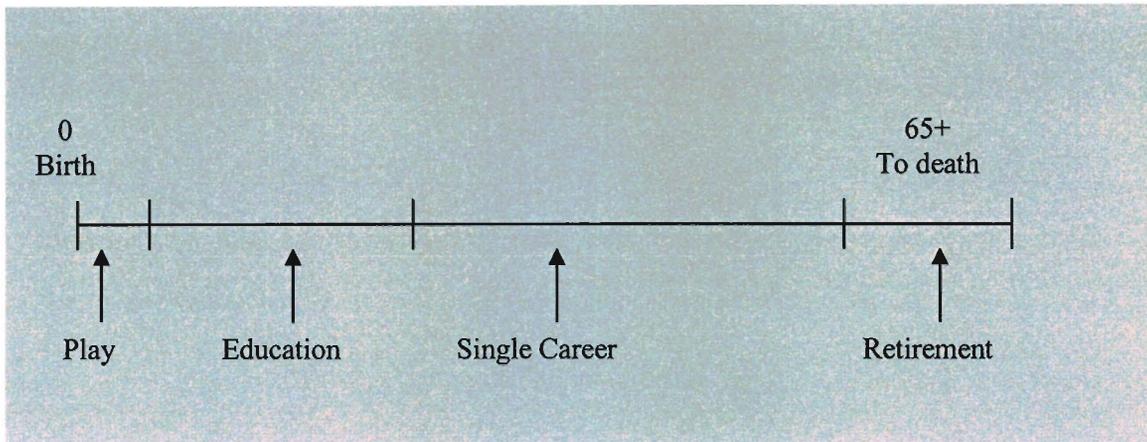
If the mentor and mentee are not willing to enhance the skills required by the mentoring program it will never be a success.

2.8 The future of mentoring

Mentees should focus on career development. This includes learning the intricacies of how the organisation works. Obtaining mentors is becoming more challenging seeing as many employees are not sure they want to find the time to serve as mentors. There are some important reasons for investing time toward helping a mentee. The mentor will be learning, he/she may get some extra work done, he/she will review and validate what he knows and has accomplished and will not stagnate with regard to his/her work (Meyer and Fourie, 2004:12).

Shea (1999:41) described the linear life-plan in figure 8 as the one most people have experienced in the past.

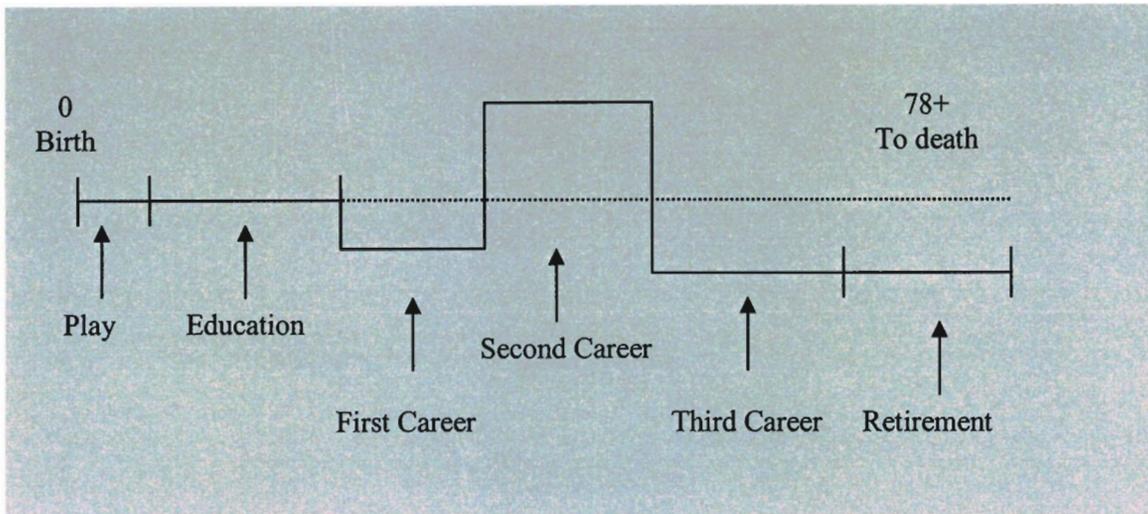
Figure 8: Linear Life-Plan Model (Shea:1999:41).



In an increasing number of organisations, the linear life-plan is no longer relevant to reality. Since health care has improved greatly, people are living longer and due to the fact that they often enjoy the work they are doing, many people are working for a longer period of time. Shea (1999:41) says that consultants suggest that in the future a person may look forward to two, three, or even four careers in a lifetime considering the volatility of today's workplace.

A flexible life-plan is the trend of the future and the mentor, mentee and organisation will have to adapt to this trend as indicated in figure 9.

Figure 9: Flexible Life-Plan Model (Shea:1999:41).



Rintels (2005:6) observed that the skill set sought nowadays tends to be in the rapidly changing areas of computers, technology and other creations of the new economy. The result is that many younger, 'tech-savvy' employees are now placed in the mentoring driver's seat in order to show older employees how to navigate this new 'world'. The bottom line is that you cannot get 'there' if you're not sure where 'there' is, if you do not have a map and do not agree on which route to take.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

There are two parts to this research study making use of a multi-methodological approach. Gill and Johnson (2002:169) termed it as ‘methodological pluralism’ where different kinds of complementary data about a ‘problem’ may be acquired by using different research techniques in the same empirical study. Creswell (2003:53) used the term ‘Mixed Methods approaches’ where both qualitative and quantitative approaches are used.

3.1.1 Qualitative

The qualitative part is a case study that is action researched based due to the fact that this problem is current, involves people and emotions. McNiff (2000:59) says that action research regards practice as a creative, adaptive process of responding in a thoughtful way to personal-social situations. Stake (2000:435) cited in Parton (2002:447) says: “Case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied... We could study it analytically or holistically, entirely by repeated measures or hermeneutically, organically or culturally, by mixed methods – but we concentrate, at least for the time being, on the case.”

Felkins et al (1993:60) lists four theories about organisational change. Each represents an ‘ideal type’ and provides a particular structure for interpreting and managing change. All of these perspectives are interrelated and I therefore feel that ‘Behavioural’ and ‘Systems’ perspectives in this study are especially appropriate in this context.

This research tested my assumption that a mentor within a project management context would assist the inexperienced staff to shorten the learning time and improve the quality of their work.

3.1.2 Quantitative

The quantitative part of the study was a questionnaire used as an instrument for data gathering. The questionnaire was aimed at testing the perceived mentoring skills within the Eskom Enterprises Division. Ghauri and Gronhaug (2002:95) say that “descriptive surveys are concerned with particular characteristics of a specific population of subjects”. They continue to say that “a review of earlier research and literature is important to determine what kind of questions are to be included in the questionnaire”. I therefore used the questionnaires from Meyer and Fourie (2004:51, 67 and 77) as they are representative of the literature review done in chapter 2 of this study.

3.2 Change Management Theory

To implement a mentoring program means changing the way things were done before. For this reason I felt that it was important to look at change management.

Simply defined, change means to make things different (Robbins, 1989:527). Too much change leads to chaos and too little change leads to stagnation (Nelson and Quick, 1997:15). There are two basic forms of change in organisations namely, planned and unplanned change (Nel et al, 2001:400). Planned change occurs from a deliberate decision to change the organisation. The organisation constructs an approach to alter the structure or function of the organisation. Change may result from an emergence from planned change or from imposed conditions. These unplanned changes can be caused by government regulations, economic conditions and environmental changes.

The scope of change can be broken down into three main scopes namely; incremental, strategic and transformational. Incremental change involves small changes for minor improvements. Strategic change occurs on a larger scale. In strategic change the organisation moves from an old state to a known new state within a controlled period of time (Nelson and Quick, 1997:544). Transformational change refers to the most massive scope of change. In this form of change the organisation’s mission, culture, goals, structure and leadership can change dramatically (Jick cited in Nelson and Quick, 1997:544).

Many methods can be used for setting change in motion, whether it is incremental, strategic or transformational change. Robbins and Finley (1998:6) mention some of the initiatives a certain company followed to bring about change. Some of these were: Quality circles, Total quality Management (TQM), Re-engineering, Mission-and-vision, Delaying, Learning organisation, Teams, Customer satisfaction and Empowerment. All of these change methods can be used to bring positive change to an organisation. In the abovementioned case, however, all these initiatives caused staff to become frustrated and the company was eventually sold to a competitor at a loss. Too many changes and no stability can also prove to be detrimental to an organisation.

