



Blue Career e-Mentoring Guide



Career Guidance in Blue Economy

Cooperation for innovation and exchange of good practices

Strategic Partnerships for vocational education and training

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BeBlue

Blue Career e-Mentoring Guide

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Chapter 1. Introduction to mentoring

Purpose

Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction.

John C. Crosby

This guide has been developed to provide prospective mentors and mentees with an understanding of the types, purpose and benefits of mentoring to people and with mentoring processes and tools.

We recommend you review it before the first meeting with your mentee and revisit it as often as you wish. We hope it can help you navigate the mentoring relationship in a structured and effective manner.

Who is this for

This e-mentoring guide is for those involved in learning and teaching in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) process, namely:

- VET learners/mentees who want to be mentored for a career advance or career switch.
- VET teachers/mentors and blue professionals who want to mentor others.

Mentoring

Mentoring is a process through which an individual offers professional expertise as well as support to a less experienced person. A mentor serves as a teacher, counsellor, and advocate to a mentee. Mentoring results in a mutually beneficial professional relationship over time.

The intent of mentoring is not to remediate weak performance, but rather to shape a career that shows promise. Remind yourself and those who ask that mentoring is an opportunity to give back to the industry by teaching the next generation of leaders and innovators.¹

Mentoring is a dynamic, supportive relationship between two individuals which exists to develop the mentee either within their current role or for the future. Mentoring differs from coaching in that it takes a holistic view of the mentee, is an on-going relationship and the agenda is usually set by the mentee with the mentor providing support and guidance.²

Mentoring IS...

- A partnership between a Mentee and a Mentor – providing both with opportunities to share talents, skills, experiences and expertise.

¹ MentorGuide: <https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/centers/cwf/individuals/pdf/MentorGuide.pdf>

² NHS_England_Mentoring_Guide_5bv5_FINAL5d: https://cec.hscni.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/NHS_England_Mentoring_Guide_5bv5_FINAL5d.pdf

- Focused on the growth and development objectives of the Mentee, supplementing learning experiences afforded through regular training and on-going coaching and feedback from managers.
- A valuable – but optional – feature of a comprehensive approach to personal and professional development.
- An investment of time, energy and thought from both the Mentee and the Mentor.
- Knowledge-sharing opportunity — mentoring facilitates the flow of information and ideas among staff in different departments and duty stations.
- Candid and Specific — a good mentoring relationship provides honest and specific feedback and a route to growth.

Mentoring IS NOT...

- Random – it is planned and structured. Forging an effective mentoring relationship involves one-on-one meetings, follow-up and on-going evaluation of progress toward meeting learning objectives.
- Bound by the parameters of the Mentee's current job or role - although professional growth has a positive impact on an individual's current contribution, the focus of mentoring can be broader, enabling the Mentee to explore capabilities needed for future opportunities as well.
- For everyone - the time invested in effective mentoring experiences is substantial and the readiness to commit to that investment is driven by a variety of factors including development needs and current responsibilities.
- A program or a matching service. There is no database from which to find a specific Mentor or Mentee.³
- Replacement for formal development — Mentoring cannot take the place of formal training but can augment it.
- Personal counselling — It is best to seek help on personal issues from a life coach or mental health professional.

Mentor

The figure of a mentor has been around since the days of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Nowadays, people often talk about the importance of mentoring in personal development and career contexts, with 'get a mentor' being a key piece of advice from successful business people.

Mentors are persons who can support, advise and guide others. They typically take the time to get to know their mentees and the challenges they are facing and then use their understanding and personal experience to help them improve. The purpose of a mentor is to help people grow as a person and become the best version of themselves. This may involve helping them achieve their personal or career goals, introducing them to new ways of thinking, challenging their limiting assumptions, sharing valuable life lessons, and much more. Each one of us may have several mentors throughout our lives and careers.

³ Mentoring_Guide: https://cdn2.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2015/10/Mentoring_Guide.pdf

What Does a Mentor Do?

A mentor may fulfil all or a combination of roles. The mentor:

- Acquires resources – Brings critical readings, opportunities, or experiences to the attention of the mentee.
- Acts as a role model – Offers insight on how he or she “made it”.
- Advises – Shares institutional and professional wisdom, critiques performance, makes suggestions.
- Advocates – Offers sponsorship, provides exposure and visibility to the mentee.
- Coaches – Helps a mentee learn new skills and practice new behaviours.
- Commit to meeting/talking to your mentee(s) on a regular basis
- Help your mentee(s) challenge their thinking and achieve their potential
- Protects – Helps a mentee find new and challenging opportunities.
- Respect the mentoring contract and maintain confidentiality
- Share skills, knowledge, experiences and resources
- Supports – Listens with a sympathetic ear, explains unwritten rules, and acknowledges disappointments and triumphs.

Characteristics of an effective mentor

Some important traits of a mentor include empathy, curiosity, authenticity and the ability to connect and impart trust. Research shows that these are more important than the professional skills a mentor may have. Other characteristics include:

- Comfortable at giving honest, constructive feedback
- Demonstrates good values and behaviours
- Good at listening, challenging and supporting
- Interested in helping others develop
- Knowledge of the operating environment, challenges and opportunities
- Non-judgemental
- Willing to commit the time and share experiences and knowledge

Mentee

A mentee is a person who is under the tutelage or training of a mentor who teaches them new skills to help them achieve their goals. A mentee is a person who receives advice, training, or guidance from a more experienced or skilled mentor. A mentee will often have specific skills or competencies they want to learn from their mentor, and the mentor may spend a designated amount of time tutoring or teaching them. Typically, a mentor and mentee will establish goals together and meet regularly to practice or learn new skills throughout the mentoring program.

What Does a Mentee Do?

- Accepts responsibility for your development and progression
- Contributes to the on-going evaluation of the mentoring programme.
- Identifies what you would like to achieve through mentoring
- Is proactive

- Is receptive to feedback
- Is specific about his/her needs and what he/she would like the mentor to provide
- Keeps in touch with your mentor
- Respects the mentoring contract
- Takes the initiative in organising meetings and agreeing agendas

Characteristics of an effective mentee

- Delivers on commitments
- Has drive and determination
- Is confident in interactions with others and able to ask clarifying questions.
- Is open to feedback
- Takes personal responsibility for development
- Wants to develop his/her career

Benefits of mentoring

Benefits for mentors

Mentoring is a relationship between two people aimed at professional development. It is based on mutual respect, trust and integrity. Why is mentoring important? Relationships drive growth, motivation and inspiration. Connecting with mentees and building these relationships can be a fulfilling part of one's career. Some benefits we hope you will gain from this programme include:

- Broadening perspectives
- Demonstrate leadership
- Develop management skills
- Enhanced and strengthened interpersonal and coaching skills.
- Expanded networks
- Gain new insights and perspectives
- Improved job satisfaction
- Increased peer recognition
- Mentors gain valuable interpersonal communication skills through the process of mentoring.
- Opportunity to demonstrate commitment to developing people.
- Opportunity to use and develop leadership skills.
- Opportunity to use and enhance skills and abilities
- Personal satisfaction of guiding and sharing with others.
- Reflect on accomplishments
- The rewards are worth the investment. Contrary to popular belief, mentoring does not require a disproportionate investment. Research shows that people who become mentors report significant benefits and few costs.⁴
- Vehicle to keep "in touch" with industry and sector issues and concerns.
- You will experience personal rewards. Many mentors, at the top of their professional careers, find an increased sense of purpose through giving back through mentoring and

⁴ MentorGuide: <https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/centers/cwf/individuals/pdf/MentorGuide.pdf>

establishing a legacy as leaders. Mentors also report feeling rejuvenated and energized through interacting with their mentees

Benefits for mentees

Mentoring has the power to accelerate our self-development, career progression, and overall confidence. It's therefore surprising that just a few professionals have one, particularly as so many successful people praise and recommend mentorship.

Of course, mentees gain a lot from being mentored, but it's not just career development. Further benefits for mentees include:

- A channel to brainstorm ideas, communicate concerns and receive support.
- A more experienced or knowledgeable person to provide feedback and advice for his/her continued career and professional development.
- A supportive forum to develop
- Being supported by someone
- Career development
- Challenge ideas and proposals.
- Develop strong communication skills
- Development of knowledge, skills and abilities
- Expand knowledge and networks
- Expanded networks and knowledge
- Explore strengths and development need
- Exposure to new and different perspectives
- Focus on values and behaviours
- Growing a personal network within the industry
- Handling difficult relationships
- Identification of insights and opportunities
- Improve goal-setting
- Improved self confidence
- Increased self-awareness
- Increased self-confidence
- Learn from other's experiences
- Learn to ask good questions
- Learn to self-reflect
- Learning opportunities
- On-going career development

Chapter 2. Art of mentoring

Relationships between mentors and mentees

An effective mentoring relationship is founded on mutual respect, transparency and trust. Both parties need to be authentic in sharing of themselves, so a willingness to be vulnerable and open is essential.

