



Win-winternship course

Module 4. Training & mentoring – key to success

VIP@work

vocational internship placements

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INTRODUCTION



Congratulations, you are able to choose your intern! How to continue?

This module will guide you through the several processes during the internship. First of all aligning expectations is very important. At the start, but also during and towards the end of the internship. Two important areas of interest are training & mentoring, how are you going to coach and mentor the intern.

During and after the project, (progress) evaluation and assessment is very important too.

Before the student leaves, you need to decide whether you would like to keep the intern as a regular employee. Be very clear on this during evaluation and assessment.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Know how to manage expectations
- Be able to manage expectations
- Understand the importance of mentoring
- Know the difference between mentoring and coaching
- Be aware of the role of the mentor
- Understand the characteristics of a good mentor
- Understand the importance of evaluation and self-evaluation
- Understand the importance of clear communication

EXPECTATION MANAGEMENT

Besides careful selection of the right intern, expectation is another key success factor. If you make sure, that both the expectations of the intern as well as the school as well as the employer are well aligned, chances of a successful internship are highest. How are you going to make sure everyone is aware of each others expectations?

EXPECTATION MANAGEMENT

The following aspects are very important to discuss as soon as possible. If you did not discuss them already during the job interview or the follow-up conversation, you should discuss these issues as one of the first things after the start.

GIVE SPACE TO THE STUDENT TO SHARE

- What (s)he needs and wants to learn
- His/her qualities, and what (s)he would like to do with it
- Practical wishes (e.g. travel time, internship fee)
- How (s)he would like to see coaching/mentoring
- What (s)he expects of the mentor within the company and the company itself

SHARE WITH THE STUDENT

- Which activities you have in mind
- What level you expect
- Expectations regarding practical matters such as presence, clothing, work attitude, etc.
- What supporting matters you arrange (internship fee, laptop, workplace etc.)
- Which guidance you can offer

EXPECTATION MANAGEMENT

- One way to start the internship is by organising a meeting on expectation management.
- Of course, you can discuss other things besides expectations as well.
- Both come up with 3 qualities which you think are the most important for a student to have. After choosing, you will identify overlap and similarities and discuss the 6 qualities.
- You can repeat this activity, but then choosing which qualities (s)he thinks is the most important for intern employers to have. Discuss these choices as well.
- You can start the internship with this activity, but you can also repeat this activity during the internship or in the final phase of the internship, to see if something has changed, why, and if you're both still well-aligned.

MENTORING

Mentoring contributes to the growth and success of a person. Through mentoring, an individual is being recognised and acknowledged. It provides motivation, personal attention and role modelling to the participants (mentees). The mentees will succeed faster when they have the encouragement and support of someone who already has had the same experience as them. The participants use the strategies that have helped their mentor in the past.

Mentoring is very powerful, because all parties benefit from it. The mentee attains confidence and does not feel isolated. The mentor acquires skills in order to lead, coach and train, because a mentor has the role of a guide, a counsellor, a teacher, a coach, and a sponsor. The key factor for success lies in these role models. The mentees will be motivated to keep developing themselves, instead of giving up on their goals.