Felkins et al (1993:60) lists four theories about organisational change. Each represents an 'ideal type' and provides a particular structure for interpreting and managing change. All of these perspectives are interrelated.

Perspective 1: Rational / Behavioural

Change is causal and predictable and can be rationally understood and controlled through: objective data, analysis of relationships between independent and dependent variables and expert knowledge.

Perspective 2: Systems

Change is a holistic, homeostatic process that involves many interdependent components, cyclical patterns, and multiple conceptual relationships.

Perspective 3: Cultural / Interpretive

Change is socially constructed and interpreted through cultural practices, human interaction and collaborative inquiry.

Perspective 4: Critical humanism

Change is action-oriented, dialectic and based on economic and historical analysis; knowledge and awareness increases self-determination.

“How we do things around here”, is the common definition of culture. The value of an organisational culture lies in the extent to which it supports the organisation’s objectives

(Whitfield, 2000:24). There is pressure for cultural change, either when the existing culture does not produce the most effective response, or when the organisation's objectives change.

If change is against the values and culture of an organisation, the change will be very small.

Change has to be managed because people generally fear and resist change. According to Nel et al (2001:401) people perceive change as a threat to their self-interest. This negative reaction occurs when people feel that their personal freedom is being threatened. Nelson and Quick (1997:546) say that people resist change for the following reasons; fear of the unknown, fear of loss, fear of failure, fear of disruption of relationships, fear of conflict and fear of loss of power of influence.

Three key strategies for managing resistance to change are; communication, participation, empathy and support (Cummings and Huse cited in Nelson and Quick, 1997:547).

3.3 Case Study Initiative

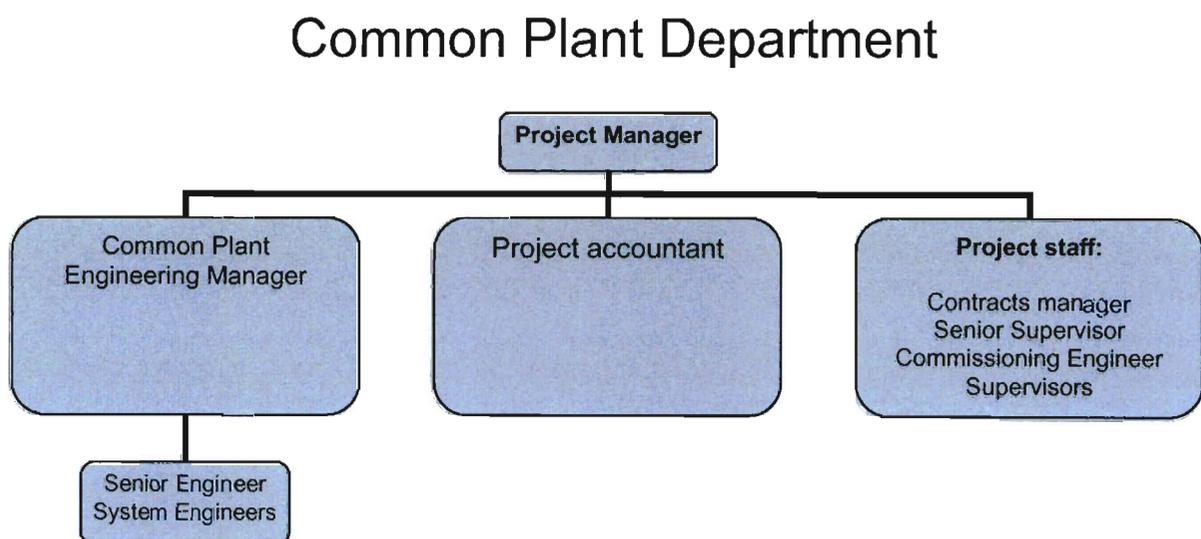
As seen in chapter two a mentor is described as a wise and trusted counsellor, one who helps others to develop. This initiative is mainly designed to test the effectiveness of accelerating the development of young and new employees in the Enterprises Division of Eskom who need to learn how to perform their duties successfully.

3.3.1 Context wherein the initiative took place

The role players in this initiative were mostly from the Common Plant department of Camden's Capital Expansion Division. A Project and Engineering manager heads this department. Reporting to the Project manager are Project supervisors, Commissioning engineers, Contract managers and Senior supervisors. The System engineers report to the Engineering manager who reports to the Project manager (Refer to figure 10).

These employees have relationships and communicate with other individuals and departments. At a high level there are other Engineering, Project, Commissioning, Finance and Planning departments, Generation division staff and Contractors.

Figure 10: Common Plant Department structure



No senior supervisor had been appointed. This position was created to enable me to employ an experienced person. Interviews were held with candidates and a candidate with more than five years of project experience was chosen. This employee's main duties were to ensure that other less experienced supervisors perform their duties correctly, as well as assisting with the mentoring and coaching of supervisors. The senior supervisor ensured that all supervisors implemented the correct contract strategies according to the New Engineering Contracts options and conditions.

The initiative outcome improved the knowledge and skills of the inexperienced Project supervisors and instructed them on how to be successful project supervisors.

When I was assigned to the Project department I realised that most of the supervisors were unsure about what their duties entailed and how they were supposed to perform these duties. I undertook data collection by conducting conversations with each of the supervisors. Most of them were unable to answer basic questions on contract management. When I enquired as to how much money had been spent and what amount was still to be spent on their contracts most were unable to provide an answer. A supervisor working on a project should be able to answer these questions easily, seeing as this knowledge is basic and essential. Another indication of the requirement to perform an intervention was the bad condition of the contract files and the poor standard of the financial documents. Some supervisors were not even aware of the fact that they had to update a contract file.

In most cases the supervisors had been employed for longer than a year. Due to time and resource constraints no mentoring was done with inexperienced staff. This led to further restrictions on time seeing as these employees had been struggling to get their work done. They had been expected to deliver certain outputs, some of which they were not even aware due to being uninformed regarding what was expected of them.

According to the American Society for Training and Development, an investment in training and development increases productivity by an average of 17%, reduces employee turnover and makes companies more profitable (Cronjé et al, 2004:211). Spending money on one person to increase ten people's performance would still be beneficial to the company.

Holistically speaking, there are many influences that are the cause of so many inexperienced project supervisors being employed. The current economic growth of South Africa and Eskom's employment policies which provide preference to previously disadvantaged people are examples of these influences.

3.3.2 Methodology

Organisational development requires that an organisation make an investment that will enhance the net-worth of the organisation in the future (Nel et al, 2001:539).

This organisational development plan is based on the assumption that one experienced person will be able to alter the performance of ten inexperienced people through mentoring.

Interviews were conducted with candidates and a person with at least five years of project experience was chosen for the Senior Supervisor position. A meeting was then held with all staff explaining how the new relationships in the department would function.

By being open regarding relationships and the method of working a learning culture was created and trust fostered within the department. In the opening meeting future planning and progress meetings were planned. In the meetings which were held every individual involved had an opportunity to state his/her views and learn from the experiences and ideas of others. This ensured that all participants remained informed and improved commitment to the initiative.

Targets were set with regard to some of the formal and informal training that was required. These included training in processes which are used by the project team, safety requirements, financial planning and monitoring, contract compilation and execution and quality management. Upon successful completion of a formal course or satisfactory progress in informal training a social event was organised as a reward.

After monitoring the progress of the organisational development initiative certain changes were necessary. Once the initiative was successful I ensured that the department was placed in the spotlight by sharing the results with other departments so that they could learn from

what we implemented. This gave the department recognition for efforts made and motivated them to continue with more initiatives.

In most practices and according to most articles mentoring has been used solely, as a tool for selecting a handful of “high flyers” and developing them as future leaders. In my opinion mentoring should be undertaken in many more situations. When a company does not mentor inexperienced staff so that most of the people in the company cannot perform to their full potential it can be detrimental to the success of the company.

3.3.3 Timing of the initiative

The initiative began at the end of June 2005. The Senior supervisor was appointed by the end of July 2005. Informal communication with the staff in the department regarding the initiative took place so as to inform them that the initiative would begin soon. This was to prepare them for the change and to encourage them to begin considering the contributions they would like to make. The opening meeting for the initiative was organised once the appointment of the Senior supervisor was finalised.