Time and commitment are key factors to a successful mentoring partnership. A mentoring agreement outlining what you are both agreeing to, is an important part of the process and setting clear expectations. A mentoring agreement is provided within this guide for both parties to discuss together and then sign after they have had time to reflect and think about what they can both realistically commit to.

- Mentoring partnerships are about professional development.
- Mentoring partnerships are grounded in confidentiality and trust.
- Mentoring partnerships should be dynamic and reciprocal experiences in which the mentor and mentee grow and learn from each other.
- The responsibility for identifying discussion topics, surfacing ideas and structuring the relationship is shared by both mentors and mentees.
- Although there is a defined period of time for mentoring partnerships, they can be extended by mutual consent.
- Mentoring is a volunteer activity. Either party can end the relationship for any reason at any time with no fault assigned.
- Mentees are encouraged to keep their managers informed about the mentoring partnership; however, the extent to which the manager is involved is at the mentee's discretion.
- The effectiveness of mentoring partnerships should be evaluated at defined intervals by reviewing the progress towards achieving the mentees' and mentors' objectives.
- The conversations between the mentee and mentor should remain confidential, unless otherwise specified upfront.⁵

What is expected of mentors in the relationship

The mentoring partnership is to be mentee-driven and mentor guided. The mentee holds overall accountability for organising the logistics, preparing the agenda for each meeting, and following up with agreed actions. The mentor is responsible for making adequate time for their mentee and being fully present in their conversations. The mentor is accountable for following up and providing information when they undertake to do so. See the breakdown of responsibilities below.

Tips for Mentors

Try to eliminate interruptions during meetings such as phone calls, visitors, visible reading and work materials. Provide "quality" meeting time, giving full attention. You may have to get out of your office to do this.

⁵ Mentoring_Guide: https://cdn2.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2015/10/Mentoring_Guide.pdf

The mentor should listen carefully to the mentee and resist the urge to talk too much or solve the problems, but rather encourage and guide the mentee to new ways of thinking, challenging the mentee to stretch their abilities.

Relate your own learning experiences, special anecdotes, and trials whenever appropriate. People not only learn from errors, but also realise that no one is perfect.

To help the people learn from experiences, try discussing the experience with them this way:

- Have the mentee give a concrete, detailed description of the experience. Probe for specifics on what was done and how problems were handled.
- Ask the mentee to describe feelings about particular aspects of the experience.
- Have the mentee explain what lessons were learned in the process.
- Based on the insights expressed in the above steps, get the mentee to discuss possible strategies for future behaviour in similar situations.

Encourage your mentee to contact you if they have any questions or concerns in between meetings.

Mentors will not only serve as coach, advisors and teachers to the mentee but also as their advocates in searching out developmental opportunities and increased visibility.

Invite your mentee to accompany you to meetings, briefings, etc. as appropriate to enhance their learning. Explain what to watch for (in relation to their developmental goals) and discuss their learnings and insights afterwards.

There is most often more than one way to reach a goal. Support the mentee to the best of your ability but remember the program success is the mentee's responsibility.

Tips for Mentees

- Apply the information and strategies he or she offers and report back on how you made the applications.
- Ask your mentor to share with you successful strategies and resources he or she has used in the past that could apply to the challenges you face.
- Assume personal responsibility for your professional growth.
- Be open to your mentor's efforts to help you see alternative interpretations as well as approaches to decisions and actions.
- Be receptive to receiving constructive feedback.
- Enjoy the mentoring experience. Know that the energy you invest will likely have a significant impact on your development. Your mentor will also grow from the experience.
- Keep your conversations and other communications with your mentor confidential.
- Mentors need encouragement, too. Express your appreciation and let your mentor know how you've benefited from the mentoring relationship. Point out concrete examples of how you've used his or her input.
- Seek discussion and input rather than advice. Look to your mentor to help you think more broadly and deeply.
- Think of your mentor as a "learning facilitator" rather than the person with all the answers.

Dos and don'ts for mentors and mentees

What Are the "Dos" of Mentoring?

DO: Be clear on where the line is drawn between your responsibilities and those of the manager.

DO: Agree on goals for the mentoring relationship from the outset and put them in writing. (A Set the Stage template is provided for this purpose.) Frequently go back to your goals to measure progress.

DO: Act as a colleague first, an expert second. A know-it-all approach to mentoring is intimidating and will limit your successes. Strike an open and warm tone so your mentee will feel she can ask you difficult questions and take risks. Listen as much as you speak so her questions and aspirations are always the central focus.

DO: Set realistic expectations. You can provide your mentee access to resources and people, but make it clear you do not wield your influence over others. You may be a senior executive but that does not mean you fix problems for the mentee – you coach as you can, but the mentee does the heavy lifting.

DO: Keep a time limit as part of the goal and evaluate your progress periodically. Every mentoring relationship has phases – including the end to formal mentoring. This doesn't necessarily mean the end of your relationship, but a change in how you interact and how often.

DO: Remember that mentoring is a process with a goal. Have a fun relationship but don't get off track and lose sight of goals.

DO: Expect high performance from the mentee and accelerate her learning. Research suggests that the most beneficial mentoring is based on mutual learning, active engagement, and striving to push the leadership capabilities of mentees.

DO: Listen, listen, and then listen some more. Hear the concerns of your mentee before offering advice and guidance. Establish trust and openness in communication from the start.

DO: Strive to protect the mentee from what you see as major professional errors or missteps, but also leave room for her to learn from her own experience and mistakes. Remember that a successful mentoring relationship is one where the mentee eventually advances and no longer needs your support. Make sure the mentee is not overly dependent on your advice.

DO: Recognize that the mentee's goals are her own and that she may have career goals that differ from the path you chose. Your role as a mentor is to guide; it's up to the mentee to decide what to implement in her career.

DO: Recognize that women and other minorities face additional barriers to advancement. Educate yourself about the issues.

DO: Keep an open mind. If you are a man mentoring a woman, or if a mentee is from a different ethnic group, be aware and respect her experiences, ideas, and goals. Cross-gender and cross-cultural mentoring relationships can be very enriching and successful but it requires open dialogue about the ways gender and culture influence your mentee's attitude and the mentoring relationship itself.

DO: Educate others about the advancement of women.

DO: Teach your mentee how to become a mentor herself – by example and by encouragement.⁶

What Are the “Don’ts” of Mentoring?

DON'T be overcritical of mistakes. Everybody makes mistakes and these should be used as a learning experience for the mentee, who can be invited to suggest how they might have done things differently to achieve the desired outcome. It is not the mentor's place to chastise or lecture a mentee but to encourage them to analyse their mistakes and take lessons from them.

DON'T talk when you should be listening. Mentoring is a two-way process, and whilst it is important for a mentor to share their knowledge and experience with the mentee, it is equally important that they invite questions and feedback, listen carefully and understand the mentees thoughts and opinions.

DON'T undermine your mentee's trust in you. An effective mentor-mentee relationship is built upon mutual trust. The mentor should respect confidentiality and not discuss their mentee's merits or failings with others, fail to keep to agreed mentoring appointments or otherwise breach their trust in you.

DON'T inhibit your mentee's capacity to think for themselves. Effective mentoring empowers the mentee to take their own approach to a situation and work out the best way to proceed. Mentor's should minimise interference, even if the mentee may be about to make a mistake. Guidance can be provided, but in order for the mentee to develop and learn they should be trusted to work things out for themselves.

Dos and don'ts for mentees

DOS	DON'TS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive the relationship • Maintain contact • Take the initiative in setting meeting times • Know what you want from the relationship • Set clear goals at the beginning – they will change • Set up meetings with clear agendas • Record progress and notes • Establish realistic and attainable expectations • Establish rapport with your mentor • Communicate openly • Solicit feedback from your mentor • Be punctual and stick to deadlines • Honour your commitments and take responsibility • Be prepared before meetings • Take responsibility • Be considerate of your mentor's pressures/time • Earn the trust of your mentor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect miracles • Expect your mentor to do the work or tell you what to do • Become dependent on your mentor • Be over-awed by your mentor – mentors are doing this because they want to • Be too passive • Break trust • Ask for advice on everything • Cancel meetings at short notice • Involve your mentor in your personal problems – he/she is not a psychologist • Become involved personally with your mentor! • Involve your mentor professionally

⁶ MentorGuide: <https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/centers/cwf/individuals/pdf/MentorGuide.pdf>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be open to constructive feedback • Give a little of yourself – show appreciation • Be enthusiastic • Stay focused • Pursue meaningful, big picture goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hang on when it is time to move on
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What to do if the relationship is not working

Tips to build success

The following are provided as guidance only, based on mentoring research on what factors can support success:

- Objectives: mentor and mentee should share the same objectives and expectations from the program – identify these at the start of the relationship and continually re-assess as the relationship progresses
- Feedback: establish a culture of giving and receiving feedback early on in the relationship – effective mentors are able to be supportive, yet challenge their mentee
- Change in circumstances: if circumstances change for both parties and, for instance, time availability changes, an open discussion should be had as soon as possible to develop possible solutions
- Professional boundaries: if professional boundaries are overstepped either party should feel comfortable to approach and seek support from their agency coordinator
- ‘No Blame’ Attitude: if either party feels that the partnership is no longer working, they should raise this with the mentor/mentee so that potential issues may be addressed early on. If problems and concerns are not resolved, the partnership should be terminated in a ‘no blame’ manner

Rules for giving feedback

- Be descriptive rather than evaluative. Tell the other person what you notice or what has happened. Avoid all comments about them as a person.
- Be specific instead of general. Describe exactly what happened so that the facts, not impressions, form the basis of the feedback.
- Solicit feedback rather than imposing it. Ask the other person if you can give them feedback. If they say no, respect that this may not be a good time. Collaborate to determine a more convenient time.
- Be timely. Feedback should be given as soon as possible after the event being described.
- Focus on what can be changed. Make suggestions for improvements that the person is capable of implementing.
- Check the feedback. Make sure your understanding is accurate and fair. Check with the person or even with others to avoid misjudging the situation.
- Demonstrate caring. Offer feedback with the positive intent of helping the other person.

