

MINT Tool: Mentoring styles

Goals:

Tool to raise awareness on the style the individual uses in mentoring conversations.
Tool to get more acquainted with other participants by exchanging first individual idea's and expectations on your own mentoring style.

Conditions:

The questionnaire of 'mentoring styles' is available for all participants. This tool comes after the filling in of the personal goals and an exercise in getting acquainted but belongs in the first part of the course.

Process:

State that each style can be useful in mentoring situations. Give examples why also the extreme components of the styles like the 'Letting go style' and the 'Prescribing style' are needed in circumstances. Like when time for growth is necessary or when a mentee in trouble has to be told to do the right things in the classroom.
The tool 'mentoring styles' itself consists also of a process description.

Material:

No other information is necessary.

'Letting Go' Style

Getting into the conversation by:

- Giving time to let things develop.
- Waiting for things to happen in a natural way.
- Avoiding an over-emotional approach
- Avoiding rush and pressure.

'Active Listening' Style

Getting into the conversation by:

- Asking questions when things are unclear.
- Checking things by summarizing.
- Being reserved in giving your own opinion.
- Giving space to the mentee.
- Showing that you understand the mentee.

'Advisory' Style

Getting into the conversation by:

- Giving suggestions for good problem solving.
- Advising as an objective outsider.
- Giving alternatives so that the mentee can make a choice.
- Giving advice expertise based

'Prescribing' Style

Getting into the conversation by:

- Taking responsibility for solving the mentee's problems.
- Offering instructions on how to handle problems.
- Being convincing and persuading.
- Requiring improvement and if necessary holding out the prospect of consequences.

'Cooperative' Style

Getting into the conversation by:

- Striving for a joint vision.
- Involving the mentee in problem-solving.
- Giving space to the opinion of the mentee.
- Appreciating equality in contributions.
- Being focussed on cooperation.

Guidelines for completing the questionnaire.

There are many different possible mentoring styles, all of which can be appropriate according to different situations. Most mentors have a preference to one or two styles in relation to their personality and beliefs. It can be important to be aware of your favoured style, the advantages and limitations of the style. It can also be important to be able to switch to another style when the situation or your mentee 'asks' for it. What do you think is your 'dominant' style and which second style do you think you have?

Please fill in the following:

I expect my most favoured style to be:

I expect my second most favoured style to be:

Now fill in the questionnaire, giving each statement a mark as follows: strongly disagree [1], disagree [2], neither agree or disagree [3], agree [4], or strongly agree [5].

Sometimes it may be difficult to choose a number. Don't think about it as a matter of conscience! It is meant as an adventure in the field of self knowledge!

Questionnaire: Mentoring Styles

1 = I strongly disagree

2 = I disagree

3 = I agree nor disagree

4 = I agree

5 = I totally agree

Points

1. When I deeply go into the problems of the mentee, this often evokes new problems; I prefer to avoid that.
2. When I see that my mentee is worried about something I take a lot of time to go into this.
3. I give all kind of suggestions to my mentees with the expectation that they choose the best suggestion for themselves.
4. For complicated problems I give solutions to the mentee because the mentee does not have a good overview in those cases.
5. We solve together the mentee's problem on the basis of equality.
6. As a mentor I wait and see how the mentees see their problems.
7. I give my mentees space to talk about their problems; I do not give my opinion in principle.
8. I see myself as someone who in mentoring situations gives suggestions and mentees then can make a choice themselves.
9. From my experience I feel entitled to indicate how problems can be solved in the most efficient way.

10. In the mentoring relationship I abandon from any hierarchy between me and the mentee so that we can share our contributions equally.
11. If a mentee is functioning badly I stay calm: those problems often resolve themselves.
12. I am open minded to solutions coming from the mentee, even if on first sight I do not think much of them.
13. If a mentee really is in trouble, good thinking is impossible for him or her, so in these occasions it is better that I do the work of the problem solving.
14. Good solutions are hard to find so I often insist on that mentees follow my advice.
15. In the mentoring process I am constantly searching for solutions that can really be acceptable for me and the mentee.
16. I keep away from problems of my mentees because I think it is better that they solve their problems themselves or with the help of their friends and colleagues.
17. When listening to my mentee I in principle do not give my opinion.
18. A good mentor really is a good adviser who stimulates the other to think and reflect after suggesting all kinds of solutions.
19. Because of my position, experience and expertise I can analyse problems very quickly and then point at solutions in an effective way.
20. As a mentor I am open and clear about my points of view and I expect the mentee to be the same.
21. I send a mentee with personal problems to an expert in that field.

22. I often take the position of a 'sounding board'.

23. Mentoring for me is a matter of giving ideas that lead to problem solving.

24. In mentoring conversations I talk mostly about how to handle problems in an effective way.

25. The best solutions come from two directions.

Scoring.

Fill in the points (1-5) that you gave to the statements. Then add up the points vertically.

1.....2.....3.....4..... 5.....

6.....7.....8.....9.....10.....

11.....12.....13.....14.....15.....

16.....17.....18.....19.....20.....

21.....22.....23.....24..... 25.....

Letting Go	Active Listening	Advising	Prescribing	Cooperation
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Some questions for reflection.

Individual reflection.

1. In what way does your score connect to what you thought of your mentoring style in the beginning? What are your thoughts and feelings? Write something here.

2. What does the outcome mean to you? What conclusions do you draw? Write something here.

Reflection in pairs:

3. Share your thoughts with your neighbour – as much as you want to share.
4. Try to find the situations in which your styles are appropriate and not.
5. Think about the differences in mentoring in pre service, induction and in service education.
6. Choose an item that, as a pair, you would be willing to share in the plenary.