During the inaugural meeting a more detailed program was discussed and agreed upon. The high priority items were financial and program awareness and the quality of documentation. These items were discussed at the opening meeting and new ways of handling them found. Implementation occurred in mid July and assessment of the new way of working by the end of July. If anything needed to be revised it was discussed with and agreed upon by all the staff members and then implemented.

This initiative, as with any organisational development program, was only the start of new things to follow. Follow-up initiatives were required to improve current and new systems installed.

3.3.4 Evaluation of initiative

I observed whether the supervisors' documentation conformed to the standards required by the New Engineering Contract conditions and Camden Power Station Quality procedure. The improvement in documentation was used to evaluate the success of the initiative and to test my assumption that one mentor can improve the quality of work of other inexperienced staff. Another good indication was the emotional atmosphere in the office. As improvements took place employees' became more positive towards their work.

3.3.5 Initiative execution

This initiative started off with interviews for the Senior supervisor position. One internal candidate was selected and an offer made. He had more than ten years experience in the Project supervision and management environment. In the beginning the human resources consultant and other managers were concerned as to whether he had the correct personality to be a mentor. The main concern they had was his short temper and almost militaristic style of working with people. In the weekly department meeting the other employees were informed of the person's new responsibilities and the changes that would be initiated. The new relationship was explained and everyone was given the opportunity to pose questions and raise their concerns.

It was decided that the Senior supervisor should check all outgoing documents and reports for quality and correctness. He would indicate to each person who submitted a report what was incorrect and why it was incorrect. This was initially difficult for other supervisors to accept due to the huge amount of mistakes that were found in their documents. Instead of correcting these mistakes the Senior supervisor simply indicated where mistakes were made and showed them how to correct it. This frustrated employees and initially led to an uncomfortable office climate.

After two weeks the supervisors had learnt the correct way to complete reports and documents and the number of mistakes declined. Due to the improved quality of reports presentations at various committees were no longer as cumbersome as before.

The senior supervisor discovered that new employees did not have the basic theoretical knowledge they needed to supervise a contract successfully. Two courses were scheduled for new employees namely, the Plant Safety Regulations and an introduction to the New Engineering Contracts. Most of the staff returned from these courses with a lot more enthusiasm, claiming that it was the first time that they knew what was expected from them.

It was difficult to set targets in the beginning due to the huge gap in theoretical knowledge on contract management. New staff did not know the conditions and terminology of the New Engineering Contracts which is the basis on which Eskom contracts with all contractors at Camden Power Station. Training was done on an “as soon as possible” basis and the 'hands-on' training and mentoring could in fact only start taking place later. A weekly practical training and case study session started from the middle of August to enhance the learning of supervisors.

On the financial development front a new spreadsheet with all the key indicators was created and would now be updated on a monthly basis. The creation of the spreadsheet formed a learning environment for new employees. For supervisors to be able provide the required input for the spreadsheet, they had to understand financial concepts and terms. This implementation proved to be a good learning curve for them.

Other departments were informed of the new financial spreadsheets and wished to implement these for themselves. This indicated that the initiative produced something that would add to the success of the entire project. A motivational boost was created for our department seeing as we were the responsible for initiating the process.

3.3.6 Observations during initiative execution

During the mentoring initiative numerous changes were implemented within the department. It started with the implementation of the senior supervisor. There was initially a concern as to whether he had the right personality to be a mentor. In the weekly department meeting employees were informed of this person’s new responsibilities and of the changes that would

be initiated. The new relationship was explained and everyone was given the opportunity to ask questions and raise their concerns.

Prior to the mentoring initiative each person was responsible for ensuring that the documents and reports were of good quality. After a discussion with all the staff everyone agreed that it would be better if the senior supervisor would assess all outgoing documents and reports for quality and correctness. This was initially difficult for other supervisors due to the amount of mistakes that were found in their documents. The senior supervisor was asked to be sensitive to cultural differences when working with newly appointed female employees. Older white male employees were most resistant to the change because they did not like corrections that were made to their documents and the advice given to them. This frustrated some employees and the atmosphere became unpleasant, instead of improving.

After two weeks the supervisors learnt the correct way to complete reports and documents and the number of mistakes decreased significantly. Due to the improved quality of reports, presentations to committees were made more thoroughly and approvals were obtained more often at the first attempt.

3.3.7 Conclusion

From the observations made it can be seen that the organisational development initiative was reasonably successful. A tight project schedule made it difficult, however, to find time for development. The employee who was chosen as a mentor was initially perceived as being 'hard' on younger employees. This perception changed as time passed. It was an eye-opener to me as a manager to observe how uninformed the supervisors actually were with regards to how their duties should be completed.

Numerous causal effects were experienced during this change. In this instance the causal effects supplemented the initiative as other deficiencies were exposed. It is very important to view the system holistically so as to prevent too much unexpected emergence. Due to numerous cultural differences in the South African workforce, dialectic discussions will be extremely important for any change to be successful.

This initiative has served to reinforce my belief that managers and leaders in today's working environment should not only mentor employees that are seen as 'high flyers', but all staff that are employed in new positions, so that all employees may be able to perform to their maximum potential and ability.

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3.4 Organisation and Personal Skills Questionnaire

The questionnaires from Meyer and Fourie (2004:51, 67 and 77) were used for this study. The questionnaires focus on the perception of the staff regarding the current status of mentoring skills in the Eskom Enterprises Division. These questions are representative of the literature review done in chapter 2 of this study and assist in the clarification of the area (mentor, mentee or organisation) that requires the most development.

3.4.1 Context wherein the questionnaire was used

The role players in this initiative were from the Capital Expansion group inside the Eskom Enterprises Division. This questionnaire was sent to experienced employees (more than five years experience) who were knowledgeable regarding mentoring and to employees who had recently begun their careers (less than five years experience). No distinction was made between employees of different levels within the organisation. Each person completed the same questionnaire.

3.4.2 Methodology

Questionnaires from Meyer and Fourie (2004:51, 67 and 77) were used. Based on the literature review done in this study a mentor, mentee and the organisation should have basic competence in these skills (talents). These questionnaires focus on those skills. Three questionnaires were sent out to people with different levels of experience in the organisation to gauge the status of mentoring in the Eskom Enterprises Division.

In my experience, especially with new staff, I have found that employees might feel intimidated about expressing their feelings in a 'one-on-one' meeting. This can result in incorrect research results. For this reason and as a result of the extended distance between the different working areas of the Eskom Enterprises Division, questionnaires were e-mailed to employees.

3.4.3 Evaluation of questionnaire

3.4.3.1 Introduction

It was assumed that this sample was representative of the Capital Expansion Department. For this study, experienced staff were categorised as employees with more than five years experience. Most of the new employee questionnaires were completed by employees with less than two years working experience. The experienced employees mostly had more than ten years experience.

3.4.3.2 Information gathered by questionnaire

For the mentor questionnaire the scores indicated the following:

A score of 0-69: You are not ready to be a mentor.

A score of 70-109: You need major development.

A score of 110-149: You have good potential to become a mentor.

A score of 150-180: You should be an excellent mentor.

For the mentee questionnaire the scores indicated the following:

A score of 0-69: You are not ready to be a mentee.

A score of 70-109: You need major development.

A score of 110-149: You have good potential to become a mentee.

A score of 150-180: You should be an excellent mentee.

For the organisational culture questionnaire the scores indicated the following:

A score of 0-69: Your organisation is far from ready for mentoring.

A score of 70-109: Your organisation is not yet ready for mentoring.

A score of 110-149: Your organisation shows signs of readiness.

A score of 150-180: Your organisation is totally ready for mentoring.

The questions were broken down to address the different skills (talents) required by mentors, mentees and organisations. These grouped questions were evaluated to compare differences between responses of new employees and experienced employees. The same questionnaires

were used to evaluate the differences between the perceptions of women and men within Eskom Enterprises.

3.4.4 Expected results

I expected new employees as well as experienced employees to view themselves as good mentees. Most people are used to being mentored from a young age by a parental figure. It was expected that new employees would probably not consider themselves to be good mentors, due to their lack of experience, whereas experienced employees should perceive themselves as good mentors. I expected new employees to rate Eskom as an organisation in the middle order with regards to mentoring and the experienced staff to rate Eskom as reasonably high due to Eskom's good training and development programmes.