Rules for receiving feedback

- Listen actively. Make eye contact with the speaker. Ask probing questions to make sure you understand what is being said.

- Don't get emotional. Breathe deeply. Sit back. Adopt a relaxed body posture. Lower your voice. Speak slowly.
- Don't get defensive. This is not aimed at you personally. Understand the other person's perspective before presenting your side of the story. Ask for more details on points you don't agree with.
- Accept the input. Even when you don't agree with all of it, there will be some good ideas -- accept those. This shows respect for the other person's perspective.
- Work to improve. Devote your energy to finding improvements rather than disputing observations. Do not put all of the burden for finding solutions on the other person.

Rules for active listening

- Stop talking. You can't listen if you're talking to others or silently to yourself.
- Imagine the other person's viewpoint. Picture yourself in his/her position, doing his/her work, facing his/her problems, having his/her values, etc.
- Look, act and be interested. Don't read your mail, doodle, or tap papers while others are talking.
- Observe non-verbal behaviour to glean information beyond what is said to you.
- Don't interrupt. Sit still past your tolerance level.
- Speak only affirmatively while listening. Resist the temptation to jump in with an evaluative or critical comment or a story of your own at the moment a remark is uttered. Confine yourself to constructive replies until the context has shifted and criticism can be offered without blame. "Put down" phrases discourage sharing. People tend to react negatively when someone implies a judgment or criticism, especially at the beginning of the relationship.
- Listen for understanding. People want first to be understood. To ensure understanding and shared meanings, rephrase what the other person has just told you at key points in the conversation.
- Stop talking. This is first and last, because all other techniques of listening depend on it.

Roles and Responsibilities

Mentoring Roles

Mentee: The mentee's role is to manage the mentoring partnership. Since the partnership is focused on the mentee's learning objectives, it is essential that potential mentees devote time to clarifying professional goals and identifying strengths that will promote the achievement of those goals and development areas that may be obstacles.

Mentor: The mentor's role is to share experience, insights and feedback that will guide the mentor in the achievement of his or her learning objectives. Listening plays an important part in the mentoring role – listening to understand the mentee's goals and to uncover key learning opportunities that support those goals.⁷

⁷ Mentoring_Guide: https://cdn2.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2015/10/Mentoring_Guide.pdf

The role of the mentor

As a mentor you will play a key role in helping people achieve their potential. Your role as a mentor is to:

- Help mentees manage their learning and career development
- Challenge and support mentees to consider opportunities and challenges
- Ask probing and stimulating questions to identify personal strengths and weaknesses
- Help mentees believe in themselves and boost confidence
- Talk about the big picture and provide guidance that mentees may otherwise not consider
- Provide clarity and answer questions where requested
- Share personal stories and learning
- Act as a sounding board when mentees have major decisions to make and need to talk them through
- Act as a gateway to other people and knowledge.

Responsibilities of the mentor

As the mentoring partnership is mentor-guided, it is important for you to understand what is expected of your role as a mentor and how to get the most out of the partnership by:

- Being invested in the growth and development of the mentee
- Clarifying and reiterating learning goals and changing development needs during your time together
- Uncover motivation factors for your mentee and recognise opportunities to leverage and build on their strengths
- Share experiences that can help them see, understand and make sense of their own situation in new ways
- Provide useful feedback that could make a difference to how they behave or think about a dilemma
- Provide opportunities for your mentee to interact with different blue economy sectors
- Discuss your mentee's questions or concerns regarding feelings of competence, commitment to advancement, partnerships with peers and managers or supervisors, and work/family conflicts
- Prioritise your commitment to always meet with your mentee at agreed upon times
- Make yourself available in times of crisis or conflict
- Clearly communicate your needs (i.e. what you require to be prepared for each meeting) and provide feedback if these are not being met
- Use meeting encounters as case-in-points (i.e. noticing how they do or do not show up with you)

The role of the mentee

As a mentee you will have access to the mentor who is willing to give their time and share their expertise and/or knowledge to support your development.

Your role as a mentee is to use your time with your mentor to best effect. Be clear what you are seeking advice on, be prepared for discussions and stay connected.



Responsibilities of the mentee

As the mentoring partnership is mentee-driven, it is important to understand what is expected of you in your role. Here are suggestions to help you get the most out of your mentorship:

- Take responsibility for your own growth and development
- Set, test and reiterate learning goals with your mentor to engage them in your ongoing development
- Seek feedback and advice from your mentor
- Meet with your mentor at agreed times
- Prepare your mentor for each meeting
- Speak up if your development needs are not being met

Chapter 3. e-Mentoring Process

As mentioned before, mentoring requires both mentors and mentees. These will be involved in the following process:

Learn about the Blue Economy

Learn about mentoring

Apply for mentoring

Get a mentor

Establish the relationship

Maintain the relationship

End the relationship

Evaluate the mentoring experience

Learn about the Blue Economy

The blue economy is the specific part of the economy that focuses on the sustainable use of oceans, seas, and coastal resources. It includes well-established sectors such as fisheries, coastal tourism, maritime transport, marine extraction of oil and gas, as well as the emerging offshore wind industry. In addition, other promising sectors such as blue biotechnology, deep-sea mining or desalination are part of the blue industry. With so many application areas, the blue economy provides 4.5 million direct jobs and generates over 650 billion EUR in turnover.

For those who want to initiate or further their career in the blue economy, it is essential to learn more about it before actively engaging in the mentoring process. In the Career Guidance in Blue Economy project, there are several opportunities to learn about the blue economy.

We recommend you follow the [career map](#) and read the job cards linked to each blue profession to see the relations to other blue economy sectors. We also recommend accessing the jobs platform to explore various career paths in the blue economy sectors.

Moreover, the [Career Guidance in Blue Economy](#) online course offers learners the required details for planning and upskilling a career in this industry. The course is intended to give an overview of each sector including general information, job categories, and opportunities for training as well as tips for trans-sectoral employability.

Learn about mentoring

You have learned about sectors, jobs, training opportunities and links between professions in the different blue economy sectors. Once you have a full image of blue economy sectors, you can go deeper and learn about the skills and training requirements needed for entering these sectors.

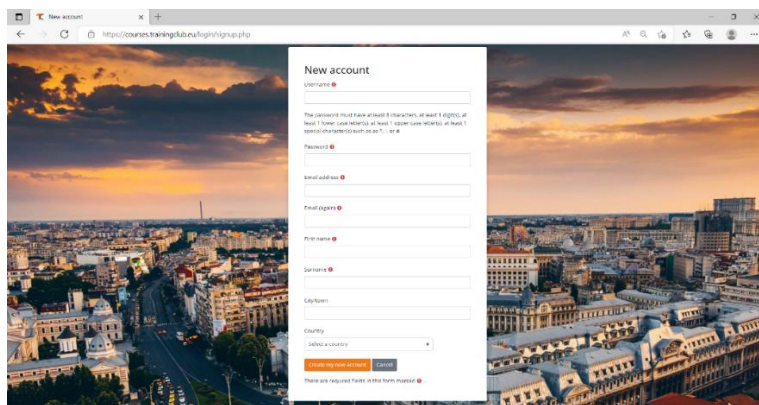
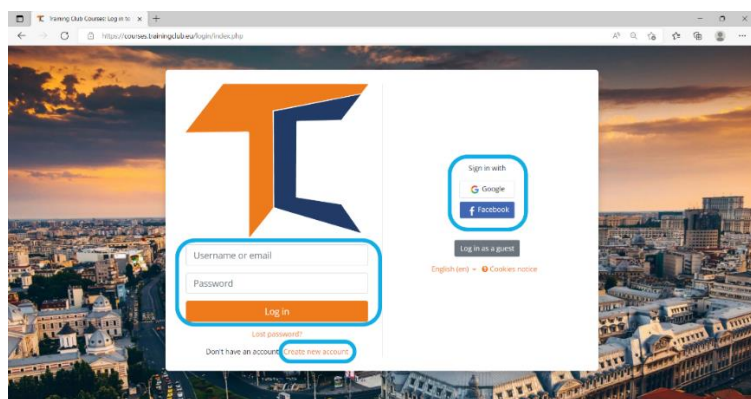
If you are a trainee, apprenticeship or professional you can find useful tips to upskill your career. If you are a mentor or career counsellor, this knowledge can flow into the advice you give about job opportunities during career guidance or mentoring.