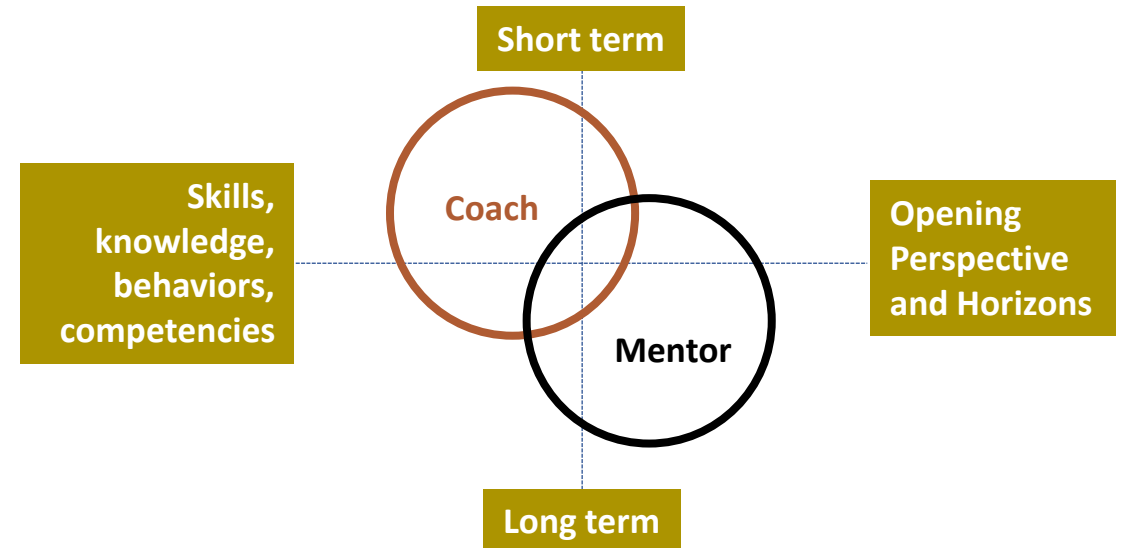
MENTORING VS. COACHING

Mentoring consists of a long-term relationship focused on supporting the growth and development of the mentee. The mentor becomes a source of wisdom, teaching, and support, but not someone who observes and advises on specific actions or behavioral changes in daily work.

Coaching typically involves a relationship of finite duration, with a focus on strengthening or eliminating specific behaviors in the here and now. Coaches help professionals correct behaviors that detract from their performance or strengthen those that support stronger performance around a given set of activities.

The terms mentoring and coaching often get used interchangeably, which misleads the audience. While similar in their support of someone's development, they involve very different disciplines in practice.

Both mentoring and coaching offer incredibly valuable developmental support. However, one offers high-level guidance for long-term development, while the other helps provide more immediate improvement in targeted areas.



THE ROLE OF A MENTOR

Suppose a talented individual lands a sales internship, and gains a senior sales executive as her mentor. The senior executive might guide her in her development as a leader, a strategist and a complete business professional.

The mentor might not exactly instruct her or provide on-the-spot coaching or training. Instead, he will challenge her and encourage her to think through issues and approaches by asking difficult-to-answer questions and serve as a source of wisdom when needed. The relationship as mentor and mentee ends after the woman changes companies, but the senior executive's impact carries through in her work throughout the rest of her career.

Many people attribute part of their professional growth to the guidance of a patient mentor who challenged them to think differently and open their eyes and mind to different perspectives. While each of us develops at our own pace, this type of influence can have many positive and lasting effects.

THE ROLE OF A MENTOR

The main functions of a mentor are:

- **Teacher:** Develops the technical and intellectual skills; a mentor provides help with existing competencies and skills.
- **Sponsor:** Makes it for the mentee possible to eventually use the developed skills and competencies within a fitting environment.
- **Guide:** Guides and introduces the mentee into a relevant field.
- **Role Model:** The mentor is being an example for the student. The primary aim is the development of the ambitions of the mentee. The mentor is more than a role model: the mentee must not become a copy of a mentor, but be his/her own improved version. This type of mentoring requires a personal relationship between mentor and mentee and a high level of commitment.
- **Counsellor:** Provides the mentees with moral support, advice and constructive criticism. Within this role, certain affection is being shown. Mentoring is not only giving instructions, but overall providing support. A mentor's task is to encourage and support rather than instruct.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD MENTOR

The most important aspect of mentoring is that a skilled person feels responsible for the development of a less experienced person. But there are also other important aspects that should be taken into account. The 4 most important aspects are:

- **Communicate what you know:** It is essential to be clear when you provide the information about the lessons you have learned. It can also concern the strategies or guidance you are offering.
- **Preparedness:** It shows of a good preparation to ask your mentee what topics or subjects he or she wants to discuss before the mentoring session. Thus, you can outline the target points you want to focus on beforehand and have a plan ready.
- **Approachability, availability, and the ability to listen:** It is wise to establish a set day and time for frequent sessions or meetings. You also have to be ready to listen properly and with an open mind.
- **Honesty with diplomacy:** Be able to say what your mentee needs to hear from you, not what you consider he or she might want to hear.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD MENTOR

Three other aspects are:

Inquisitiveness: Continuous learning is crucial if you want to be an effective mentor.

