



MENTORING : ENHANCING OUR UNDERSTANDING THE MENTORING DEFINITION

EMCC Global Quality - Mentoring Review Project

Background

This summary sets out the proposed new Mentoring definition together with the methodology and evidence, which informs the new definition.

The practice of Mentoring is dynamic and evolving in a rapidly changing global context. A Mentoring definition needs to reflect and enhance professional practice. The EMCC Mentoring Review Group, was tasked by the Global Executive Board (GEB) to review the existing definition and make recommendations for an updated understanding. In alignment with EMCC values of professionalism, diversity, and inclusion, the Review Group adopted a triangulation approach, which included a literature search, focus groups and survey of members.

The findings reflect and incorporate the perspectives of the wider Mentoring community, including views from inside and outside the EMCC's global community. From this research, we have created a new fit for purpose definition of Mentoring.

The proposed new wording serves not only as an updated definition but also represents EMCC's current understanding of the essence of Mentoring. We recognise that this definition encapsulates a broad view, and, as work in progress, we would love any feedback and development suggestions. Please send any questions and/or comments to centresforexcellence@emccglobal.org

Coaching and Mentoring overlap/spectrum

While creating the new Mentoring definition, we recognise that Coaching and Mentoring share many of the same characteristics, lying along a structured conversational continuum. But that there are some very different views held globally e.g.:

- One school of thought, more common in the US, believes that coaching takes the form of a non-directive intervention, while mentoring allows for directive advice giving.
- Others argue that both ought to be non-directive (and are based on coaching skills), but that a difference arises in the level of relevant knowledge and willingness to contextualise and share this expertise.

EMCC seeks to cover these views together with nuanced versions, thus, to be a truly global definition of Mentoring

EMCC Definition of Mentoring

"Mentoring is a learning relationship, involving the sharing of skills, knowledge, and expertise between a mentor and mentee through developmental conversations, experience sharing, and role modelling. The relationship may cover a wide variety of contexts and is an inclusive two-way partnership for mutual learning that values differences."

New Mentoring Definition – Summary of Findings

This new proposed definition has been broken down in the table below and the sources of different aspects of the new definition are exemplified in the numbered references.

Table 1 Key parts of mentoring derived from the consultation

Mentoring is a learning relationship, ¹	involving the sharing of skills, knowledge, and expertise ²	between a mentor and mentee through developmental conversations ³ , experience sharing ⁴ , and role modelling ⁵ .
The relationship	may cover a wide variety of contexts ⁶ ,	and is an inclusive two-way partnership ⁷ for mutual learning ⁸
that values differences ⁹ .		

¹ Several leading professionals refer to learning and describe the Mentor/Mentee dynamic as a relationship.

² All interviewees talk of skills, knowledge, and expertise being transferred or shared between Mentor/Mentee. The Survey lists Knowledge transfer as the top keyword. Expertise reflects references to Domain Knowledge and experience.

³ Developmental Conversation: is the result of the initial definition and additional ideas from survey results, and the idea that the setting in which Mentoring takes is a conversational space.

⁴ Experience Sharing: Suggests that a Mentor may have experience of the mentees desired knowledge gain. A number of those surveyed suggested a person with greater experience share; that the relationship adds insights into each other's values and skills; and that the Mentor needs specific knowledge (implicit in experience)

⁵ Role Modelling: This was mentioned very often during our feedback gathering

⁶ Contexts are very broad reflecting the understanding of mentoring in the Americas, Australasia compared to Europe, for example, the IMA stress the value of mentoring in sharing of network relationships and for career development.

⁷ Two-way partnership: All experts reflected on the learning the Mentor takes from the mentoring relationship, supporting a two-way experience.

⁸ Mutual Learning: A Mentor learns from each meeting as does the Mentee – learning exchange, also having benefits for the mentor, mutually beneficial, 2-way development relationship, reciprocal, yet asymmetrical relationship established for the personal and professional development of the participants and mutual knowledge transfer

⁹ The new definition simply states, 'valuing differences' and 'inclusive'. The original EMCC definition used the following words: "between peers or across differences such as age, race or discipline" but we felt that simplifying this was better to embrace all possible differences rather than prescribing a specific narrow list of values/qualities that a Mentor or Mentee should hold/be aware of.