But engaging into the mentoring process as a mentor or mentee requires you to know about mentoring. In this regard, the [Career Guidance in Blue Economy](#) online course includes a chapter dedicated to mentoring and career guidance. While that is recommended especially to mentors, we consider it a good read for mentees as well. The career guidance and mentoring module aims at offering the basic supporting tools and methods to initiate a mentoring process.

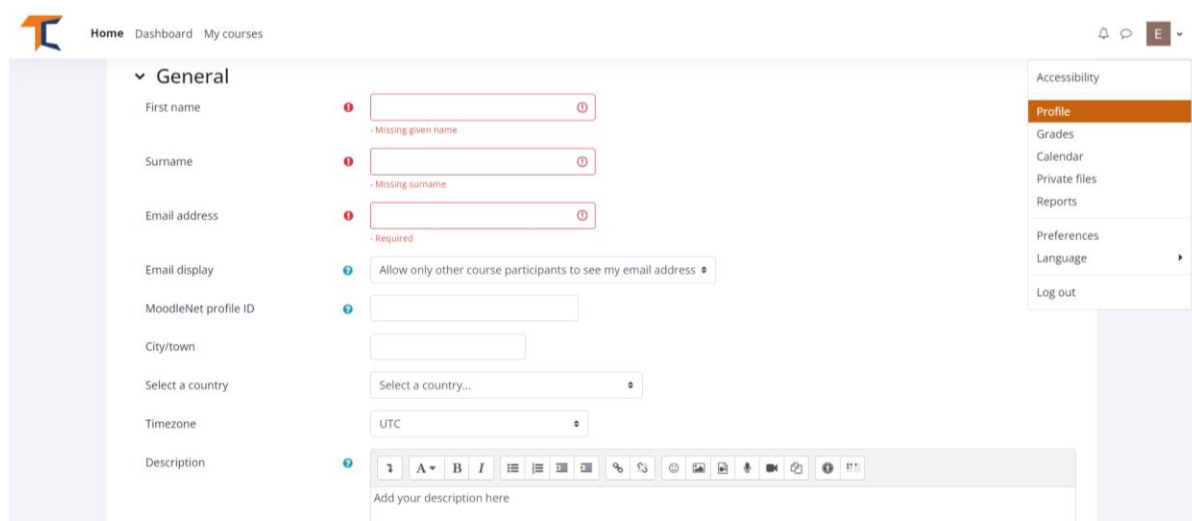
But mentoring is a rather complex domain and requires a structured approach, including a mentoring process (explained in this chapter), mentoring steps, appropriate tools and a documentation kit to assist both mentors and mentees during the process. All these are included in the current Blue Career e-Mentoring Guide. Therefore, reading and using this guide is essential for those embarking into our e-Mentoring Programme.

Apply for mentoring

Applying for mentoring through our Blue Career e-Mentoring Programme has never been easier. First of all, applicants must register into the [TrainingClub.eu online learning platform](#):



Secondly, users shall complete their profile in the platform:



The screenshot shows the 'General' profile completion form in Moodle. The form includes fields for First name, Surname, Email address, Email display, MoodleNet profile ID, City/town, Select a country, Timezone, and Description. The 'Email address' field is marked as required. The 'Email display' field has a dropdown menu with the option 'Allow only other course participants to see my email address'. The 'Description' field has a rich text editor toolbar. A sidebar menu on the right shows 'Profile' as the selected option, with other options like Accessibility, Grades, Calendar, Private files, Reports, Preferences, Language, and Log out.

Once registered into the platform and updated the profile, you are ready to [enrol into the course](#). You can choose to enrol into the Career Guidance in the Blue Economy to learn more about the blue economy, or you can jump straight to mentoring and enrol into the Blue Career e-Mentoring Programme.



The screenshot shows the 'Career Guidance in the Blue Economy' course page. The page has a blue header with navigation links: Home, Dashboard, My courses, Site administration. A sidebar on the left contains links to 'About the course', 'Module 1. Fisheries, A...', and 'Module 1. Fisheries, Aq...'. The main content area features a large orange button 'Enrol me in this course' and a section titled 'About the course' with a 'Collapse all' link. The 'About the course' section contains text describing the blue economy and its sectors.

The Blue Career e-Mentoring Programme provides you with a lot of useful information about mentoring. It is essential to follow all the resources before applying and actively engaging into mentoring.

So far, the process is the same for mentors and mentees. To engage in one-on-one mentorship, mentors and mentees need to fill in the application form and accept the terms and conditions of the e-mentoring programme. The application form is specific to the blue economy in terms of the experience and interest in various sectors. Needless to say, the questions answered by mentors will be different from those shown to mentees.

In addition, Mentors will need to fill in and submit their Mentor Profile:

ABOUT MENTOR		Photo For the website
Name and Surname		
Professional Experience (about 100 words, 9-10 lines)		
LinkedIn profile		
E-mail address		
EXPERIENCE (in which area can you guide mentees?)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Identification of career goals		
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional career planning		
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership/ Professional behaviour		
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional marketing (promotion of professional image)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (detailed)		
EXPECTATIONS FROM THE MENTEE (detail your expectations in terms of mentoring)		
ADVICE FOR A SUCCESSFUL CAREER (give some recommendations)		
AVAILABILITY FOR MENTORING		
<input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face meetings		
<input type="checkbox"/> Online meetings		
<input type="checkbox"/> Language(s): please specify		

Get a mentor

Once mentors and mentees have applied for mentoring, matching them depends on the interests of the mentee and the experience of the mentors. The matching is done by the Career Guidance in Blue Economy project experts.

Once the matching is completed, the mentor and mentee will be notified then they can establish the relationship and start mentoring. From this moment on, the mentoring process is confidential between the mentor and mentee, supported by the steps, tools and documentation provided in the guide and platform.

Establish the relationship

The thing to do when starting mentoring is to establish the relationship between mentor and mentee. The way mentoring progresses further depends on the schedules, experience, needs and wants of both parties. However, we set out below several common points to follow:

- Establish ground rules and agree on ways of working.
- Establish the duration, number of meetings, lengths of meetings and type of meetings (face-to-face, online, synchronous or asynchronous).

Maintain the relationship

Maintaining the relationship during the mentoring process is as important as establishing the relationship in the first place. Here are a couple of things to remember:

- Agree preferred ways of keeping in touch.
- Check the balance of challenge and support.
- Treat the relationship with respect and confidentiality.
- Be realistic.

End the relationship

Mentoring relationship come to an end for a variety of reasons. If the relationship has achieved its objective or it is not working be honest and feedback in a respectful manner. If the time has lapsed as stated in the initial agreement, both parties can determine the appropriate closure to the relationship.

If the parties are working to achieve a specific goal, they may choose to exit the relationship when it has been accomplished or they may extend it for another goal/time period.

When exiting the mentoring relationship, both parties should be clear that the mentoring relationship has ceased, why this has occurred, and what the next steps are. The final meeting in a mentoring partnership is also an acknowledgment of the time and effort that each has contributed to the development process. This should also be a time of celebration and thanks.

Evaluate your mentoring experience

At the end of a mentoring relationship mentors and mentees will evaluate the success of the mentoring process. Information gained by project experts from this exercise will be used to develop good practice and make improvements to the process.⁸

Evaluations should be conducted throughout the course of the mentoring relationship by both mentor and mentee. The evaluation process is a critical component of the relationship such that it will help the participants to track the progress made on the established goals and realign their efforts if necessary. The evaluation process may occur during the programme and at the end of the programme.

Sample questions which can be included for the evaluation during the mentoring process are:

- Are we staying on track with schedule?
- Are the interactions between mentor and mentee occurring frequently enough?
- Are we on track for meeting our goals?
- Have we identified sufficient and varied opportunities for learning?
- Have the goals changed, if so has a new development plan been created?
- What is working well and what needs improvement?
- Is the quality of our mentoring interactions sufficient and are we providing candid constructive feedback?

At the end of mentoring, it is expected that mentors and mentees evaluate their experience. Sample questions which can be included in the final evaluation process are:

- To what extent did you accomplish your goals?
- What obstacles prevented you from meeting your goals?
- If obstacles prevented goal attainment is there a plan to reach these goals in the future?
- What have you gained from the mentoring relationship?
- Will you continue the mentoring relationship and set new goals?