When comparing men and women I expected to find that men and woman see themselves equally as good mentors and mentees. This is based on my assumption that both men and women have the necessary skills to mentor successfully and be mentored. When comparing men's and women's views on the organisation I expected women to feel that the organisation is good at mentoring. This would be as a result of all the enhancement programs in place to develop women within Eskom. Men were expected to rate Eskom fairly well with regard to mentoring.

3.4.5 Results evaluation

The response rate from employees to whom the questionnaires were sent was 54%. Forty-five questionnaires were sent out to different levels of employees. Of the twenty-four received only twelve were completed correctly. There were a number of respondents who felt that they were not able to supply a score on certain questions and therefore did not score those questions. Three employees only completed the mentee questionnaire and did not feel competent enough to complete the organisation and mentor questionnaires. On future questionnaires an option similar to "no opinion" can be used to reduce the number of non-completed questions.

The large number of incomplete questionnaires indicated to me that the mentoring system in Eskom Enterprises division was not at the standard that it should be. People were not sure where they stood in relation to the mentoring system. This was probably due to a lack of understanding of what mentoring is and could be improved through basic mentoring training.

When evaluating the fully completed questionnaires, I was amazed by the similarities between scores received from new and experienced employees. This indicated to me that employees who have been employed by Eskom for a long period of time (more than five years) perceived mentoring in the same way as new employees and that their mentoring skills did not improve over the years.

Lull (1983:<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2548>), says "Hermeneutics," as a field of study, concerns *theories* of interpretation, the process of understanding, and meaning. Occasionally, as in structuralism, distinctively new *methods* are developed from a particular hermeneutical perspective. As a rule, however, *existing* tools of exegesis are used from different hermeneutical perspectives." The design of the questionnaires was initially to determine a single person's level of skills in mentoring. In this study I used the individuals' scores to compare the new and experienced staff with each other. Therefore a hermeneutical (art of interpretation) (Readers Digest: 1984:789) approach was followed to increase usability and validity whilst interpreting the results from questionnaires. All the comments made to the responses received from the questionnaires are based on my own perception. Different comparisons are shown in this study and will be discussed under each section.

3.4.6 Skills of mentees

Questions used on the mentee questionnaire that I felt were appropriate to specific skills were grouped together. These were the results for each of these skills:

3.4.6.1 Learning

I can learn a lot from people in management positions.

New staff score: 4.8 Experienced staff score: 5

I see obstacles as learning opportunities.

New staff score: 5.3 Experienced staff score: 4.8

When I make a mistake, I concentrate actively on correcting it next time.

New staff score: 5.5 Experienced staff score: 5.2

The average score for new employees was 5.2 and for experienced staff 5.0.

From the lower scores of new employees on the first questions it could be deduced that they were not as open to learning from others as more experienced employees. Another conclusion was that younger employees believed that their managers were not competent and that they could therefore not learn a lot from them. New employees saw themselves as being better skilled when compared to experienced employees who had learnt from their own mistakes and undertaken many challenges.

3.4.6.2 Researching

I make checklists of the things I have to do.

New staff score: 5.2 Experienced staff score: 4.7

This questionnaire failed to provide sufficient related questions to measure this specific skill or competency adequately. From the scores it was deduced that new staff were better at

using this skill. This indicated that new employees still required a structured way of noting what duties had to be performed where experienced staff did not need to write everything down. Most people in the technical project environment possess the skill of researcher. These people are usually referred to as “techno junkies” due to their inquisitive minds and their need to be aware of the latest developments.

3.4.6.3 Self-developing

I am very committed to making a success of my career.

New staff score: 5.8 Experienced staff score: 5.7

I am aware of my weaknesses and shortcomings.

New staff score: 5.7 Experienced staff score: 4.8

Every person is responsible for his/her own development and is required to set his/her own goals. From the high scores in this section one can relate that most of the employees in the project environment had a high degree of self-development awareness. All new staff gave themselves very high scores indicating their awareness of their need for further development.

I was surprised by the low scoring that experienced staff gave themselves on their awareness of their weaknesses. This might be due to the fact that experienced staff members are not aware of what they do not know. It may also be that experienced staff only gave this issue thought during the completion of this questionnaire whilst new staff members were constantly aware of their weaknesses as 'juniors' in the department.

3.4.6.4 Communicating

I communicate very clearly.

New staff score: 5.0 Experienced staff score: 4.8

I have good relationships with people in other departments.

New staff score: 5.3 Experienced staff score: 5.0

I am responsible for maintaining a good relationship with my manager.

New staff score: 5.0 Experienced staff score: 4.8

I have well-developed listening skills.

New staff score: 5.3 Experienced staff score: 4.7

The average score for the new employees was 5.2 and for the experienced staff 4.8.

Good communication is probably the most important skill for a mentee. Without communication of some sort there is no transfer of knowledge. This was probably the one area whereupon all employees could improve. The scores indicated that employees were aware of the opportunity for improving their communication skills. I felt that this was the reason why experienced staff scored lower than new staff.

3.4.6.5 Implementing

I always meet deadlines.

New staff score: 4.5 Experienced staff score: 4.5

I like to make things happen.

New staff score: 5.7 Experienced staff score: 5.3

People would like to think that they mostly complete tasks on time. This could be seen from the high scores for, "I like to make things happen". I feel that in reality this is not really what happens. The low scores of, "I always meet deadlines", indicated that all employees felt the same about meeting deadlines. This could have been an indication that staff felt that they were over-committed at work and therefore could not meet deadlines. On the other hand it could have been an indication of the culture within the organisation where meeting deadlines was not considered to be important. If so, something needed to be done to change the culture.

3.4.6.6 Networking

I like to build networks with people in different departments.

New staff score: 5.3 Experienced staff score: 5.2

I like to work in teams to achieve objectives.

New staff score: 4.7 Experienced staff score: 4.5

Both the new and experienced staff indicated that they needed to improve their networking skills. The fact that both groups gave low scores for teamwork was another indication of communication that needed to improve.

I believe that the lack of networking skills is one of the reasons why successful learning is not taking place in Eskom. Eskom is a large organisation and if networking is not successful we will not learn from our own mistakes.

3.4.6.7 Problem solving

I am very creative and innovative in my work.

New staff score: 5.2 Experienced staff score: 5.3

I can solve problems on my own, without the help of my manager.

New staff score: 4.7 Experienced staff score: 4.3

The scores for solving problems on their own were surprisingly low as most of the people were in a technical field and were continuously busy solving technical and managerial problems. This could have been due to the relatively high uncertainty as a result of the project of refurbishing an old power station. This type of project had not been attempted anywhere else in the world before. Linked to this was the problem of finding staff with experience in the Power Generation environment. This added to the uncertainty experienced by staff during problem solving.

The high scores on creativity were a good indication of the high engineering standard within Eskom. There are a large number of new staff members within Eskom who contribute to new ideas and ways of working.

3.4.7 Skills evaluation of mentors

3.4.7.1 Parenting

I am comfortable in expressing my feelings to other people.

New staff score: 4.8 Experienced staff score: 4.8

I believe that leaders should be more concerned about employees.

New staff score: 5.7 Experienced staff score: 5.3

The scores indicated that people were not very comfortable expressing their feelings. This is probably due to the South African culture wherein the workforce wants to be perceived as tough and strong. It is difficult to open yourself up in a competitive working environment where what you say can sometimes be used to negatively influence your career.

Both new and experienced staff indicated their belief that leaders should focus more on employees and their well-being.

3.4.7.2 Reviewing and advising

I try to define problems in several different ways.

New staff score: 4.7 Experienced staff score: 5.0

I try to apply both logic and intuition to problems.

New staff score: 5.0 Experienced staff score: 4.8

The scores for this section were reasonably low. This was possibly due to the lack of experience in what was expected of the employee. It would be difficult for a mentor to

advise someone if they did not feel comfortable resolving problems in their own work environment.

3.4.7.3 Encouraging and Developing

I openly show my excitement when other people succeed.

New staff score: 5.2 Experienced staff score: 5.2

I strive to generate multiple creative solutions to problems.

New staff score: 4.7 Experienced staff score: 5.0

With the high score on showing their excitement when other people succeed the staff indicated their compassion for other people. This is a skill that is essential for mentors to be successful in mentoring. A low score on the creative problem solving skill is linked to lack of experience.

3.4.7.4 Role model

People often come to me with their problems.

New staff score: 4.2 Experienced staff score: 4.8

Most people see me as an optimist.

