

Mentoring as a Knowledge Management Tool in Organisations

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Assignment presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy (Information and Knowledge Management) at Stellenbosch University



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March 2007

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this assignment is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

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ABSTRACT

Mentoring programmes have been implemented in organisations to manage succession planning and talent management; to make sure that there are enough resources (people) to take over some tasks when employees in those positions retire or leave the organisation for greener pastures. Mentoring programmes have also been implemented to minimize the call back of retired employees to the organisation at an exorbitant salary to transfer the knowledge that should have been transferred while they were still employees of the organisation.

The number one problem facing organisations these days is talent management and global brain drain. Organisations are continuously faced with challenges of how they are going to make sure that their intellectual capital and knowledge remain in their organisational structures and not lost to competitors outside. Organisations have tried many tools to enhance knowledge sharing and transfer, however very little research has been done to look at mentoring as another form to share and transfer knowledge within the structures of organisations.

This study aims to look at mentoring and the role it plays in knowledge management as a tool to share and transfer knowledge. It will also pursue to understand the term mentoring, how it differs or is similar to coaching and other related terms. It will also look at how organisations can go about implementing and running mentoring programmes.

The research will follow a methodology of literature review from various primary and secondary sources, to ascertain what has been written on mentoring in general, as well as more specifically literature on the relationship between mentoring and knowledge management and its use in organisations. It will also look at local and international firms which have implemented mentoring programmes and how they have succeeded in managing and transferring knowledge between experienced and less experienced employees. It will also look at types of mentoring that the organisation may consider implementing in respective structures. Roles and responsibilities of various parties in the mentoring programme will also be discussed briefly.

It has been proven in this research that little has been written and researched on mentoring and knowledge management. Even companies mentioned in this research, their mentoring programmes didn't have a knowledge management flavour in it; they looked more at succession planning and the human resource factor of mentoring. South Africa as a country as well is still lagging behind with regard to mentoring; it is only in 2006 that an association of mentoring and coaching was introduced, which hopes to look at implementing country-wide standards and ethics. United States of America and United Kingdom are well developed and far ahead with mentoring in general as well as within organisations.

Seeing that little has been written on the concept of mentoring and knowledge management, this research concludes that more research need to be conducted to understand and look at the relationship and value of mentoring in knowledge management. It also recommends further research on e-mentoring. The research also recommends that mentoring should be included in performance agreements of experienced employees.

OPSOMMING

Organisasies maak gebruik van mentorskapprogramme as instrumente om opvolgbeplanning te doen en talenhantering te bestuur. Hierdeur kan hulle verseker dat daar genoeg menslike hulpbronne beskikbaar is om sleuteltake oor te neem wanneer werknemers in sekere posisies aftree, of die onderneming verlaat om ander geleenthede aan te gryp. Mentorskapprogramme word ook ingespan om die terugroep van afgetrede kollegas na die werkplek, sodat hulle hul kennis aan opvolgers kan oordra, tot die minimum te beperk. Buitensporige salarisse word in sulke gevalle betaal vir kennis wat oorgedra kon word terwyl die persoon nog in diens van die onderneming was.

‘n Groot probleem wat organisasies tans in die gesig staar, is die bestuur van talent, tesame met die globale verlies aan breinkrag. Hulle word voortdurend gekonfronteer met uitdagings om te verseker dat hulle intellektuele kapitaal en -kennis binne hulle organisasie se strukture behoue bly, en nie aan hulle mededingers afgestaan word nie. Ondernemings het al verskeie maniere op die proef gestel om die deel en oordrag van kennis te bevorder, maar desondanks is daar nog baie min navorsing gedoen om mentorship te ondersoek as ‘n middel om die doel en oordrag van kennis in ‘n organisasie te bewerkstellig.

Hierdie studie beoog die ondersoek van mentorship en die rol daarvan in kennisbestuur as instrument in die deel en oordrag van kennis. Dit sal poog om die begrip mentorship uit te klaar, asook hoe dit van ander terme soos bv. afrigting verskil of met hulle ooreenstem. Die doel is ook om vas te stel hoe organisasies die implementering en uitvoer van mentorskapprogramme kan hanteer.

Die navorsing sal literatuur wat uit verskeie primêre en sekondêre bronne verkry is, ondersoek, ten einde vas te stel wat oor die algemeen oor mentorship geskryf is. In die besonder sal literatuur ondersoek word wat die verhouding tussen mentorship en kennisbestuur, en die gebruik daarvan in organisasies, uitlig. Daar sal gekyk word na plaaslike en internasionale firmas wat mentorskapprogramme implementeer, en die mate waartoe hulle daarin geslaag het om kennisoordrag tussen ervare en onervare werknemers te bestuur. Die soorte mentorship wat die bepaalde organisasie in sekere strukture oorweeg, sal ook onder die soeklig geplaas word. Die rol en verpligtinge van verskeie deelnemers aan die mentorskapprogram sal ook kortliks bespreek word.

Hierdie navorsing het aan die lig gebring dat weinig oor mentorship en kennisbestuur geskryf en nagevors is. Selfs die firmas wat ondersoek is, het nie die klem op kennisbestuur geplaas nie; hulle het eerder gekyk na opvolgbeplanning en die menslike hulpbronaspek van mentorship. Suid-Afrika skiet ook ver tekort wat mentorship aanbetref. Dit is eers in 2006 dat ‘n organisasie vir mentorship en afrigting, wat beoog om landswye standaarde en etiese oorwegings te implementeer, gestig is. Die Verenigde State van Amerika en die Verenigde Koninkryk is goed ontwikkel en ver gevorderd sover dit mentorship in die algemeen sowel as in organisasies aanbetref.