Apart from the evaluation of the mentoring process which is done confidentially between mentors and mentees, our Blue Career e-Mentoring Programme requires filling in a final survey to provide feedback and useful information to the project experts and platform administrators. This is a very important step in order to help improve the e-mentoring process. Filling in the survey represents the formal end of the e-mentoring programme and enables the platform to issue the certificate for participating into the mentoring process.

⁸ NHS_England_Mentoring_Guide_5bv5_FINAL5d: https://cec.hscni.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/NHS_England_Mentoring_Guide_5bv5_FINAL5d.pdf

Chapter 4. Mentoring steps/phases

Some mentees may know just what they want to discuss from the first meeting. Some may need more encouragement to open up. Some mentees can be keen on more structured meetings and have a detailed plan while others prefer more spontaneity.

There is no right mentoring formula. All these approaches and preferences are okay! Aim to simply get to one another at first and communicate expectations and preferences. Together you will figure out what works best for both of you.

Also, keep in mind that if you've been a mentor before, the way you communicated last time may not work this time. Many factors influence communication in a mentoring relationship including interpersonal chemistry, years of experience in the industry, one's cultural background and one's personality type, to name a few.

For both first-time mentors/mentees and more experienced ones, we recommend that you consider the following phases and related steps.

Phase 1: Establish expectations and build trust (pre-work & sessions 1-2)

- Identify your expectations for the mentoring relationship
- Hold an introductory meeting
- Discuss the mentee's expectations and goals for a career in the blue economy
- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Share the expectations from the programme

Phase 2: Create an action plan (sessions 2-3)

- Discuss the mentee's strengths and challenges
- Discuss their career goals and action items for the programme

Phase 3: Meet consistently and revise the action plan (session 3 onward)

- At each meeting, review progress on actions items
- Discuss items of interest, current challenges, recent successes, etc.
- Foster learning and development with practical examples
- Reflect on the experience

Phase 4: End of mentoring (last session)

- Acknowledge your relationship and what you accomplished together
- Discuss next steps: challenges ahead and new goals
- Provide feedback to each other and evaluate the mentoring programme

The next sections provide more details on how to address each phase.

Phase 1. Establish Expectations

At the start of a mentoring relationship, it's important to focus on expectations – for both parties to understand what each would like to give and gain from the relationship.

Part of this process is figuring out what kind of role you might play. The list below has roles that mentors typically have and the effective and ineffective behaviours that can result.

Rome	Effective Behaviours
Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acts as a sounding board and facilitator Maintains privacy/confidentiality
Developer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives structure and direction Provides guidance based on observations during interactions with mentee Empowers mentee to handle their problems independently
Broker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies skill or competency gaps through a “third party” lens Identifies and facilitates development
Challenger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positively provokes, pushes toward highest standards Helps mentee explore potential career opportunities
Affirmer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives needed support, enhances self esteem Exhibits empathy and understanding

Remember that these role(s) – and they may change periodically - depend on personal preferences and personality, the approach mentors and mentees might have to mentoring and the mentee's expectations and goals. Again, there is no right formula.

Get to know each other as people. Spend time introducing yourselves, sharing information such as your preferred names, one another's current positions and your relevant job histories, why you decided to participate and any information about hobbies and interests that you feel comfortable sharing. You might use some of the following questions to help drive conversations:

First meeting guide

Questions for the First Meeting may be:

- What is your motivation for signing up for the mentoring programme?
- What is your educational and professional background (including an explanation of your current role and future)
- What have been some high points in your career? Some low points? What is your next big challenge?
- What is interesting about the blue economy?
- What are your greatest strengths? Greatest weaknesses?
- What do you hope to accomplish in the next 6 months, 1 year, 3 years, 5 years, 10 years?
- What are your hobbies/interests outside of work?
- Discuss things about the personal profile that were interesting to each other.

Also, keep in mind that mentors can learn from mentees. You will both need to communicate with your each other about what you would like to learn. Review each other's profiles and identify a topic that you would like input on or a skill you would like to develop. The first meeting is predominately

about getting to know each other, developing rapport and setting out expectations for the mentoring partnership. Generally, in the first session the topics would cover:

- Informally getting to know each other
- Clarify the mentees' development goals
- Discuss roles, responsibilities and expectations of both parties
- Agree on logistics for ongoing sessions such as duration, frequency and locations

First meeting checklist

1. Get to know each other	
What are your interests outside work?	
What are your strengths?	
What are you currently working on?	
What are your personality/communication styles?	
2. Mentees development goal	
What does the mentee see as his/her development needs?	
What are the mentee's goals?	
What are his/her professional goals/ambitions?	
What are his/her personal goals?	
3. Clarify expectations	
What are your expectations of the mentoring partnership?	
What are the key factors that will make this partnership work?	
Confidentiality is essential, how will this be maintained?	
Agree between yourselves the boundaries of the relationship	
Commitment of time: if things come up, what is acceptable?	
4. Clarify roles and responsibilities	
Go over the responsibilities and the differences between mentor and mentee	
5. Logistics	
Agree on session duration, frequency and locations	
How will we connect? (In person? via phone? via Skype?)	
Where are we going to meet?	
How often will we connect, and for how long? (every two weeks? monthly? Is a certain day better for both of you?)	
What will we do if we have to cancel the contact?	
What are our guidelines for cancelling within 24 hours?	
Process for mentee designing and sharing the agenda	
Will someone facilitate the sessions?	
6. Questions	
Mentee and mentor to ask any clarifying questions	
7. Discuss the mentoring process	
The mentoring is between the mentor and the mentee	
It defines how the mentoring partnership will function	
The mentoring process helps to solidify expectations on both sides	
It provides a clear roadmap of the expectations of the partnership	
8. Finalise Meeting	
What is the next step to take after the meeting	
Set date for next meeting and agree on its contents	
Discuss any other issues that might be relevant	
Close the meeting	

Phase 2. Create an action plan

Once you have gotten to know each other's expectations for the programme, mentors can help mentees develop an action plan (e.g. a 10-year career plan, template included in the next chapter). You could encourage your mentee to fill it out and then review it with them and give feedback.

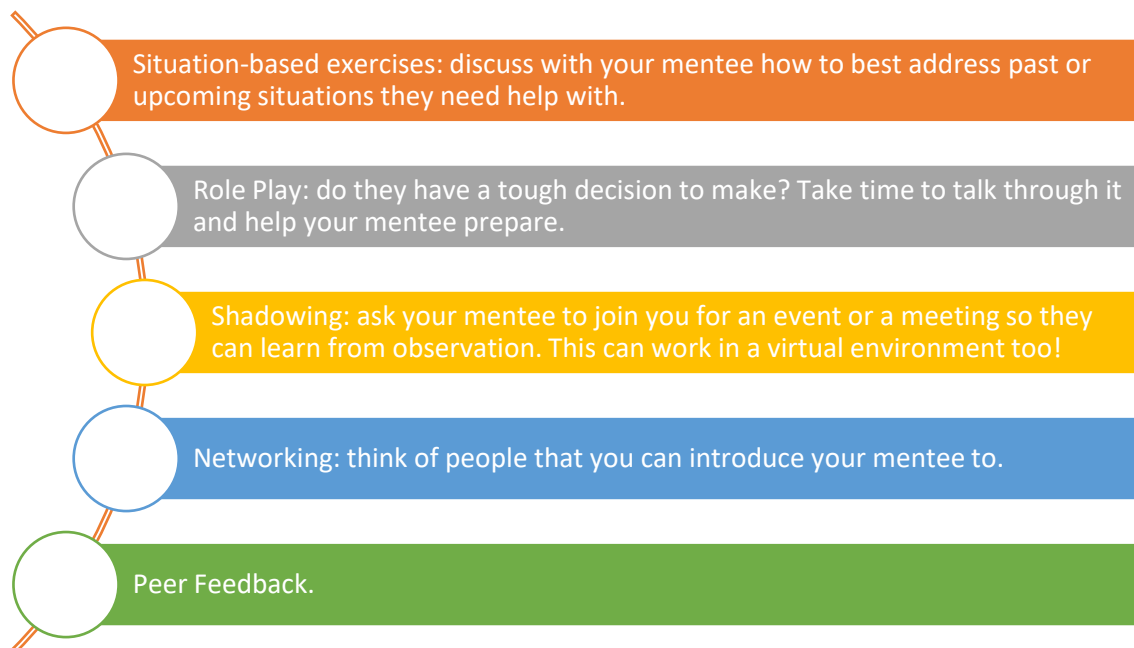
Or mentees may want to use another type of action plan; this is fine too. On the other hand, mentees may not be interested in developing a written action plan; this is okay too. You might remind them, however, that people tend to achieve goals and accomplish action items more often when they have written them down.