New staff score: 4.8 Experienced staff score: 4.7

The new staff saw themselves as being approached less than experienced staff. This is an indication that experienced staff felt that they were seen as role models and that people therefore approach them more for advice. Both new and experienced staff saw themselves as optimists. For Eskom this is a good sign that a positive culture exists and will probably continue to exist.

3.4.7.5 Support building

I feel comfortable in supporting a person who comes to me in tears.

New staff score: 5.5 Experienced staff score: 5.0

People at lower levels of the organisation find me very approachable.

New staff score: 5.3 Experienced staff score: 4.8

In this section I do believe that new staff scored high due to ignorance. I do not think that they had the experience required to fully understand these questions. The scores of the experienced staff were more in line with what I feel the actual values should be. The low score on lower level employees finding mentors approachable was an indication that mentoring in Eskom Enterprises was not functioning successfully.

3.4.7.6 Information source

I always give detailed feedback to people.

New staff score: 4.8 Experienced staff score: 4.7

When I provide criticism, most people regard it as constructive.

New staff score: 4.3 Experienced staff score: 5.0

People often come to me for information or advice.

New staff score: 4.0 Experienced staff score: 4.8

This is one of the lowest scored sections in the questionnaire. Again I believe that this is due to the lack of skills within Eskom. The low score on people asking for advice, once again indicated the poor communication and networking taking place, both of which are the cornerstones of a mentoring program.

3.4.7.7 Communicating

I have good relationships with people in other departments.

New staff score: 5.2 Experienced staff score: 5.0

I am a very good listener.

New staff score: 5.3 Experienced staff score: 4.3

I communicate very clearly.

New staff score: 4.8 Experienced staff score: 4.3

The experienced staff gave themselves very low scores in this section. It is not a good indication for a successful mentoring environment, when the people who should perform the mentoring feel that they are not good communicators. The scores of the new staff were marginally better and I feel that this was again due to the fact that they did not relate to the questions properly.

3.4.7.8 Storytelling

I define problems before solving them, thus avoiding imposing my predetermined solutions.

New staff score: 4.3 Experienced staff score: 4.5

There were no questions in this questionnaire that really gave a good indication of the skills related to storytelling. The one question I used here looks at how people sum up a problem before taking action. It is interesting to see that both the new and experienced staff did not see themselves as taking time to understand a problem before acting. Storytelling uses past experience and communication to avoid making the same mistakes or to improve upon past experiences. The low score here indicated that there are opportunities to improve the process of problem-solving and that storytelling can possibly assist this process.

3.4.7.9 Teaching and coaching

I often offer my help to people who need me.

New staff score: 5.2 Experienced staff score: 5.3

I like to coach other people in how to do things.

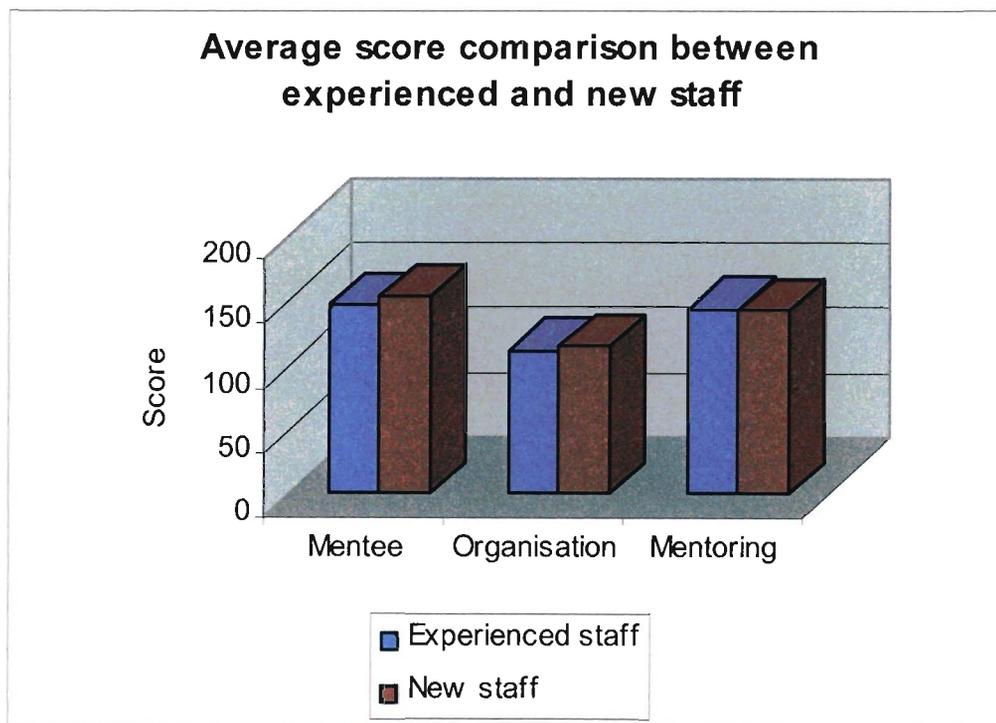
New staff score: 5.5 Experienced staff score: 4.8

The scores for this section were reasonably high. This was a good indication of the willingness of people to assist less experienced staff. One concern was the lower scoring of experienced staff on their willingness to coach other employees. I feel that available time was the biggest factor for this reluctance shown by experienced staff. It could also be that they felt that they are not compensated for extra work. A common problem in larger organisations is the competition between employees for promotions. Experienced staff members are therefore reluctant to train and mentor new staff because they may become competition for them at a later stage in their careers.

3.4.8 Summary of findings

When looking at the overall scores of the questionnaire it is interesting to see how similar the scores were which were given by new and experienced staff on all three evaluated areas. This may be due to the strong culture that exists within Eskom. Employees are very rapidly encultured into the methods of dealing with business in Eskom, including good and bad methods.

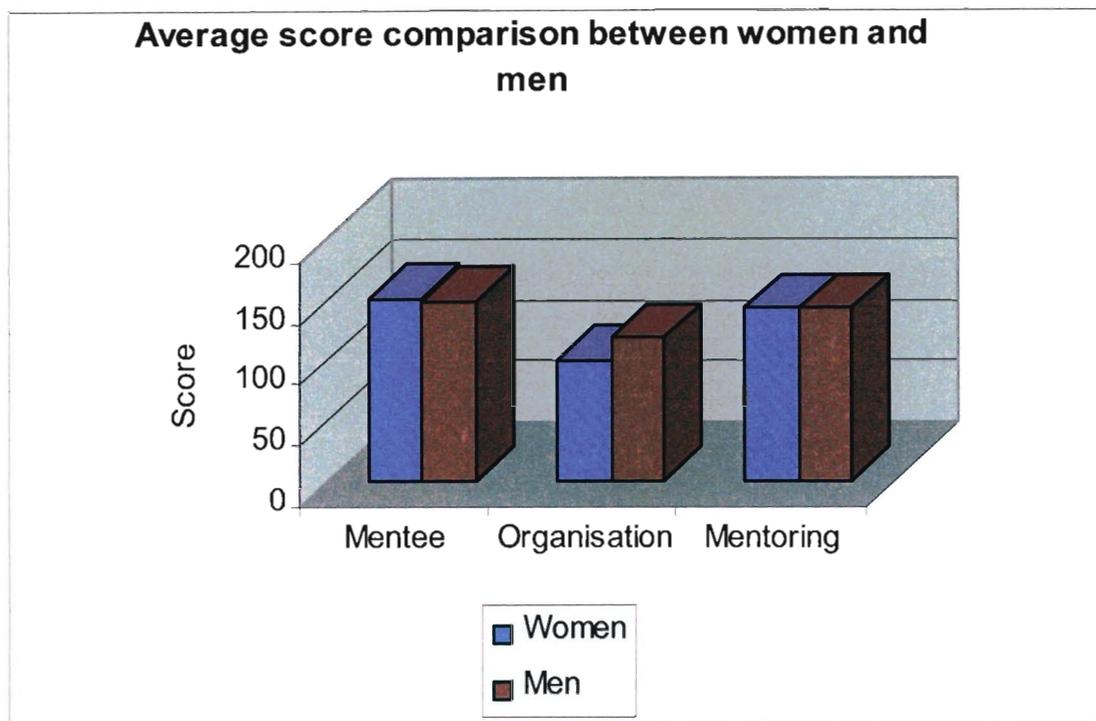
Figure 11: Average score comparison between experienced and new staff



Communication featured as one of the weak skills related to mentoring together with other available skills. Both new and experienced staff saw Eskom as needing to improve their mentoring skills and roles.