In die lig daarvan dat baie min geskryf is oor die onderwerp van mentorship en kennisbestuur, het hierdie navorsing tot die slotsom gekom dat baie ondersoek nog gedoen moet word rondom die verhouding en waarde van mentorship en kennisbestuur. Verdere navorsing rakende e-mentorship word aanbeveel. Dit is ook wenslik dat mentorship ingesluit word in prestasie-ooreenkomste van ervare werknemers.

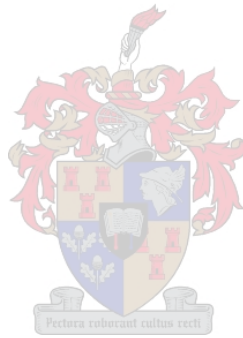
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To God be the Glory!

My wife for her continuous support and encouragement.

My colleagues at Sasol InfoNet for their support.

My supervisor for his guidance.



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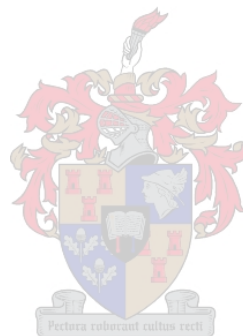
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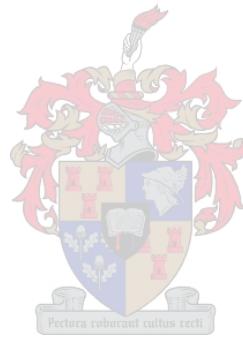


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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

Creating and sharing knowledge provides value to organisations and the potential to create competitive advantage (Boisot, as cited in Bryant, 2005) Up to now organisations increase their knowledge creation and sharing through several processes like;

- Company intranets.
- Training programmes.
- Research & Development programmes.
- Internal workshops & conferences.
- Sharing best practices between departments

Looking at the short list above, nothing is mentioned about mentoring as a method of sharing and transferring knowledge. This is because many organisations have not looked at mentoring as a knowledge management tool but rather as a human resources tool in contributing to employee motivation, job performance and retention rates (Wilson & Elman 1990). Bryant, (2005) argues another point that current mentoring literature emphasizes the outcomes of mentoring and focuses primarily on career related benefits and psychological benefits. He also continues by stating that there is no empirical work on the impact of mentoring relationships on knowledge creation and sharing.

The South African Government has in 2006 indicated that it needs to call back people who are on retirement to re-join the public sector so as to share and transfer their knowledge to current employees. This obviously has some cost implication as these retirees will need to be paid consultant fees, however the long term benefits are beyond the initial costs, meaning the public sector will be in a position to save on red tape and extra training.

With a huge turnaround time in organisations lately, it is important that the focus of mentoring is moved to the value it can bring to make the organisation as competitive as possible rather than focusing on a human resource aspect only.

“Today, in our love affair with what’s new, what’s cutting edge, and what’s technologically cool, it’s easy to forget that knowledge also comes with experience. It may require a few hours of e-training or a semester-long course to learn how an energy pump operates, but it takes years and years of experience to recognize the sounds of a pump that is not operating properly. The only way to shorten that learning cycle is to have someone with more experience help to accelerate learning.”¹

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Today’s organisations are faced with the continuous problem of huge staff turnover and loss of knowledge in the process. Staff turnover is not only caused by people job hopping, but also by a number of experienced individuals who are reaching their retirement age and will be leaving the organisation. We can also look at other crises like HIV/AIDS, poverty and crime which lead to loss of valuable knowledge at an unexpected time. Many organisations are caught sleeping when an employee retire, and then realize that the knowledge of that employee has not been captured in any way/form.

Although much has been written about mentoring in recent years, there is a lack of literature on how mentoring is practiced in South African organisations as well as how it is used to support knowledge management action in organisations, very little has been written about the latter with the exception of Bryant (2005) and Mullen & Noe (1999). Many literature sources have focused on mentoring as supporting human resources and overall succession planning for managers.

Cranwell-Ward (2004:21) pointed that mentoring is an excellent development initiative to help address the challenges brought up by the knowledge economy. Through mentoring, knowledge will be shared both ways between mentors and protégés, also ensuring that little knowledge is lost when staff members resign from the organisation. By this organisations are making sure that knowledge is retained at all times within the organisation and not lost to the world or even more dangerously, to competitors.

There is evidence from various studies that mentoring in organisations allow senior managers to share their experiences with junior staff (Bollinger and Smith 2001). It allows organisations

¹ Sasol’s approach to mentoring

to capture know-how of experienced staff members and transferring that knowledge to people who will take over the responsibility from them.

Failure of mentoring in most cases can be attributed to lack of commitment to the mentoring process, as both management and employee do not fully appreciate the extent of the benefit, or because they do not understand the process and underlying success factors (Myburgh 2004)

Seeing that employees do not understand mentoring (Myburgh 2004) and the process of achieving acceptable goals it is a challenge for them to understand what role mentoring can play in their organisations to support knowledge management in transferring and sharing knowledge across.

Many retired employees are being asked to come back to organisations to help finish projects and help on certain tasks, because there is no one among the remaining employees who is experienced enough or have the capability to tackle those roles. In coming back they cost organisations millions of rands as they now have to be paid consultant rates as well as pay the permanent employees. Other organisation face close-down due to lack of intellectual and experienced employees to take the organisation further.

As mentoring has been used for many years as a human resources function or only for development of senior management staff, to prepare them to take over the reigns when their predecessor retires. Very little has been written on the role of knowledge management in mentoring.

This research proposes to understand how mentoring works, whether it can be used as a knowledge management tool; how it is used in organisations as well as some examples of organisations where mentoring has been used/implemented.

The research problem to be investigated will be based on the following questions:

- What is mentoring and its relationship with knowledge management?
- How can knowledge sharing/transfer be achieved in an organisation?
- What role does knowledge management & mentoring play in an organisation?