Phase 3. Meet consistently and revise the action plan

The topics you discuss during mentoring sessions should be centred around the goals. Mentors should try and help mentee track progress and reassess their action plan; encourage them to adjust some actions if they are no longer useful and to add new ones that might serve their goals better.

Of course, conversations tend to flow into other areas that can be equally useful and interesting. As a mentor, try to remember that finding a balance between structure and flexibility can help ensure fulfilling meetings for both parties.

Using exercises or activities during sessions can accelerate career guidance, learning and growth. Take a look at the list below. Ideas for Exercises and Activities:



The following is offered as a guide only. The mentor and mentee may use this as a starting point and then adapt it to suit the circumstances of the mentoring partnership. A range of mentoring tools is also provided in the next chapter.

1. Commence your meeting by building rapport	
Find things you have in common by exchanging information on your professional and personal background	
2. Discuss expectations for the meeting	
What is to be achieved from the meeting?	
How much time is available for the meeting today?	
3. Review last meeting and what was discussed	
Provide update on events/actions since last meeting	
Check on actions aligned to development goals	
4. Debrief issues, both successes and challenges	
Outline what happened	
Why did it happen?	
What were the lessons learnt?	
What could be done differently next time?	
5. Commit to actions	
What is the next step to take after the meeting?	
What timeframe will be applied?	
Set date for next meeting	
6. Finalise Meeting	
Discuss any other issues that might be relevant	
Close the meeting	

Phase 4: End of mentoring partnership (last session)

Your last session is approaching. Consider the following steps in this last phase.

Reflect

- Thank each other and acknowledge what your time together accomplished. What were the most useful exercises? What were the biggest takeaways?

Going forward

- Determine if or how you want to stay in touch. If there's more you can accomplish together, set up more monthly sessions!
- Share your success: as you make traction, update each other. Send an email when you have news to share.
- Spread the word: did you find the experience rewarding and fulfilling? Invite others to serve as mentors or enrol into the mentoring programme.

Feedback

- Respond to the survey. Your comments will help the programme grow.

The following guidelines provide mentors and mentees with the opportunity to reflect on their partnership and what has been learned by both parties.

1. Commence the meeting by discussing	
What has been happening in your world?	
Things that you know about one another from your past	
2. Discuss expectations for the meeting	
How do we close things off?	
How much time is available for the meeting today?	
3. Review last meeting and what was discussed	
Provide update on events/actions since last meeting	
4. Debrief issues, both successes and challenges over the period of the partnership	
Discuss progression towards stated objectives	
Articulate performance outcomes	
Outline the key areas of progression and the steps moving	
5. Reflect on the mentoring partnership	
What did we learn as partners?	
How did we help each other achieve our stated goals?	
What did we learn about ourselves as a result of the experience?	
What will we do better next time around?	
6. Finalise Meeting	
Discuss any other issues that might be relevant	
Close the meeting in a way that is appropriate to finalise the mentoring commitment	
Discuss any other issues that might be relevant	

Chapter 5. Mentoring tools

This section summarises a range of tools that can be used throughout the mentoring relationship. The tools included below can assist you to make the most of your mentoring relationship. This is not meant as a comprehensive or prescriptive suite of tools; we encourage you to use tools and techniques that best suit you.

Questioning Techniques

Description

The art of asking great questions is at the heart of many workplace conversations including (but not limited to): training, performance reviews, problem-solving, coaching and mentoring. Questions, rather than advice or jumping into solution mode, are used to help the other person or people explore their aspirations, situations, thoughts and feelings and generate their own potential solutions to issues that they are facing.

How it applies to mentoring

Within the mentoring role there will be opportunities to utilise good questioning techniques, especially when you want your mentee to:

- Identify and describe problems, situations, events
- Reflect on their feelings, assumptions and beliefs
- Identify alternatives and options they may not have considered
- Come to new understandings about themselves and the issues at hand

While the mentor may provide advice and draw on their own experience to explain situations, a part of their role is to help the mentee consider things from different perspectives. A part of the planning is to prepare well-constructed questions to ask.

Using open-ended questions

Designed to elicit further information and insight. They cannot be answered with a “yes” or “no”.

Types of open-ended questions	Examples
Reflective	“You said ... what leads you to think that?” “What did this experience remind you of?” “What have you learned about yourself and others so far?”
Probing	“Where do you think the issues lie?” “What are some issues you worry about and why?” “What makes X important?”
Clarifying	“Could you explain a bit more?”

	<p>"Can you give an example of...?"</p> <p>"What does that look like in action?"</p>
Feeling	<p>"How do you feel about that?"</p> <p>"What is your level of comfort with?"</p> <p>"What surprised you?"</p>
Analytical	<p>"Who else could help?"</p> <p>"What are your observations?"</p> <p>"What alternatives are you thinking about for dealing with some of the ongoing challenges?"</p>
Consequence	<p>"What might be the consequences of doing that?"</p> <p>"What are the pros and cons of that approach?"</p> <p>"What is the impact of doing nothing?"</p>
Assumptions surfacing	<p>"What are the assumptions behind your thinking?"</p> <p>"What words or phrases stood out for you?"</p> <p>"Why do you think that?"</p>

Using closed questions

Designed to test for understanding, set the frame of a situation, elicit a decision or close a conversation.

Types of closed questions	Examples
Test for Understanding	"So, if I get this qualification, I will find a job?"
Frame Setting	"Are you happy with the service you've been receiving?"
Decision Making	"Now that we know all the facts, are we all agreed on the right course of action?"
Close a Conversation	"Do you have anything else to add?"

Using content questions and other effective tactics

Types of content questions	Examples
Clarifying	"You say you're concerned about... What are you concerned about?"
Probing (also an open question)	"What more can you tell me about why things are getting worse with your career planning?"

Funnelling	“Which of all those issues you’ve mentioned is most important right now and why?”
Silence	Sometimes a carefully placed pause puts pressure on the speaker to provide more information as they feel compelled to fill the empty space.

GROW Coaching model

Description

Coaching is the process of unlocking people’s potential to maximise their own performance; helping people to learn rather than teaching them. To coach, you don’t need to be an expert in the area under exploration, but you do need to be able to guide the other person through the process by asking questions that open up the other person’s ability to think through what they want to achieve, their current reality, the possible options for moving forward and finally, the most suitable option to try.

How it applies to mentoring

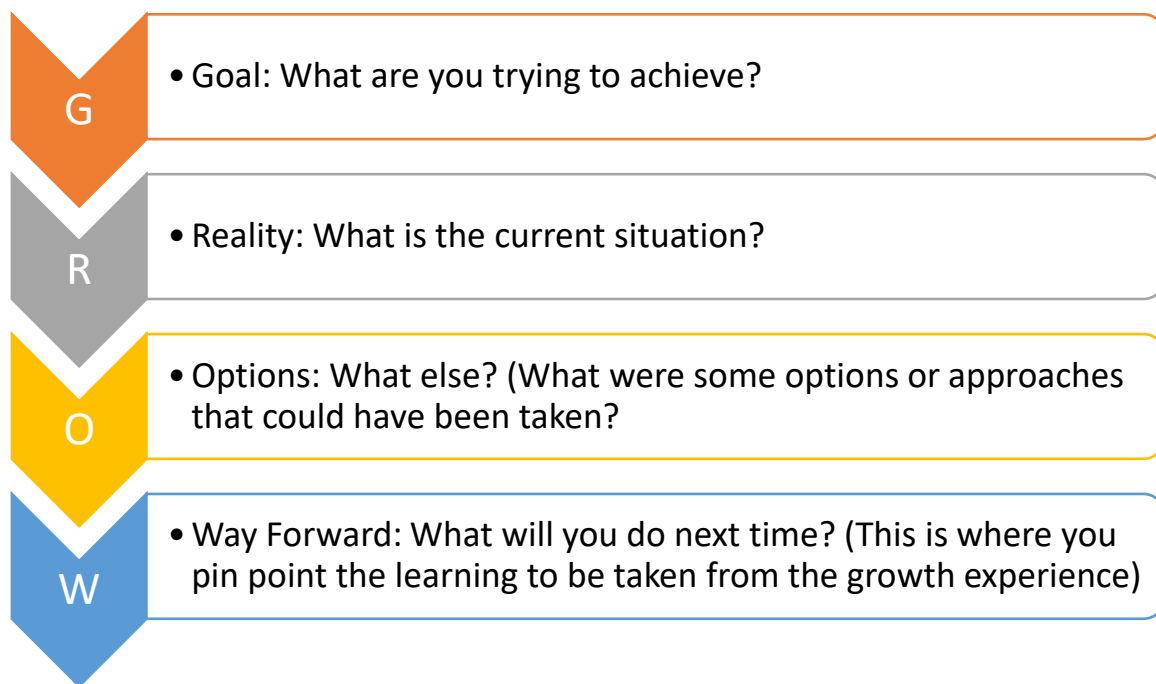
While coaching rarely involves mentoring, most would agree that there are opportunities within the mentoring partnership for the mentor to provide coaching. Typically coaching can be used when the mentor strongly believes that the mentee is capable of coming to their own answer or solution to a perceived problem, issue or dilemma. A coaching conversation facilitates problem-solving rather than the mentor providing an answer. If the mentee is persistently reliant on the mentor “having all the answers” they are not developing their own problem solving and decision-making capabilities.