The women in particular did not experience Eskom as an organisation which is mentoring 'friendly'. On a positive note it was apparent that staff members are willing and optimistic about mentoring.

Figure 12: Average score comparison between women and men



It was interesting to note that new staff gave consistently higher scores than experienced staff. The trend was inverted when looking at the minimum score per question. The experienced staff members were much more consistent in their scores. I attribute this to the maturity of these employees and the improved balance of skills that experienced staff members have developed during their careers.

Figure 13: Comparison between experienced and new staff for maximum score per question

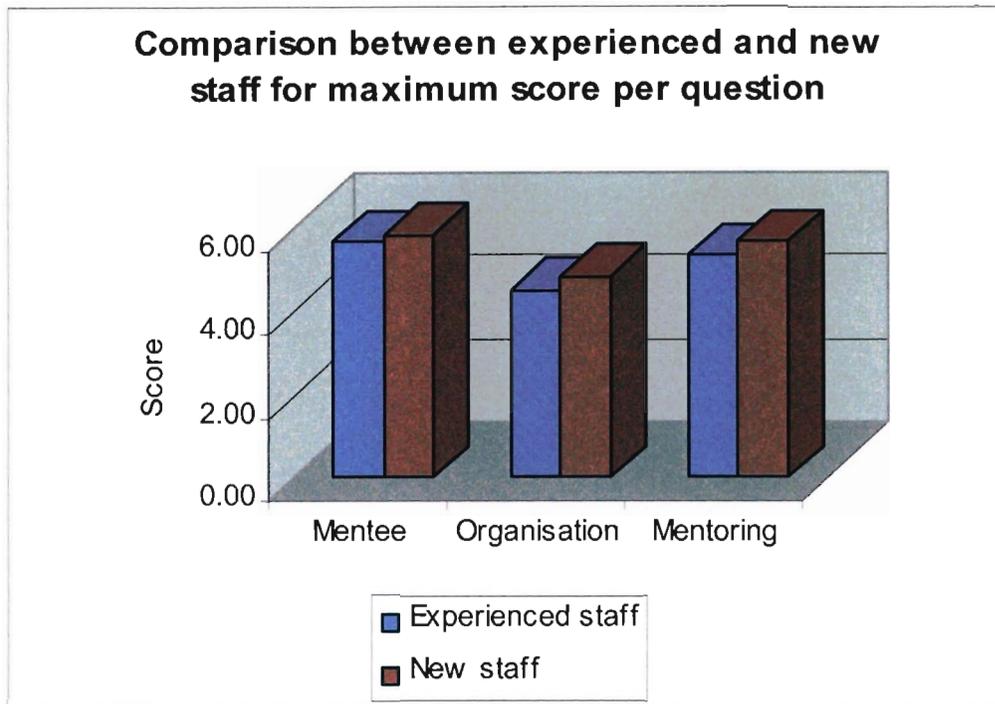
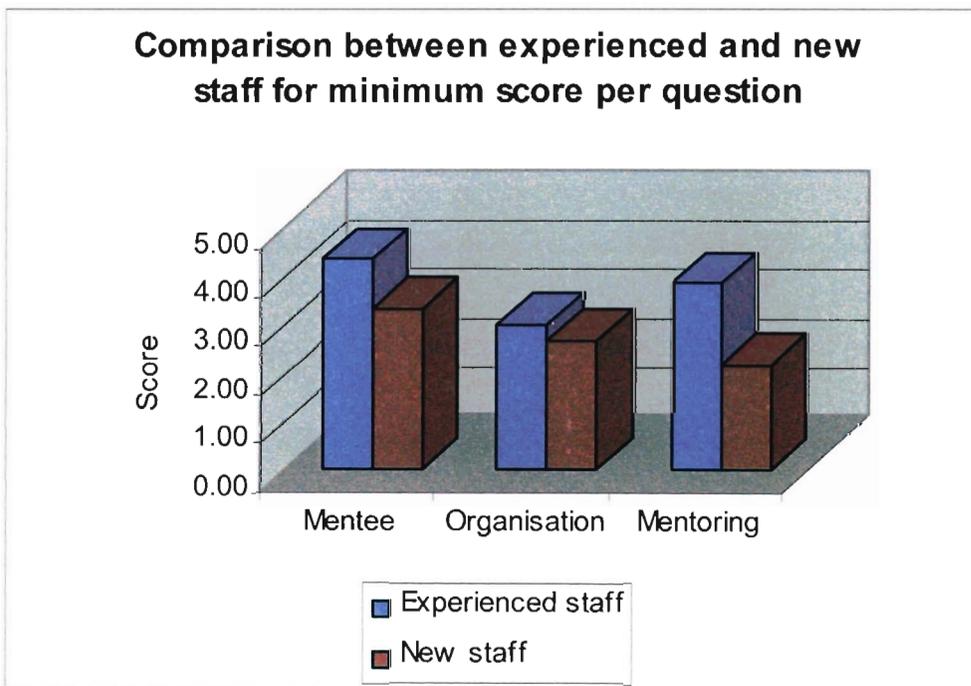


Figure 14: Comparison between experienced and new staff for minimum score per question

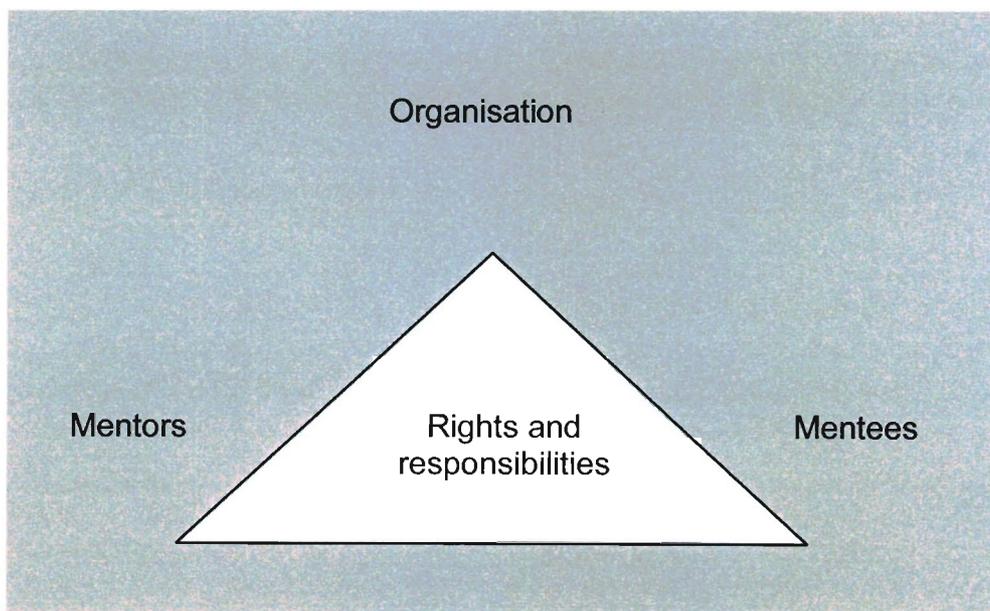


4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Figure 5 indicates the balanced rights and responsibilities of the parties in the mentoring relationship. If one of the parties is not living up to their responsibilities properly, the mentoring process will probably not be successful.

This study suggests that a reasonably good balance in mentoring skills exists in Eskom Enterprises. The organisation needs to improve their mentoring program in order to get a perfect balance where all three role-players can continuously grow and improve together. The recommendations made below will assist the organisation to achieve this balance. The current status is visually presented in figure 15.

Figure 15: Balanced Skills in the Enterprises Division mentoring relationship



- It is recommended that staff participating in a formal mentoring relationship be measured and rewarded for successes. The measurements and rewards can be done by incorporating the individuals' mentoring output on the persons' six-monthly performance appraisal. This will build commitment for mentoring programs and it will advertise mentoring as a successful tool to enhance a career.

- Mentors and mentees must be allowed to have weekly interaction during normal working hours or they must be compensated when meetings are held outside normal working hours. This will ensure that mentoring receives the appropriate time allocation to be successful.
- A further recommendation is that all new staff are assigned to a mentor when they are employed by the organisation. By implementing this strategy a culture of mentoring will be created that will enhance the productivity of new employees.
- Money must be budgeted in order to allow mentees and mentors to attend training courses. Short introductory training courses must form part of new employees' induction training programs together with safety induction and orientation.
- As indicated in figure 1 of this dissertation, the mentoring relationship must be structured to allow for a good relationship and communication by having regular meetings. There must be clear goals set between the mentor and mentee at these meetings with action plans and delivery dates. The outputs from these action plans must be measured to determine the success of the mentoring relationship.