- What is the difference between mentoring, coaching and other related terms?

1.3 METHODOLOGY

This research project will be conducted by means of a literature review of various sources as a point of departure. A lot has been written on the general concept of mentoring, however little has been published on mentoring and its relation to knowledge management. In this instance I'll use my experience and knowledge of knowledge management to come up with roles of mentoring on KM.

The research project will also look at organisations that have implemented mentoring and use it to some instance as a knowledge management tool.

1.4 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1

Background to research, problem statement and research problems.

Chapter 2

This chapter will provide definition of mentoring, overview of the origin of mentoring, types of mentoring as well as distinguishing between mentoring, coaching and other related terms.

Chapter 3

This chapter will give an understanding of the role of knowledge management in organisations as well as understanding of knowledge sharing and transfer.

Chapter 4

This chapter will give in depth understanding of mentoring in organisations, its benefits, role players and will conclude by listing barriers affecting mentoring in organisations.

Chapter 5

This chapter will discuss in brief several examples of organisations which have mentoring programmes in place.

Chapter 6

This chapter will provide the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 2

OVERVIEW OF MENTORING

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will be devoted to the overview of mentoring by providing definitions to the concept. In order to fully understand the concept of mentoring, definitions of mentoring and coaching as well as other related terms will be reviewed. A brief overview of mentoring is also provided. Types of mentoring will also be discussed in this chapter.

2.1 DEFINING MENTORING

Understanding the term mentoring varies widely; and different people/organisations use it to suit their needs. Various authors also define mentoring in many different ways, either in a work or personal context. Meyer & Fourie (2004:2) define mentoring as a process that is not static and coming from both sides (mentor and protégé). This relationship happens within a work environment where an advanced employee (mentor) helps a less experienced employee (protégé) to develop in certain areas that may be specified or unspecified, meaning there must be a clear purpose and focus for development through mentoring.

Levinson (as cited by Myburgh, 2004) sees mentoring not in terms of formal roles, but in terms of the character of the relationship and the functions it serves. He sees the mentor as someone who provides counsel and moral support and someone who, through own virtue can be someone that the protégé can admire and seek to emulate.

Kroon (1996:6) defines mentoring as a purposeful open and mutual relationship which results in learning and development with mutual respect, acceptance and trust. We can gather from this, that mentoring does not happen in a vacuum, but there is an underlying purpose for it to take place.

Parsloe and Wray (2001:82) define mentoring as a process that supports learning and development and thus performance improves for an individual, team or business.

In view of the different definitions of mentoring, one can realise that mentoring is a process that happens within an organisation between two employees with different work experience. Mentoring can also happen outside the organisation, however for the purpose of this paper we will only concentrate on mentoring within the organisation.

Meyer & Fourie (2004:3) raise an important point that mentoring is not about being sponsored for promotion; rather it is one of the many tools to aid in the development of employee to be a better employee in the long term. Mentoring is therefore one effective vehicle for moving knowledge through the organisation from employees who have the most experience and learning to those who have less experience.

Shea (2003: 13) states what he calls a widely accepted definition of mentoring as an exceptional developmental, caring and sharing relationship where one person invests time, know-how and effort in enhancing another person's growth, insights, perspective and wisdom as well as knowledge and skill and responds to other critical needs in the life of that person to prepare them for greater productivity, understanding or achievement in future.

While there is a widespread agreement about the characteristics of mentoring, it is important to recognise that such relationships can also differ in a number of ways, e.g. the relationship between the internal mentor and external mentor can be different; the protégé will be more comfortable to fully discuss work "politics" with the latter than with the former. A conservative definition of mentoring is of a one-on-one, informal, spontaneous relationship, often only recognised as a mentoring relationship in hindsight.

2.2 WHAT IS COACHING?

Meyer and Fourie (2004:5) see coaching as the systematically planned and direct guidance of an individual or group of individuals by a coach to learn and develop specific skills that are applied and implemented in the workplace and therefore translate directly to defined performance outcomes that are achieved over a short period of time.

One can deduct from the definition above that coaching, unlike mentoring, is a planned process, meaning it happens consciously and directed towards a specific goal, and individuals

learn and develop a specific skill. To my understanding coaching can be defined as an extension of the boss/subordinate relationship, which takes on a defined training component.

Hofmeyer (1987:14) sees coaching as being different to mentoring in the sense that it is a narrower relationship, stating that the superior has a very real influence on the behaviour, attitude, motivation and work performance of his subordinates. Peterson and Hicks (1996:14) see coaching as the process of equipping people with the tools, knowledge and opportunities to develop themselves and become more effective.

Meyer & Fourie (2004:7) continue by arguing that coaching is concerned primarily with performance and the development of definable skills. It usually starts with the learning goal already identified; if it is not by the executive, then by an influential third party. Coaching can be taken as another form of on-the-job training, using work to provide planned opportunities for learning under guidance.

Table 1: Difference between mentoring and coaching (Meyer and Fourie 2004:6)

Coaching	Mentoring
Provides day-to-day skills to be used on the job.	Provides medium to long term skills development.
Two parties are involved i.e. the manager and employee.	Three parties are involved i.e. the manager, employee and mentor.
The coach is usually the immediate line manager.	The mentor is an independent third party.
Maintained by performance appraisal	Maintained by development agreement.
Driven by individual coaches.	Driven by a steering committee.
Usually no policy framework for coaching.	Guided by policy framework.
Coaches are appointed.	Mentors are nominated or are volunteers.
Occurs on-the-job.	Occurs off the job.
Is training focused?	Is development focused?
Relationships are formed due to supervisory role.	Relationships are formed via matching.
Goals, objectives and tasks are normally not documented.	Goals, objectives and tasks are documented.