Objectivity and fairness: Outside of the mentor-mentee relationship, you are not obliged to do your mentee any favors, and he or she does not owe you anything, besides his or her gratitude.

Compassion and genuineness: Your mentoring relationship might not work if you do not express your interest and ambition to give one-on-one help and guidance.



MENTORING

Make sure that the employee who is going to be the mentor is given enough time to perform his task properly.

Also, be aware that not all mentors/mentees are a good match. Try to find a suitable mentor for your intern, where both feel comfortable. Sometimes, at first impression the relationship seems perfect, but later on it appears that there is no click. Don't stick too long with a toxic relationship, probably there is somebody else in your company more suitable for this intern. Ensure that both the mentor as the mentee feel free to come to you when they think the relationship is not as it should be.



EVALUATION, PROGRESS & ASSESSMENT

Evaluation is not something just for final assessment. To facilitate optimal progress, frequent evaluation and assessment is necessary.

Most of the time, the criteria where you need to base the evaluation and assessment on is varying per school. However, of course there is some room for own interpretation as well. In this chapter we will give you some tips as preparation for highly qualitative evaluation, progress and assessment.

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EVALUATION, PROGRESS & ASSESSMENT

With regards to evaluation, progress and assessment of interns, it's very important to include the school. In the end, the student needs to fulfill the requirements of school to pass the test/graduate.

Monitor the students' progress carefully, based on the checklist of school. Hereby, you can detect problems in an early stage and is the student able to work on problem areas.



EVALUATION, PROGRESS & ASSESSMENT

We all know the evaluation forms with multiple choice answers and the possibility to give some explanation. However, nowadays there are more ways to evaluate and monitor progress. Some ideas for during the internship:

- Daily reflections: each student can reflect on successes they've created and the challenges they face in their internship
- Video blogs: students can create a visual 'journal' of their experience, rather than written reflections. *If internship experience is part of a class with multiple students, students can respond to one another's videos.*



EVALUATION, PROGRESS & ASSESSMENT

Some more ideas for evaluation at the end of the internship

- Scrapbook: integrate text and visuals to display learning and growth during the internship
- Revise the resume, motivational letter and LinkedIn profile to reflect new skills
- Create a website and/or offer to update company's website with internship information
- Assemble a workshop for other students who might be interested in an internship in this area
- Digital portfolio

PROMOTE SELF-EVALUATION

Of course, self-evaluation is totally up to the intern itself. However, it can be very interesting to take a critical look at the finished internship. This can serve as preparation of presenting their skills in the best possible light to future employers. When self-evaluating, they should ask a lot of questions and put in time necessary to come up with specific answers that align with their career aspirations.

[Here](#) you can find some exemplar questions for them.



BEFORE THE STUDENT LEAVES

Cultivating future employees

Once the internship has ended, you have two choices: let the intern go or offer him/her a position in your company.

Sometimes you don't really have a choice, when the internship is not part of a graduation year. Then the student needs to leave your company anyway, because (s) he needs to continue their education. Even then, you can offer them a future position. Once they have finished their school, you might want them to contact you if you have any positions available.

Whichever you choose, both options need clear and effective communication.

BEFORE THE STUDENT LEAVES

An internship can be a very good way to see whether a student fits in your workforce.

If the student successfully completes the internship, you might want to keep the student as employee.

Make sure that the student knows from the beginning until the end how you see this. Also, when you do think the intern would be perfect for your company, but don't have the resources at the moment to hire him/her. In that case, you can agree on keeping in contact. You might have the possibility to hire in the (near) future.



BEFORE THE STUDENT LEAVES

Especially when you decide not to hire the student, it's very valuable to explain the student why.

Some examples of reasons why you're not going to hire your (former) intern.

- **Student does the work given but doesn't initiate to learn more.**
- **Student is very passionate and wants to learn and improve. Needs to work on organization and managing his/her time wisely.**
- **Student is very confident. We would appreciate some more independence and initiative.**

[Here](#) you can find more examples of comments for the students after finishing the internship.

RECAP

- You have learned:
 - how you can manage expectations of the intern
 - The importance of mentoring
 - The difference between mentoring and coaching
 - What the characteristics are of a good mentor
 - Why evaluation and self-evaluation are important
 - That clear communication is key for a successful internship program

VIP@work

You have now
completed module 4!



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