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APPENDICES

Table 4: Mentoring talents inventory. (Meyer and Mabaso (2001) cited by Meyer and Fourie, 2004:51)

1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = slightly agree, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree		Rating
1	Most people see me as a very nice person.	
2	I am a very patient person.	
3	I am comfortable in expressing my feelings to other people.	
4	I define problems before solving them, thus avoiding imposing my predetermined solutions.	
5	I often offer my help to people who need me.	
6	I try to define problems in several different ways.	
7	I try to be flexible in the way I approach a problem, not relying on past concepts or practice.	
8	People often come to me for information or advice.	
9	I try to unfreeze my thinking by asking lots of questions about the nature of problems	
10	I try to apply both logic and intuition to problems.	
11	I openly show my excitement when other people succeed.	
12	I strive to look at problems from different perspectives so as to generate multiple definitions.	
13	I believe that leaders should be more concerned about employees.	
14	I often break the problem down into smaller components and analyse each one separately.	
15	I strive to generate multiple creative solutions to problems.	
16	I tend to stay calm in stressful situations.	
17	Most people see me as an optimist.	
18	I feel comfortable in supporting a person who comes to me in tears.	
19	When I provide criticism, most people regard it as constructive.	
20	I believe that mistakes should be avoided at all cost.	
21	People often come to me with their problems.	
22	I can be trusted to keep a secret.	
23	People are open to admitting their shortcomings to me.	
24	I always give detailed feedback to people.	
25	When I make a suggestion, people take it very seriously.	
26	I communicate very clearly.	
27	I am a very good listener.	
28	I have good relationships with people in other departments.	
29	People at lower levels of the organisation find me very approachable.	
30	I like to coach other people in how to do things.	

Table 5: Mentee potential and talents inventory. (Meyer and Mabaso (2001) cited by Meyer and Fourie, 2004:67)

1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = slightly agree, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree		Rating
1	I am comfortable in expressing my feelings to people in the higher levels of the organisation.	
2	I am very committed to make a success of my career.	
3	I feel that I should reach a high level position in this organisation.	
4	My success depends on my own ability and motivation.	
5	I am comfortable when other people criticise me.	
6	I communicate very clearly.	
7	I like to build networks with people in different departments.	
8	When I make a mistake, I concentrate actively on correcting it next time.	
9	I have well-developed listening skills.	
10	I can solve problems on my own, without the help of my manager.	
11	I can learn a lot from people in management positions.	
12	I am aware of my weaknesses and shortcomings.	
13	I make checklists of the things I have to do.	
14	Most managers respect me for my ability and competence.	
15	I like to make things happen.	
16	If a mentor can guide me, I will achieve high level of performance.	
17	I often give feedback to my manager on my progress.	
18	I see obstacles as learning opportunities.	
19	I respect people of different cultures and religions.	
20	I have a lot of potential to perform very well in my job.	
21	I have good relationships with people in other departments.	
22	I perform much better than the other people in my group.	
23	I like to work in teams to achieve objectives.	
24	I deal effectively with difficult people.	
25	I am very creative and innovative in my work.	
26	I do not mind working late to finish an important task.	
27	I always meet deadlines.	
28	I concentrate hard to do a job right the first time.	
29	I am always on time.	
30	I am responsible for maintaining a good relationship with my manager.	

Table 6: Organisation readiness for mentoring inventory. (Meyer and Mabaso (2001) cited by Meyer and Fourie, 2004:77)

1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = slightly agree, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree		Rating
1	Members in junior positions are comfortable in expressing their ideas and feelings to people in the higher levels of the organisation.	
2	The organisation actively supports the career advancement of high flyers.	
3	There is very good co-operation between various departments in the organisation.	
4	The development of people is a high priority for management.	
5	People are very comfortable when other people criticise them in the organisation.	
6	Management is willing to commit resources to mentoring.	
7	People like to build networks with people in different departments.	
8	When employees make mistakes, they fear that they will get into trouble.	
9	Most managers have well-developed listening skills.	
10	Leadership has a lot of vision to improve the organisation.	
11	People in different departments are willing to learn from one another.	
12	Managers openly admit their weaknesses and shortcomings.	
13	There are excellent role models to follow in our organisation.	
14	Most managers respect employees for their abilities and competence.	
15	The organisation openly shares information about success stories where employees have achieved very well	
16	There is a lot of feedback in this organisation.	
17	Managers have been trained to be coaches and mentors.	
18	Most managers see obstacles and problems as learning opportunities.	
19	People from different cultures and religions are respected in our organisation.	
20	New ideas, processes and systems are often resisted in our organisation.	
21	Communication is very good in the organisation.	
22	Top and senior management is committed to develop successors for their positions.	
23	Employees feel empowered to make their own decisions.	
24	Managers believe that they can learn from their subordinates.	
25	Managers recognise the performance of their staff members.	
26	Most employees aspire to be like their managers.	
27	Managers are very supportive in helping employees achieve their objectives.	
28	Most managers are very effective in our organisation.	
29	Morale is very good in our organisation.	
30	Managers are democratic and approachable.	

Table 7: Mentee potential and talents inventory summary of results

		New Staff						Experienced Staff							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F	Avg	
1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = slightly agree, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree		Avg													
1	I am comfortable in expressing my feelings to people in the higher levels of the organisation.	3.33	3	4	3	4	5	1	5	3	4	5	6	5	4.67
2	I am very committed to making a success of my career.	5.83	6	6	6	6	6	5	6	5	5	6	6	6	5.67
3	I feel that I should reach a high-level position in this organisation.	5.00	6	5	4	6	5	4	5	4	5	6	6	6	5.33
4	My success depends on my own ability and motivation.	5.83	6	6	6	6	6	5	5	4	4	6	6	5	5.00
5	I am comfortable when other people criticise me.	4.33	5	5	5	4	5	2	5	5	5	5	6	5	5.17
6	I communicate very clearly.	5.00	4	6	6	4	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	6	4.83
7	I like to build networks with people in different departments.	5.33	5	5	6	5	5	6	6	5	4	5	6	5	5.17
8	When I make a mistake, I concentrate actively on correcting it next time.	5.50	5	6	6	6	5	5	6	5	4	4	6	6	5.17
9	I have well-developed listening skills.	5.33	5	6	5	5	6	5	5	3	4	5	5	6	4.67
10	I can solve problems on my own, without the help of my manager.	4.67	5	4	4	4	5	6	5	4	4	5	5	3	4.33
11	I can learn a lot from people in management positions.	4.83	4	6	4	6	5	4	6	5	5	3	5	6	5.00
12	I am aware of my weaknesses and shortcomings.	5.67	5	6	6	6	5	6	4	4	5	5	5	6	4.83
13	I make checklists of the things I have to do.	5.17	5	6	6	5	5	4	5	2	5	5	5	6	4.67

		A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F		
14	Most managers respect me for my ability and competence.	4.83	4	5	4	6	5	5	4	4	3	5	5	6	4.50
15	I like to make things happen.	5.67	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	5	4	6	5	6	5.33
16	If a mentor can guide me, I will achieve a high level of performance.	5.83	6	6	6	6	5	6	6	6	3	1	4	6	4.33
17	I often give feedback to my manager on my progress.	4.83	5	5	4	6	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	5	4.83
18	I see obstacles as learning opportunities.	5.33	5	6	6	6	5	4	6	4	5	5	3	6	4.83
19	I respect people of different cultures and religions.	5.50	5	6	6	5	6	5	6	4	4	5	6	6	5.17
20	I have a lot of potential to perform very well in my job.	5.83	6	6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	5.50
21	I have good relationships with people in other departments.	5.33	5	4	6	6	5	6	5	5	4	4	6	6	5.00
22	I perform much better than the other people in my group.	4.17	4	5	3	3	5	5	4	4	5	6	5	5	4.83
23	I like to work in teams to achieve objectives.	4.67	4	5	6	4	5	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	4.50
24	I deal effectively with difficult people.	4.50	4	4	5	4	6	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	4.33
25	I am very creative and innovative in my work.	5.17	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	5	6	5.33
26	I do not mind working late to finish an important task.	5.83	5	6	6	6	6	6	5	4	4	4	4	6	4.50
27	I always meet deadlines.	4.50	4	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	3	4.50
28	I concentrate hard to do a job right the first time.	5.17	5	6	5	5	5	5	5	6	4	5	5	6	5.17
29	I am always on time.	5.00	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	3	4	5	5	4.67
30	I am responsible for maintaining a good relationship with my manager.	5.00	4	6	4	6	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	6	4.83
		153	145	161	155	156	158	143	155	135	127	144	154	165	146.7