Job outputs are measured.	Developmental outputs and the overall mentoring process can be measured.
Used to promote individual competence.	Used for a variety of reasons.
The relationship continues as long as there is a supervisory-employee relationship.	Once goals are achieved, the formal relationship is terminated.

According to Cranwell-Ward, Basson and Gover (2004:45) coaching is seen to be more skills related, with specific capabilities-linked outcomes. It would be acceptable for a line manager to coach a member of his/her staff. Mentoring is positioned much more around the whole person and the big picture and it generally helps that the line manager would not be a subordinate's mentor. This is mainly because a line manager has performance management responsibilities which could get in the way of genuine mentoring conversations.

2.3 ORIGIN OF MENTORING

As mentoring has been in existence over a number of centuries; various theories on the origin of mentoring have been put forward by different people. Some scholars familiar with the original work of mentoring believe that the true origin of the modern use of the term more likely comes from the work of 18th Century French writer Fenelom, also an educator. African scholars have however noted that mentors were commonplace in Africa, long before the ancient Greek Civilization. (Merlevede & Bridoux 2004:6)

Most popular literature on mentoring attributes the origin of mentoring to Homer (Greek Storyteller) who in his tale tells of the king of Ithaca, Odysseus, who asked his friend, Mentor to look after his son, Telemachus while he fought to win the Trojan War. Mentor's task was to educate, train and develop the youngster to fulfil his birthright and become king of Ithaca. (Kaye & Jacobson 1995:24)

Merlevede and Bridout (2004:1) mentions the origin of mentoring in France in 1689 where a French prelate, Francois Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambrai and foremost intellectual light in the country at the time, was nominated tutor of Louis the XIV's grandson and heir to the throne, Louis Duke of Burgundy, then seven years old.

Turner (2001:2) states that mentoring has a long and reputable history through time. Mentoring has included trade and craft guilds, apprenticeship systems and similar learning styles. In the late 20th Century, mentoring has returned to popularity under a variety of names and styles, again mainly as a method by which a less experienced individual can learn from a more experienced one. It has embraced a number of innovations, one of them being facilitated mentoring wherein an organisation, usually the employer, established a specific methodology and expectations and places individuals into relationships. In Greek the word mentoring means enduring.

Throughout the years mentoring in organisations has changed with the times as the world of work is changing. Many people think of mentoring as a powerful tool in helping people to learn. The following are some characteristics as mentioned by Lewis (2000 :9) that illustrate the importance of mentoring;

- **It has flexibility:** mentoring can happen in so many ways and in a wide variety of circumstances. There is no prescribed minimum set of rules or requirements for mentoring to happen; the only necessities are time and at least two people.
- **It is an off-line activity:** it takes place out of the run of normal operational activity. Thus it has an element of informality and is more like a social than a professional activity.
- **It does not relate to work and the job:** although the style is not prescribed by work conventions, the substance can be highly work focused and is therefore seen as practical.
- **It is individual:** it relates directly and uniquely to the needs and interest of the individual, in a way that few group development activities or remote development activities can.
- **It is people-centred:** it engages people as people, with all their values, motives and feelings. It engages hearts as well as minds.
- **It is a feedback system:** feedback is a structured component of a mentoring relationship. It is known to engage interest and attention, also to enhance learning.
- **It is broad in focus:** many of the methods of learning, by their very nature, are located in specific personal, technical or functional skill areas. Mentoring on the other hand, can encompass the whole range of working and human activity.

- **It is not exclusive:** one of the great advantages of mentoring is that it can be coordination, stimulating and monitoring process that operates in parallel or in addition to any or all of the other learning methods.

2.4. MENTORING THROUGH THE AGES

As mentioned previously it is believed that mentoring has been in existence through the different ages, however, I strongly believe that it is in the last two ages that mentoring was “formally” acknowledged or known to organisations. This statement is supported by Shea (2003:6) where he states the characteristics of mentoring in both the industrial and information age.

2.4.1 Industrial Age Mentoring

The Industrial Age model of mentoring is characterised by a single-minded focus on career advancement. The model assumes that all “eligible” employees are seeking to climb an organisational ladder within the tall, hierarchical, multi-layered organisation of the past. Other characteristics include:

- The perception that a mentor is a protector and a sponsor: this model reflects the medieval term protégé. Historically the protégé’s career was placed in the hands of a more powerful advocate.
- A tendency to clone look-alike, think-alike and act-alike managers: this model encouraged managers to share a particular organisational vision and culture and hold similar career aspirations.
- A fundamentally elitist vision of mentoring: mentoring was a strategy for assimilating “high potential” personnel, rather than using it as a tool for discovering or developing varied talents throughout the workforce.
- The exclusion of broader, organisational concerns: because of its emphasis on an individual’s career-development goals, the Industrial Age model tended to overlook the importance of mentoring to organisation development.
- A preoccupation with the rationalisation of work, logical problem solving and the “dumping down” of most jobs: during this age, this preoccupation left little besides a pay check for the millions of employees who either applied their

imagination and talents to activities outside the workplace or simply never developed these facets of their abilities.

- A tendency to characterise people by the work they do: companies that embraced the Industrial Age model often failed to explore the many facets of each employee's personality, aspirations, talents and experience. Companies were often left with a passive workforce and a rift between workers and management that was spanned only by the occasional use of informal mentoring by a supervisor or technical or professional person who decided to help a less experienced subordinate.

