Mentoring

- **What is mentoring**
  - Mentoring is the "wise counselling" of a trainee from dependence and inexperience through to maturity and independent professionalism
  - A relationship
  - An activity
  - A helping ~~hand~~ / ear / brain / mouth
  - What it's not!
    - Training
    - Coaching
    - Education
    - Consultancy
    - A substitute for being self-reliant
- **Being mentored**
  - Finding a mentor
    - Understand the improvement or change you want to make - what is the end state?
    - Identify an individual that you respect, and who you think may be able to add value
      - Knowledge
      - Skills
      - Reputation
      - Existing network
      - Pre-exiting relationship
      - Approachability
    - Approach that individual and ask directly whether they'd be willing and available to help you - do they have any experience of being a mentor?
  - Mentoring sessions
    - Be clear about what you want from each session
    - The onus is upon you to organise the session
    - Don't ask the mentor to do things for you, you want their experience and insight
    - Don't waste your mentor's time!
    - Always look for a means of thanking / recognising your mentor
- **Being a Mentor**
  - The Rules
    - Be wary of being "used"
    - Don't get over-involved
    - Research and practise the mentoring process
    - Understand what *you* want to get from the relationship
    - Don't be afraid to say "no", but help where possible in suggesting alternatives
  - The Rewards
    - Enhances own standing and reputation within the organization
    - Personally rewarding
    - Network building
  - The Process
    - Listen lots!
      - Use active listening skills
        - **L**ook Interested - body language and demeanour
        - **I**nvolve yourself through questioning - make the connection
        - **S**tay on track - be careful to only deal with one subject at a time
        - **T**est your understanding - play back a summary and look for agreement
        - **E**valuate the message - have you any experience to add here, does it all stack up?
        - **N**eutralise your own feelings - no prejudice, but don't get too drawn into "wrong" discussions
    - Ask lots of questions
      - Good Question types
        - Open
        - Focused or factual
        - Hypothetical
        - Reflective
        - Closed
        - Linked
      - Be careful using these question types
        - Leading
        - Multiple
        - Forced choice
        - Subtopic
    - Don't give solutions early in the process - it will end up being your fault if they don't work!
    - Generate options / possibilities
    - Try and get the mentee to come up with the answers
    - Talk about the risks of the solution and introduce own experience here
    - Get the mentee to summarise the outcome and take responsibility for the action plan
    - Do follow up and ask how things went
- **PPSO Aspects**
  - What sort of PPSO are you in?
    - Administration
    - Guidance
    - Control
  - Mentoring or being mentored?
    - type of PPSO
    - the maturity of the organisation
    - capability of individuals
  - Think about when to use mentoring vs coaching
    - Mentoring - personal and professional development - soft and flexible
    - Coaching - skills development, professional certification
- **Benefits of Mentoring Vs Coaching**
  - Positive
    - Can be much less formal
    - Draws out personal commitment as the answers often come from within
    - Helps to build personal and professional networks
    - Mentor doesn't have to be a SME, but does have to know and be able to practise the mentoring process
    - Light-touch process
      - Non-threatening
      - Objective and confidential
    - Cost - effective, but the costs can be hidden
    - Considers wider implications than pure training
  - Negative
    - Resourcing implications
    - No substitute for formal skills training
    - Risk that the skill set of the mentor is inappropriate
    - Hard to attribute and measure the benefits in a hard way
- **Learning Organisation**
  - Scientific knowledge is created by research
  - How does business learn
  - How do individuals in business learn

PPSO
www.ppsosig.co.uk
the programme & project support office
specialist interest group

Mentoring.mmap - Chris Walters