Coaching should only be introduced once the mentoring partnership has been established and to avoid mentee frustration, the mentor should be open about why they are using coaching instead of providing advice or solutions.

There are some key skills that are required to be an effective coach:

- Always coaches with intent
- Releases their own views: is objective and doesn’t judge
- Challenges assumptions and “raises the bar”
- Is curious and taps into their intuition
- Pays absolute attention (listens actively and watches)
- Asks great questions that clarify and/or challenge
- Establishes and retains rapport
- Provides honest and constructive feedback and playback
- Provides support and encouragement

The GROW model outlines a simple four step process for having a constructive coaching conversation. The acronym GROW stands for Goal, Reality, Options, Way forward. It can be used in a 5 minute or a 60-minute conversation. It is a versatile and essential tool in the mentor’s toolkit.



GROW coaching questions by stage

The list below provides guidelines for mentors on the types of questions they can ask at each stage of the GROW coaching conversation.

Goal

- Describe the perfect outcome
- What outcome are you trying to achieve?
- What does that look like specifically? (if too general)
- When do you want to achieve this by?
- Why is this goal important to you?
- What will it make more possible for you?
- What will you see and feel having achieved your goal?
- How will you know you are successful?

Reality

- Where are you in relation to your goal?
- What have you tried so far?
- What is working well for you now?
- What could be working better?
- Why do you think you haven't achieved your goal yet?
- What do you think is getting in the way?
- What are the obstacles to resolving this issue?
- What do you think are the key factors contributing to the situation?
- How might you be contributing to the situation?

Options

- What could you do to change the situation?
- What else could you do?
- What else?
- If you were advising someone else on this situation what would you tell them to do?
- What would you do differently if you could start again?
- What would happen if you did nothing?
- If you could guarantee a successful outcome, what would you do?
- What's the best or worst thing that could happen?
- If you go with that option, what do you think will happen? What else might happen?

Way Forward

- What options work best for you?
- How committed are you to taking action?
- How likely is this option to proceed?
- What's the first thing you are going to do?
- By when?
- Who can help you?
- How will you involve them?
- How will you know if you've succeeded?
- How excited (or confident) do you feel about achieving your goal?
- How could you increase that excitement (or confidence)?

Giving effective feedback

Description

The Corporate Leadership Council (CLC) research states that providing fair and accurate informal feedback is the most effective driver of improvements. With feedback, it's not our intentions that are visible, but our words, actions and behaviours. Therefore, the way in which we give and receive feedback is crucial.

How it applies to mentoring

As the mentoring partnership strengthens, it becomes more critical that the mentor is able to provide constructive feedback (both positive and negative). "Blind spots" (as illustrated in the Johari Window), are often the result of a lack of adequate feedback. Feedback is, therefore, very relevant in a successful mentoring partnership and may help the mentee understand critical information impacting on their overall performance.

There are four common types of feedback (summarised below). Constructive feedback (both positive and negative) provides the greatest opportunity for growth and development.

Constructive feedback, positive

Information specific, issue focused, and based on observation

- About an effort well done

- Objective, specific and non-judgemental
- It is not 'right' or 'wrong' so it encourages discussion. So instead of having the person shut down, you get more information

Constructive feedback, negative

Information-specific, issue-focused, and based on observation

- News about an effort that needs improvement
- Doesn't need to be a nightmare – you just need improved outcomes
- Objective, specific and non-judgemental

Praise

This is a personal, favourable judgement

- General and vague
- Doesn't encourage discussion so it can come across as hollow, insincere or lacking in substance
- Focused on the person
- Based on opinions and feelings
- Can positively impact mood and morale, but not drive improved performance

Criticism

This is a personal, unfavourable judgement

- General and vague
- Without specifics, it can lead to a battle over whose perception is 'right' or 'wrong'
- Focused on the person
- Based on opinions and feelings
- Tends to start with "Now don't take this personally...."
- Puts people on the defensive

SMART 10-Year career plan

Draft Goal Where do you want to be in...?	Short-term (1 Year)	Mid-Range (3-5 Years)	Long-term (10 Years)
Specific What is the desired job? (i.e., position, industry, responsibilities, benefits, hours)			
Measurable How can you quantify (numerically or descriptively) progress and completion? (i.e., title, responsibilities, pay)			
Achievable What training, certification and skills are needed? What experience is necessary? What resources (i.e., money, equipment) are needed? Do you need help from other people?			
Realistic Is the goal in alignment with your values and strengths?			
Time-bound What is the deadline? Is the deadline realistic?			
Final Goal			

Final evaluation of e-mentoring program

Your evaluation of the e-mentoring program will be kept confidential. Your responses will be used solely for the purpose of improving the program.

Name:

Date:

Check one: ☐ Mentor ☐ Mentee

Please check the appropriate box indicating your level of agreement with each statement.

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The program met my expectations					
Developmental goals and objectives were accomplished					
The duration of the program was adequate					
The topics defined for discussion were covered during the program					
I learned a great deal during mentoring					

On a scale of 1 to 10, how likely are you to recommend this program to a friend or colleague? (1 being not likely at all - 10 being very likely)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Please motivate your choice. You could add here comments about what do you like or appreciate most about our program, how can we improve your experience and what was missing or disappointing in your experience.

Chapter 6. Documentation kit

Requirements

To become part of our mentoring programme mentors and mentees need to follow the steps set out in the e-Mentoring process. In summary, the process requires them to enrol into the e-Mentoring platform and enrol into the e-Mentoring programme. Then, they should follow all the content materials.

Particularly mentors, but also mentees, may wish to enrol into the Career Guidance in the Blue Economy course. This would be useful for both mentors and mentees to learn and update their knowledge and skills in the different sectors of the Blue Economy. Moreover, the course includes a chapter on mentoring, which is, again, useful for both categories.

So far, the process is the same for mentors and mentees. To engage in one-on-one mentorship, mentors and mentees need to fill in the application form and accept the terms and conditions of the e-mentoring programme. The application form is specific to the blue economy in terms of the experience and interest in various sectors. The questions answered by mentors will be different from those shown to mentees. That is because mentors will need to prove their competence in at least one of the sectors of the blue economy: fisheries, aquaculture, coastal tourism, maritime tourism, maritime transport, ports, shipbuilding, offshore oil and gas, offshore wind, ocean energy, blue biotechnology, deep-sea mining and desalination.

Requirements



There are no specific requirements for mentees, other than having an interest in a blue career and adhering to the terms and conditions. Anyone is welcome, be it a vocational student with no professional experience at all, or a seasoned professional who wants to change his/her career from one sector of the blue economy to the other. Also, we welcome into the e-mentoring program those who already have a career in another industry but want to change that and join the blue economy and follow a career in one of the above-mentioned sectors.

Ethical guidelines

You could face a variety of problems or choices in the mentoring relationship, whether you're the mentor or the mentee. There are frequently no simple or obvious answers and no definite feeling of "right" or "wrong" in many situations.

These straightforward rules are intended to draw attention to a group of behaviours that could have an effect on the mentoring relationship or, more generally, when utilising mentoring/coaching techniques in different contexts.

Trust

Trust is a cornerstone of effective mentoring relationships. As a mentor or mentee in our programme, remember that you will need to trust each other rather quickly in order to accomplish goals. Everyone has a different trust profile. Some of us trust people quickly and others take longer, withholding trust until the other person has proven trustworthy. Keep this in mind as you get to know your mentor/mentee.

Responsibility

Both the mentor and the mentee have a responsibility to be mindful of the possibility that their actions could harm the mentoring relationship.

Boundary management & roles

Since they may hear sensitive and private information during the mentoring relationship, both the mentor and the mentee have a big obligation to uphold and respect the secrecy of all the information imparted. To advise the mentee to take proper action on their own is a suitable strategy for the mentor if the knowledge is risky or unlawful.

Competence

Mentors must be aware of their own levels of expertise and experience in mentoring and must never exaggerate either. A journal or other form of reflective practice may be an acceptable way for mentors to encourage this consciousness. An appropriate strategy might be to suggest that further discussion of that particular topic might be better with those qualified to help when the mentoring conversation seems to veer from mentoring (forward-looking, solution-focused) towards counselling (typically talk is firmly rooted in problems in the past).

Contracting

Examples of clear contracting should include clarity over length and frequency of sessions; agreement on whether it is permissible or not to make email/telephone/text contact concerning mentoring issues between mentoring sessions; responsibility for finding a suitable location for the mentoring session.