(Shea 2003:45)

2.4.2 Information Age Mentoring

Information Age organisations use mentoring to improve the quality of employee work life, train in specialized technical skills and adapt its operations in ways that take advantage of rapidly developing workforce diversity Shea (2003:7). These organisations hone each person's inner uniqueness and their special array of talents, experience and abilities. According to Shea (2003:48) typical goals are:

- Mentor training to enable a person to operate across the entire mentoring spectrum, meet short-term situational needs, and work within the context of both informal and formal mentoring relationships.
- Protégé training to help the learner build a “partnering” relationship with a mentor, take greater responsibility for self-development, and make more effective use of what a mentor can offer.
- A highly flexible and often voluntary system of mentoring where mentors and protégé decide if they can or should work together.
- A formal system that is non-burdensome, non-bureaucratic and virtually self-managed. A mentoring coordinator identifies appropriate matches and leaves the task of forming the relationship up to the potential participants.
- An intranet bulletin board system for protégés to list their needs and mentors list their skills and areas of special knowledge and experience (e-mentoring)
- An open system that allows for multiple mentors or protégé arrangements or for a given individual to serve as a mentor or protégé in informal relationships.

2.5. TYPES OF MENTORING

Mentoring comes in different formats. (Battin as cited by Myburgh 2004:35) distinguishes between two types of mentoring, defining these two types of mentoring as natural mentoring and planned mentoring. Natural mentoring occurs through friendship, collegiality, and teaching. In contrast, planned mentors and participants are selected and matched through a formal process. There are other various types of mentoring; however in this paper we will only mention a few.

2.5.1 Informal Mentoring

Traditionally according to Armstrong, Allison & Hayes (2002:2) the concept of mentoring is rested in informal system where linkages form almost by chance when a protégé randomly seeks help. Mutual feelings of trust, respect and caring may then emerge, even if the ones concerned are not normally sympathetic to formal supervisor–subordinate relationships in the organisation. Differentiating to formal mentoring, (Ragins & Cotton as cited by Armstrong, Allison and Hayes 2002:2) found that protégés with informal mentors reported that their mentors provided more career development and psychosocial functions than did protégés with formal mentors.

Informal mentoring programmes are much less structured and are initiated either when an aspiring junior manager approaches a senior person and asks him to be a mentor, or when a senior executive happens to cross someone s/he likes in the junior ranks and takes that person under his/her wings, sometimes without the full consent of the latter. There is typically no training or programme evaluation, (Shelley 2002:2). Informal mentoring can be enhanced if the participants in the relationship take time to formally discuss and establish specific goals for the transference of certain skills and knowledge in set time periods.

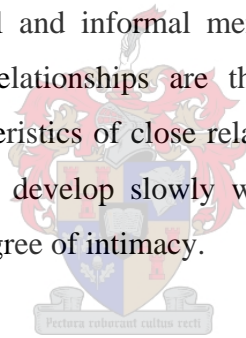
Organisations do not have control over informal mentoring activities, thus they do not become integrated within a broader career effort. Informal mentoring provides opportunities to both mentors and protégés to develop independent judgement, the relationship may even be beyond the workplace. On a negative side, colleagues who observe informal mentoring relationships may conclude that favouritism occurred, particularly in the case of hierarchical relationship.

2.5.2 Formal Mentoring

Formal mentoring programmes are developed with organisational approval and assistance, which usually involves establishing mentoring objectives, selecting and matching mentors and protégés helping them develop realistic expectations through orientation programmes, stating responsibilities for them and establishing the duration and frequency of time spent in specific mentoring activities.

Singh, Bains and Vinnicombe (2002:390) state that formal mentoring programmes are carefully structured and monitored. Individuals seeking mentors or protégés complete application forms stating their interest and needs; and the system will allocate them with mentors or protégé. Often the two parties do not meet until the match has been made, allowing no chance for interpersonal liking and interest as a basis for selection. Formal mentoring relationships are initiated and managed by an external party (Clark as cited by McDonald: 1995)

The key difference between formal and informal mentoring lies in the formation of the relationship. Informal mentoring relationships are those that arise spontaneously. This relationship possesses many characteristics of close relationship: It is based on good rapport and mutual attraction and tends to develop slowly without commitment by either party, resulting in strong ties and a high degree of intimacy.



2.5.3 Group Mentoring

Group mentoring occurs when a number of mentors serve together as a resource for a defined group of protégés with similar expectations. The mentor brings a variety of skills to the protégés and share responsibilities for the protégés' growth. The group may meet at regular intervals, and unlike a one-on-one pairing, if one or two mentors are unavailable, the protégés will still have a contact person. The protégé group also benefits from the varying backgrounds and skill sets of their peers and may not need the mentor's presence at each meeting.

Participation in a mentoring group develops cooperation and collaboration between people with similar objectives but potentially diverse backgrounds, such as a multidisciplinary treatment team. Group mentoring can benefit those sharing a workplace, drawing on the potential of informal meetings and gathering and transforming them into opportunities for context-specific learning and support.

(Kroon 1996:6)

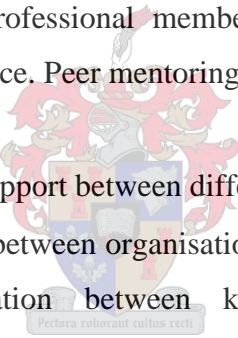
2.5.4 Facilitated Mentoring

Facilitated mentoring is a structure and series of processes designed to create effective mentoring relationships, guide the desired behaviour change of those involved and evaluate the results of the mentor and the organisation. Facilitated mentoring involves an autonomous body assigning individuals together based on character, skills, need and other criteria. Some organisations like Munich Reinsurance have facilitated mentoring programmes as part of their organisation's orientation process or as succession management strategy.

(Kaye & Jacobson 1996:46)

2.5.5 Peer Mentoring

Peer mentoring refers to a mentoring relationship between two people of equal standing who engage in reciprocal mentoring activities, each adopting the roles of protégés and mentor McDonald (2002). The peer mentoring model reflects increasing awareness that workers learn effectively from each other and that learning is an integral part of work. Instead of merely contributing to accreditation and professional membership requirements, peer mentoring encourages development of competence. Peer mentoring can enhance:

- 
- Knowledge sharing and support between different professions and vocations.
 - Collaboration within and between organisation, helping to reduce the “solo effect” which results in isolation between knowledge domains and different administration and functional services.
 - Dissemination of research and treatment innovation by pairing seasoned practitioners with those at the cutting edge of technology and research innovation.