Table 8: Organisation readiness for mentoring inventory summary of results

		New Staff						Experienced Staff							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F		
1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = slightly agree, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree		Avg						Avg							
1	Members in junior positions are comfortable in expressing their ideas and feelings to people in the higher levels of the organisation.	3.83	2	4	4	4	6	3	4	4	5	2	4	5	4.00
2	The organisation actively supports the career advancement of high flyers.	4.17	2	4	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	2	5	6	4.33
3	There is very good co-operation between various departments in the organisation.	3.67	3	4	4	4	5	2	4	3	4	2	4	3	3.33
4	The development of people is a high priority for management.	4.67	2	4	5	6	5	6	5	4	3	5	5	5	4.50
5	People are very comfortable when other people criticise them in the organisation.	3.17	3	3	2	4	5	2	4	3	5	1	3	4	3.33
6	Management is willing to commit resources to mentoring.	3	2	3	2	4	6	1	4	3	4	1	4	5	3.50
7	People like to build networks with people in different departments.	4	3	5	4	4	6	2	5	3	3	2	4	5	3.67
8	When employees make mistakes, they fear that they will get into trouble.	3.67	2	3	3	6	6	2	4	5	4	6	4	4	4.50
9	Most managers have well-developed listening skills.	3.83	2	3	3	6	5	4	4	4	4	2	3	4	3.50
10	Leadership has a lot of vision to improve the organisation.	4.17	2	6	5	5	6	1	5	5	4	3	4	5	4.33
11	People in different departments are willing to learn from one another.	4.17	3	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	5	1	4	5	3.83
12	Managers openly admit their weaknesses and shortcomings.	3	2	3	2	3	6	2	4	3	4	1	3	4	3.17

			A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F	
13	There are excellent role models to follow in our organisation.	3.83	3	4	5	4	5	2	5	3	5	1	3	6	3.83
14	Most managers respect employees for their abilities and competence.	3.83	2	5	2	5	5	4	5	4	3	6	3	6	4.50
15	The organisation openly shares information about success stories where employees have achieved very well	4.67	2	6	4	6	5	5	4	4	5	4	3	6	4.33
16	There is a lot of feedback in this organisation.	4.83	2	5	5	6	6	5	4	3	3	1	3	5	3.17
17	Managers have been trained to be coaches and mentors.	2.67	2	1	2	5	5	1	4	2	4	1	3	4	3.00
18	Most managers see obstacles and problems as learning opportunities.	3.5	3	4	2	5	5	2	5	2	4	1	3	5	3.33
19	People from different cultures and religions are respected in our organisation.	4.33	1	6	6	6	5	2	5	4	4	1	5	6	4.17
20	New ideas, processes and systems are often resisted in our organisation.	3.33	2	2	2	3	5	6	4	3	4	5	3	2	3.50
21	Communication is very good in the organisation.	4.17	3	4	3	5	6	4	4	2	3	1	4	4	3.00
22	Top and senior management is committed to develop successors for their positions.	3	2	2	3	5	5	1	4	3	3	1	5	5	3.50
23	Employees feel empowered to make their own decisions.	3.83	2	2	6	6	6	1	5	3	4	2	4	3	3.50
24	Managers believe that they can learn from their subordinates.	2.83	2	4	2	3	5	1	4	3	4	1	3	5	3.33
25	Managers recognise the performance of their staff members.	4.17	2	5	3	6	5	4	4	4	4	6	4	5	4.50
26	Most employees aspire to be like their managers.	3.5	2	4	2	5	6	2	4	4	4	1	4	2	3.17
27	Managers are very supportive in helping employees achieve their objectives.	4	2	4	5	6	5	2	5	4	3	1	4	4	3.50
28	Most managers are very effective in our organisation.	4.33	4	5	3	6	6	2	4	3	4	1	4	5	3.50
29	Morale is very good in our organisation.	3.67	2	4	4	6	5	1	4	4	3	1	4	5	3.50
30	Managers are democratic and approachable.	4	2	4	3	6	6	3	4	4	4	2	4	3	3.50
		114	68	118	105	148	162	82	130	104	117	65	113	136	111

Table 9: Mentoring talents inventory summary of results

		New Staff						Experienced Staff							
		Avg	A	B	C	D	E	F	Avg	A	B	C	D	E	F
1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = slightly agree, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree															
1	Most people see me as a very nice person.	4.67	4	5	6	4	5	4	4	5	5	6	5	5	5
2	I am a very patient person.	4.33	4	5	6	4	5	2	4	3	3	4	5	4	3.8
3	I am comfortable in expressing my feelings to other people.	4.83	3	5	5	6	5	5	5	4	4	6	5	5	4.8
4	I define problems before solving them, thus avoiding imposing my predetermined solutions.	4.33	4	6	4	4	6	2	5	4	3	4	5	6	4.5
5	I often offer my help to people who need me.	5.17	4	5	5	6	5	6	5	6	5	6	4	6	5.3
6	I try to define problems in several different ways.	4.67	4	4	6	4	6	4	5	5	4	6	4	6	5
7	I try to be flexible in the way I approach a problem, not relying on past concepts or practice.	4.67	4	4	6	4	5	5	5	4	4	6	4	6	4.8
8	People often come to me for information or advice.	4.00	3	4	4	2	6	5	4	5	4	6	4	6	4.8
9	I try to unfreeze my thinking by asking lots of questions about the nature of problems	4.50	3	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	6	4	6	4.7
10	I try to apply both logic and intuition to problems.	5.00	4	6	5	4	6	5	5	5	4	5	4	6	4.8
11	I openly show my excitement when other people succeed.	5.17	4	6	5	6	6	4	5	4	5	6	5	6	5.2
12	I strive to look at problems from different perspectives so as to generate multiple definitions.	4.83	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	6	4.8
13	I believe that leaders should be more concerned about employees.	5.67	5	6	6	6	5	6	5	5	5	6	5	6	5.3
14	I often break the problem down into smaller components and analyse each one separately.	5.00	4	5	5	5	6	5	5	4	3	5	5	5	4.5
15	I strive to generate multiple creative solutions to problems.	4.67	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	6	5
16	I tend to stay calm in stressful situations.	4.33	4	4	6	3	5	4	5	3	3	4	5	5	4.2

			A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F	
17	Most people see me as an optimist.	4.83	6	4	6	3	6	4	4	4	4	5	5	6	4.7
18	I feel comfortable in supporting a person who comes to me in tears.	5.50	5	6	6	6	6	4	5	4	4	6	5	6	5
19	When I provide criticism, most people regard it as constructive.	4.33	4	4	6	3	5	4	5	5	4	6	5	5	5
20	I believe that mistakes should be avoided at all cost.	2.17	2	1	5	1	1	3	2	3	4	6	5	6	4.3
21	People often come to me with their problems.	4.17	5	4	4	3	5	4	4	5	4	6	4	6	4.8
22	I can be trusted to keep a secret.	5.50	5	5	6	6	5	6	4	6	3	6	5	6	5
23	People are open to admitting their shortcomings to me.	4.50	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	6	4	6	4.7
24	I always give detailed feedback to people.	4.83	4	4	4	6	6	5	5	4	4	6	4	5	4.7
25	When I make a suggestion, people take it very seriously.	4.50	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	5	4.5
26	I communicate very clearly.	4.83	4	5	6	4	5	5	5	3	4	5	4	5	4.3
27	I am a very good listener.	5.33	5	6	6	5	5	5	5	3	3	5	4	6	4.3
28	I have good relationships with people in other departments.	5.17	4	5	6	5	5	6	5	5	4	5	5	6	5
29	People at lower levels of the organisation find me very approachable.	5.33	5	5	5	6	5	6	5	4	3	6	5	6	4.8
30	I like to coach other people in how to do things.	5.50	5	6	6	6	5	5	5	4	4	6	4	6	4.8
		142.3	125	143	159	135	155	137	139	127	118	165	137	170	143