“Mentoring is probably the most powerful developmental process people can experience. And when it works, it develops two for the price of one. *The Mentoring Pocketbook* is a no-nonsense primer for the first-time mentor or mentee.”

Prof. David Clutterbuck, Co-founder, The European Mentoring and Coaching Council

“The Mentoring Pocketbook is the basis of the Mentoring Programme at Mövenpick Hotels & Resorts. Mentoring has been fundamental to supporting our approach to talent development throughout the company. Not only is it providing our top talent with the support they need to make the challenging transition to more senior leadership roles but it also supports our current generation of business leaders. Mentoring has greatly enhanced their unique contribution to the company and the company's learning and development culture.”

Bruce Harkness, VP Learning & Development, Mövenpick Hotels & Resorts Management AG
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Mentoring includes a number of processes. Different mentors have different strengths and work in different ways. Whatever approach or style you use, working within a well-thought out, robust and flexible framework will ensure you are most effective in helping your mentee.

A useful framework is a 3-stage model* of helping:

1. EXPLORATION
2. NEW UNDERSTANDING
3. ACTION PLANNING

THE MENTORING PROCESS

3-STAGE MODEL

The model can be used in a number of ways:

- To **reflect** upon what mentoring involves, and to **assess** yourself as a mentor
- As a **schedule** for a mentoring meeting - to work through the stages
- As a **map** of the mentoring process - to see what ground has been covered and what needs further attention
- To **review** the mentoring relationship over time, as the mentee moves towards achieving the goals identified earlier in the relationship
- To **enhance** shared understanding of the mentoring process and relationship, and to develop the mentee’s ability to use the model independently
Mentoring gives me a real buzz and makes me feel unbelievably good that somebody can learn and develop with my help. It has enabled my influence to spread in the organisation and thus assist the change process in a way which is more powerful than any other process I know.

A manager and mentor
THE MENTORING PROCESS

STAGE 1: EXPLORATION

**Strategies**
As mentor, you aim to:
- Establish ground rules
- Take the lead by listening
- Pay attention to the relationship and develop it
- Clarify the aims and objectives of the mentoring
- Support the exploration

**Methods**
As mentor, you:
- Help create the agenda
- Listen carefully
- Ask open questions
- Summarise

1 EXPLORATION  2 NEW UNDERSTANDING  3 ACTION PLANNING
THE MENTORING PROCESS

STAGE 1: EXPLORATION
GETTING MAXIMUM BENEFIT

- Take the lead in creating a rapport with your mentee and an atmosphere that encourages exploration; show your commitment to the mentee, the mentoring process and the mentoring relationship

- Give it time, be patient; action plans come unstuck when rushed, and insufficient exploration leads to faulty understanding in Stage 2 and hence to inappropriate plans (investment of time and care in Stage 1 pays dividends later in the meeting and later in the relationship)

- Help your mentee to arrive at his or her own answers

- Resist the temptation to give advice or tell the mentee what to do (there are occasions when advice and direction are helpful, but not in Stage 1)
THE MENTORING PROCESS

STAGE 1: EXPLORATION

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

As a mentor, you might say:

- ‘What would you like to talk about today?’
- ‘Tell me about your experience of...’
- ‘Let’s explore this issue some more.’
- ‘You’ve said very little about X, but that seems to be central to the issue we are discussing.’
- ‘What I understand you to be saying is... (paraphrase/summarise). Does that seem right?’
- ‘Shall we start by recapping on our last meeting?’
THE MENTORING PROCESS

STAGE 1: EXPLORATION

HOW LONG DOES STAGE 1 LAST?

This is an important question but it does not have a straightforward answer. It is important to think about how much time to give to exploring an issue so that you can assess progress.

Much depends upon the topic being explored:

- If it is something **significant**, related to changes in personal or professional attitudes and behaviours, you may find that you need to explore an issue on and off for several months or longer

- If it is a **practical** topic, related to knowledge or skills, it may take a few minutes or a few hours

Either as mentor or mentee, if you feel that you are stuck in a rut of endless exploration with no progress, it is time to talk about your relationship.
About the Authors

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