The main goals of the peer mentoring relationships are sharing job-related knowledge and providing psychological support (Bryant 2005:233). Bryant also continues by stating that peer mentoring provides an effective way to transfer knowledge and encourage the learner.

2.5.6 E-Mentoring

This is a less researched topic sometimes referred to as tele-mentoring. E-mentoring provides flexibility and easy access, which is highly beneficial to those who may face barriers to being mentored, because of their gender, ethnicity, disability or geographical location (Bierena and Itill, as cited in Headlam-Wells, Gosland, Craig 2006:11). This is because all of the mentoring

activities are conducted via a system and a protégé would not know the gender or background of the mentor and vice versa.

Another advantage of e-mentoring is that the protégé are able to take responsibility for initiating contact and to play an active role in online discussions, rather than the mentor always initiating the discussions.

2.5.7 Self Managed Mentoring

In this model, as described by Darling and Schatz (1991), a person is responsible for and proactive about his/her own professional development by seeking a mentoring type relationship as the need arises. It is a dynamic and ongoing process and a person has a number of mentors simultaneously, each collaborating with him/her to develop particular strengths. Instead of developing a formal mentoring programme, a programme aimed at equipping workers to undertake this process may be implemented, which includes training workers to identify their individual mentoring needs (McDonald 2002). It is important that workers understand when mentoring is needed, their own unique developmental patterns, the most appropriate form of mentoring and how to proceed.

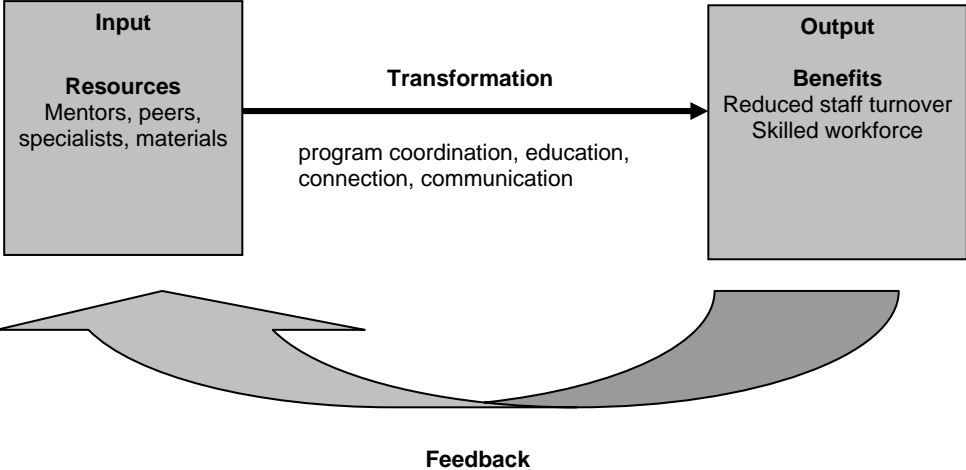
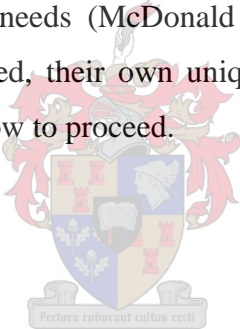


Figure 1: Self managed Model of Mentoring (McDonald: 1999)

2.5.8 Situational Mentoring

Some of the most powerful mentoring experiences occur in short bursts, when an individual provides the right information or ideas at the right moment in another person's life. The mentor may simply be responding to the protege's need without realising the impact his or her words are having. However, the incident may produce a significant effect on the other person and only later be recognised as powerful mentoring. The value of such a casual transfer of information or ideas depends largely on how well the protégé accepts and uses the information, if the information offered fits the protege's needs, the impact can be substantial (Shea 2003:41).

2.6 MENTORING STYLES

Myburgh (2004:38) researched the way in which mentors handle ambiguity, how they develop themselves and behave in ways that lead others to trust them. These depend on the mentoring style the mentor uses. He mentions five basic styles as identified by Hay (cited by Myburgh 2004:38):

1. Controlling
2. Nurturing
3. Logical
4. Adaptable
5. Spontaneous



One can argue that best mentors have all five styles to allow them to perform in their different roles. They are able to be firm and controlling without becoming authoritarian and insisting that they are right. They can be nurturing and reassuring without being so caring that they smother people. They have a logical, rational style when there are problems to solve, but still remain humane. They are able to adapt and fit in with the reasonable expectations of others without being submissive and are spontaneous without seeming immature or over-emotional, (Myburgh 2004:39).

Table 2: Mentoring Styles (Myburgh 2004:40)

<p style="text-align: center;">Expressive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appears communicative, warm and approachable. • Assertive and competitive. • Involves others with ideas and feelings. • Wants others as friends and followers, not competitors. • Gets involved with people in active situations. • Tends to make generalisations. • Outgoing, dynamic and energetic. • Sells themselves and their ideas. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Driving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task oriented, wants results. • Initiates action and acts purposefully. • Sticks to business, doesn't share thoughts and feelings. • Tends to be impatient and blunt. • Seems to control others and treat them as things and not as people. • Is friendly and pleasant but not own terms.
<p style="text-align: center;">Supportive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works well in relationships. • Does not appear to be assertive. • Uses feelings and empathy often. • Warm, supportive, people oriented. • Wants to be part of a team. • Willing to be of service to others and to please others. • Uses a friendly tolerant approach 	<p style="text-align: center;">Analytical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived to be factual, logical and consistent. • Can be seen as cold, formal and lacking enthusiasm. • Cautious about making friends and showing warmth. • Collects all facts before making decisions. • Systematic, orderly and rational. • Avoids emotional situations.