Dealing with self-distractions

Mentors must be aware that prejudice, preconceived notions, first impressions, attitudes, and stereotypes can all affect one's capacity to give their whole attention to, be present with, and be focused on those they are mentoring. If this level of self-management cannot be achieved, the mentor should either take a temporary leave of absence or recommend that the mentee collaborates with another person. Mentors may need to take a step back and consider their relationship with the people being mentored and their own definition of mentoring if they believe they must "advise" in order to provide value to the mentee.

Confidentiality

A healthy mentorship maintains transparency, trust, and loyalty. Information, whether one deems as private or not, should not be exchanged beyond the mentor and mentee relationship. For the mentoring relationship to succeed, it must be confidential. Personal and professional information divulged during a mentoring relationship must be confidential.

Any information that the Mentor receives from the Mentee, organisations or other people will be kept confidential and not relayed to third parties or exploited for personal gain. It is expected that both parties do not disclose such information to anyone else unless both mentor and mentee agree otherwise.

The exception to this rule is the possibility of harm to oneself or another. In these cases, the Mentor will discuss the course of action with the Mentee before talking to the appropriate contact.

To ensure confidentiality between the mentor, mentee and the program, all mentors and mentees are required to adhere to the confidentiality principles below.

For a mentoring relationship to develop, both the mentor and mentee must feel that discussions of private issues or problems are being handled with discretion. This is to protect both the mentor and mentee from a breach of confidentiality during the mentoring process.

Confidentiality agreement

I, _____, agree to keep confidential the specifics of my discussions with my mentor/mentee, unless given permission to share this information with others. I am also encouraged to discuss any concerns I have about my mentoring experience with the e-mentoring programme experts. These will maintain confidentiality unless a breach of confidentiality is necessary to maintain someone's personal safety.



Mentoring agreement

Anyone can enrol on the e-mentoring course. However, for being accepted as a mentor or mentee need to fill in an application form and adhere to the terms and conditions. These are referred to in the application form:

I am voluntarily entering into a mentoring partnership, which I expect to benefit both mentor and mentee. I want this to be a productive and rewarding experience, with most of our time spent in collaborative development activities. To minimize the possibility of confusion, I agree to the purpose of this relationship is to develop the mentee's career path.

AGREEMENT



Adhering to these terms also means that the mentors and mentees have read and understood the ethical guidelines, the confidentiality issues and the general data protection provisions.

While the above agreement is a written form of accepting the general terms of the mentoring process, the most important thing to be remembered by both mentors and mentees is the moral contract. Entering a mentoring experience is a voluntary activity. Both mentors and mentees commit to give their time and focus their attention to the e-mentoring process. For this reason, it is highly appreciated that both parties act responsibly, respect each other and follow the common sense in dealing with each other. Mentoring means adding value to each other, a process in which everyone gains new experiences, skills and improved attitudes.

General Data Protection (GDPR)

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)⁹ is the toughest privacy and security law in the world. Though it was drafted and passed by the European Union (EU), it imposes obligations onto organizations anywhere, so long as they target or collect data related to people in the EU. The regulation was put into effect on May 25, 2018. The GDPR will levy harsh fines against those who violate its privacy and security standards, with penalties reaching into the tens of millions of euros.

With the GDPR, Europe is signalling its firm stance on data privacy and security at a time when more people are entrusting their personal data with cloud services and breaches are a daily occurrence. The GDPR defines an array of legal terms at length. Below are some of the most important ones:

Personal data — Personal data is any information that relates to an individual who can be directly or indirectly identified. Names and email addresses are obviously personal data. Location information, ethnicity, gender, biometric data, religious beliefs, web cookies, and political opinions can also be personal data. Pseudonymous data can also fall under the definition if it's relatively easy to ID someone from it.

Data processing — Any action performed on data, whether automated or manual. The examples cited in the text include collecting, recording, organizing, structuring, storing, using, erasing... so basically anything.

Data subject — The person whose data is processed. These are your customers or site visitors.

Data controller — The person who decides why and how personal data will be processed. If you're an owner or employee in your organization who handles data, this is you.

Data processor — A third party that processes personal data on behalf of a data controller. The GDPR has special rules for these individuals and organizations.

The GDPR related to our mentoring process concerns the way data submitted into the platform is used and the way mentors and mentees handle each other's data. What you need to remember is that this data will be accessible to the BeBlue project partners and to the relevant mentors/mentees. The mentors and mentees need to agree on the GDPR terms before submitting their application forms.

GDPR Agreement

All personal data will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the European Union institutions, bodies and offices of the Union and the free movement of data. The data will be accessible to the BeBlue project partners and to the relevant mentors/mentees for educational purposes.

⁹ <https://gdpr.eu/what-is-gdpr/>

Lessons learnt

Following the design and implementation of the e-mentoring process, the project experts gathered useful insights and lessons learnt regarding the entire experience. These were used to improve the process and may be utilised by anyone who wishes to develop a similar process of mentoring. We believe that the usability of these lessons learnt extends beyond the blue economy and beyond the vocational sector, which was the primary target of the project.

Firstly, the project experts found out that they need to convince mentees that they need help to further develop their career in the blue economy. In fact, people can only be interested to learn about things they are aware they don't know. For example, it is difficult for a maritime graduate to enter mentoring to develop a career in the offshore oil and gas sector, if he/she has never heard about this sector. For this reason, the project experts have developed career maps and blue economy courses, which provide basic knowledge. Also, the current guide informs readers about the benefits of mentoring.

During the project implementation we learnt that there is a misconception among potential mentors that they do not gain anything from the mentoring process. As we have shown in the above chapters, mentors may know their subject field, but the mentoring process can help them develop their interpersonal and mentoring skills. However, convincing mentors about the benefits of actively engaging in mentoring requires a lot of time, dedication and effort.

Another lesson learnt refers to the activity of matching mentors with mentees. The main criterion for this match is the blue economy sector the mentor needs help with. While in some sectors there are a lot of professionals (some of which are interested to become mentors), there are also niche sectors (such as biotechnology for example) where there are not so many professionals. Besides this, there must also be chemistry between mentors and mentees, which is difficult to assess and foresee at the stage of matching mentors and mentees. For this reason, the e-mentoring programme provides various tools and a documentation kit.

In addition, we learnt that the success of the mentoring process depends on the commitment of both parties. Mentoring is a confidential activity and how it evolves is something that depends on the mentor and the mentee. In this regard, the programme designers created the programme, platform and associated guide in order to streamline the process. However, the mentoring itself remains something beyond the reach of project experts.

Following up on the above, it was noted that mentors need not only specific industry knowledge, experience and skills but also mentoring tools to improve their mentoring skills.

Finally, the project experts concluded that it is difficult to automate and standardise the mentoring process because, beyond procedures and platforms, it is all about human interaction. In fact, there is no single way of mentoring or being mentored. For this reason, our mentoring process, the recommended steps and tools are not cut in stone but leave room for personal preference and adaptation.

About partner organisations



TEAM4Excellence (T4E) is a Romanian association aiming to improve the quality of life through education, research and consulting activities. To address societal challenges, T4E provides learning opportunities and career advice for social inclusion, development and employability of people, and equips trainers with key competences and skills to foster personal as well as professional development. Within 30+ EU-funded projects, the association produces and transfers innovation, experience and know-how through cooperation with domestic and international partners. By hosting events, training courses and conferences, T4E strengthens collaboration between people, supports organisations and bridges gaps between generations. The wide expertise in management enables T4E staff to provide consultancy to large companies and SMEs using EFQM Model and Business Model Canvas.



Sea Teach, as a Sea School and Charter Company, has a profound understanding of the current training supply and the market needs in the Blue Economy. Through its project work, Sea Teach has also developed high levels of expertise regarding maritime education, skills assessment, validation processes and mentorship programmes. Sea Teach is actively involved in the promotion and placement of young people in different sectors of the Blue Economy. Sea Teach has developed projects to address the problem of lack of recognition of qualifications in recreational boating and has also developed unique Assessment Tools that have found wide approval by employment agencies, Human Resource departments and Maritime Universities. The wide network in Spain and beyond, including employment agencies, the VET sector and universities, enables Sea Teach to implement activities and tools in cooperation with relevant stakeholders.



Osmaniye Provincial Directorate of National Education is a governmental organisation in charge of the planning and coordination of all kinds of educational and training activities from pre-school to the end of secondary school, vocational high schools, technical schools and adult education institutions & centres in its region. There is 1 director, 9 deputy directors and 20 school inspectors. Osmaniye Provincial Directorate of National Education is responsible for about 419 schools, 6.780 teachers and 133250 students in its region and responsible for any kind of educational facilities. In Osmaniye there are 26 vocational high schools and 6 of them are in the city centre. 12580 students are attending 9-12 grades at different departments such as Furniture and Interior Design, Installation Technology and Air Conditioning, Chemistry, ICT, Accounting and Finance departments and Food and Beverage Services, etc.



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