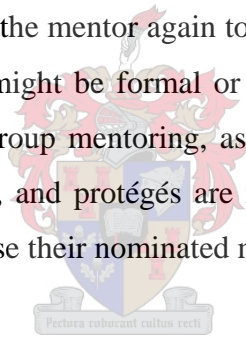
2.7. LESSONS LEARNED

In this chapter, definitions of mentoring and coaching, as well as their differences, have been discussed. The main important point to note is that mentoring is not what many people think it is, namely that the protégé is being sponsored or “eyed” for promotion or a senior position, but it is a tool that helps employees to develop and become better employees in the long run. Role players in both mentoring and coaching also differ: the latter will be conducted by an

immediate line manager, whereas the former will be conducted by a person who is in most cases not linked to the employees in performance measurement or in a direct work relation.

Like with any other concept, one needs to understand its origin to get better clarity of where it is going. Mentoring, as it evolved from the 18th Century, was used as a tool to “look after” someone, in this case Telemachus, while his father went on war. Mentoring can also be traced back to the Chinese and African past, where stories were told to the younger generation by the older generation, with the aim of transferring and sharing knowledge. It was also shown that mentoring has been in existence from the industrial to the information age.

There are various mentoring types and styles in existence. It is entirely up to the mentor to choose the style that will suit him/her and that will also be one that will create a positive relationship between him/her and the protégé. Many mentors and their respective organisations choose to use more than one mentoring style, in order to get effective results. With the mentoring types, it is up to the mentor again to decide what type of relationship s/he need to have with the protégé - it might be formal or informal. The research suggests that companies should invest more on group mentoring, as employees/protégés gain more from different people within their groups, and protégés are not only limited to one mentor; they always have someone to talk to in case their nominated mentor is not available.



With organisations becoming more and more global, it might be difficult for mentors and protégés to meet regularly, hence the research recommends that companies should look more and more into the concept of e-mentoring, where a mentoring session can be held via the internet or a specially created mentoring system. Today, with tools like e-mail, MSN Messenger and internet/intranets, e-mentoring is a real possibility.

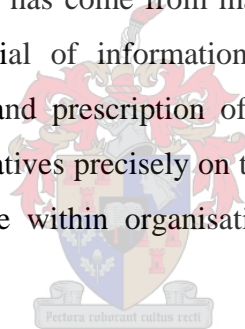
CHAPTER 3

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN MENTORING

INTRODUCTION

Knowledge Management (KM) as a concept has been introduced in organisations as a means of retaining the implicit knowledge that lies in people's heads into a manageable, recordable format, so that it does not get lost. In this chapter we will be looking at knowledge management and the role it plays in mentoring as a driver to share and transfer knowledge from older, more experienced colleague to the junior ones, before the former go on retirement or pension.

To some extent, KM has gained academic legitimacy on the back of Nonaka's work, but the driving force in the corporate world has come from major consulting companies seeking to capitalise on the enormous potential of information technology in a period following disenchantment with the methods and prescription of re-engineering. There are currently critiques being mounted of KM initiatives precisely on the grounds that they ignore the social architecture of knowledge exchange within organisations (Easterby-Smith and Lyles, ed. 2005:13)



Many mentoring literature sources have largely ignored the function of information and knowledge sharing, which can play a significant role in the mentoring relationship (Bryant 2005:320). He further confirms this observation by pointing out that "there is no empirical work on the impact of mentoring relationship and knowledge creation and sharing".

3.1. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN ORGANISATIONS

Knowledge is a critical factor affecting an organisation's ability to remain competitive in the new global market place. Organisations therefore need to recognize knowledge as a valuable resource and develop a mechanism for tapping into the collective intelligence and skills of employees in order to create a greater organisational knowledge base (Bollinger & Smith 2001:9)

Organisational knowledge includes all the tacit and explicit knowledge that individuals possess about the products, systems and processes and the explicit knowledge codified in manuals, databases and information systems (Bryant 2005:320). The number one concern or priority in organisations is how they will manage this tacit and explicit knowledge, also making sure that it is shared accordingly and transferred to other colleagues who will use it in the near future.

Managing organisational knowledge includes the process of creating knowledge, sharing knowledge and exploiting knowledge; mentors facilitate the knowledge creation and sharing process.

An issue that is affecting most organisations is the global aging population that sees a massive increase in staff reaching the retirement age over the next ten years. Poole and Sheehan (2006:22) state that if the experience of senior staff members is not transferred to the next generation through the processes of teaching, mentoring or coaching, the potential to innovate will be eroded. Organisations therefore need to identify:

- Critical knowledge: knowledge that enables them to differentiate themselves in a given market.
- Key knowledge holders: people critical to delivering knowledge.
- Strategies to manage brain drain: in order to mobilize critical knowledge and re-seed it within the organisation before it is lost with key knowledge holders.

3.2 HOW ARE ORGANISATIONS MANAGING THEIR KNOWLEDGE?

There are many techniques and technologies currently being used to manage knowledge. Some organisations are concerned mainly with capturing explicit knowledge and others are attempting to collect tacit knowledge through use of expert system (Bollinger & Smith 2001).

Another technique that can be mentioned is managing knowledge within organisations by means of mentoring. The goal however should not be to capture what everyone knows so that everyone has the same knowledge, which can be dangerous for the organisation, but to combine the various levels of expertise present to create new organisational knowledge.

Knowledge can be effectively managed by employing traditional mechanisms such as cross functional project teams. Mentoring can be used to manage knowledge in organisations by allowing senior employees to share their expertise with junior colleagues.

Mentoring is seen as an effective tool, as it doesn't happen on a short term, but can be long term and allow the organisation to be innovative and sustainable, also making sure that knowledge is retained within the organisation at all times.

It has not been literally proven that there is a relationship between mentoring and increased organisational knowledge, however a number of studies have found that individuals who are mentored perform better and are promoted more rapidly, presumably because they have learned and absorbed knowledge from their mentors (Swap, et al. 2001). It can be argued therefore that mentors are serving as informal teachers and knowledge is being transferred.

3.3 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN ORGANISATIONS

Grayson and O'Dell (as cited by Bollinger & Smith, 2001) defines knowledge of the organisation as what people know about customers, products, process, mistakes and success. Organisational knowledge accumulates over time and enables firms to attain levels of understanding and perception that lead to business astuteness and acumen.

Organisations are interested in managing knowledge for several reasons. Core competencies are based on the skills and experience of the people who do the work and may not exist in physical form. Therefore, it is important that organisations find a way to tap into this knowledge base in order to preserve and expand their core competencies.

Knowledge Management in organisations is usually concerned with capturing organisations' know-how and know-what through creation, collection, storage distribution and application. It means identifying and harnessing the collective knowledge of the organisation gained through experience and competencies. I believe that it is the goal of knowledge management for an organisation that is capable of measuring, storing and capitalizing on the expertise of employees to create an organisation that is more than the sum of its parts.

Like any other process in organisations, knowledge management has its organisational benefits as well, as cited by Lank (1997):

- Help employees to improve their performance and employability.
- Help organisations become more competitive by using new knowledge to reduce costs, increase speed and meet customers needs.
- Help generate less stress for employees trying to do more with fewer resources.

3.4. KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Knowledge transfer involves two actions; transmission and absorption. Merely making knowledge available is not to transfer knowledge. Access is necessary but by no means sufficient to ensure that knowledge will be used. Knowledge transfer goal is to improve an organisation's ability to do things and therefore increase its value.

Organisations today use different strategies to transfer knowledge between employees. Davenport and Prusak (1998:88) states that for organisations to manage knowledge effectively, they need to get people to talk to one another in an organisation, through different mediums available. Davenport and Prusak further highlight that knowledge transfer happens in organisations whether people manage it or not, at times it happens without people taking cognisance of it. These everyday knowledge transfers are part of organisational life.

One way to encourage knowledge transfer is to focus on a selected value, e.g. increased customer satisfaction. Employees then focus on capturing knowledge about the customers' needs and preferences. An important factor frequently mentioned in knowledge transfer literature is the culture of organisations. One dimension critical to knowledge transfer is co-operation and collaboration; this implies that knowledge transfer will not occur in an organisation unless its employees display a high level of cooperation (Goh 2002). The existence of a strong co-operative and collaborative culture is an important prerequisite for knowledge transfer between individuals and groups.

To support and re-enforce knowledge transfer there has to be an appropriate infrastructure in place. One important thing, as highlighted by Nokana (1994), is that breaking down hierarchies within the organisation enables knowledge transfer, whereas organisations that

maintains hierarchical levels and silos will not encourage knowledge transfer and such organisations frequently becomes ‘sticky’, residing in one area or silo, and not easily moved to other parts of the organisation. Another organisational support structure is a reward system. Cisco Systems (www.cisco.com) have identified the following as benefits of knowledge transfer and mentoring;

- Recruit and retain top performers by offering employees the ability to build their knowledge and skills through strategic knowledge transfer and mentoring solutions.
- Improve network operations and deployment confidence for emerging technologies.
- Decrease the costs of deployment and support by avoiding costly modifications in network deployment and operations.
- Maximize the use of features and functionalities within Cisco products for a better return on investment.
- Build a foundation for technology migration and growth.

Cisco Systems has also as part of their knowledge transfer programme developed onsite mentoring which helps customers deliver the best possible networking results, including unmatched network uptime and performance, by offering the expertise of Cisco engineers in an intimate environment where specific networking needs can be addressed. The Onsite Mentoring feature is available to customers who purchase Cisco Advanced Services support.

Cisco has also an Interactive Mentor, who provides a continuous stream of Cisco networking knowledge for professionals who plan, configure, deploy and troubleshoot networks based on Cisco products and technologies.

3.5 KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Knowledge sharing can be defined as “giving” of information from one individual to another, either through a database or as a face to face interaction. These days in organisations, it is important that knowledge be shared between employees, so as to allow it to flow on all levels of the organisation. It is also essential for the survival of almost all businesses.

Gurteen (1999) identified the following as reasons for the importance of knowledge sharing:

- Intangible products are taking a growing share of global trade from the application of new knowledge.
- Increasingly the only sustainable competitive advantage is continuous innovation.
- Increasing turn-over of staff, when someone leaves an organisation their knowledge walks out of the door with them.
- Organisations don't know what they know. Expertise learnt and applied in one part of the organisation is not leveraged in another.
- Accelerating change. As things change so does our knowledge base erode, in some businesses, as much of 50% of what you knew five (5) years ago is probably obsolete today.

Organisations must find it in themselves to create a knowledge sharing culture; by that meaning they should create knowledge. This will require networking and communication channels that encourage sharing and collaboration sharing the norm. To achieve this, employees within an organisation need to be encouraged to work together more effectively, to collaborate and to share.

Mentoring can also be used as a tool to share knowledge between more experienced employees to less experienced ones. For the purpose of knowledge management, mentoring allows individuals to pair with experts as needed to learn ways to improve their skills. The use of mentoring is effective in individual cases because it allows mentors to share information one-on-one with individuals who need to obtain advice and guidance to achieve their knowledge and skills.

Sharing of information enables even small, remote units to engage in mentoring. As the system expands, it creates a greater sharing of employee ideas and knowledge. The process of efficient information flow focuses on the efficient sharing and transfer of skills and information on corporate best practices in a value-added context.

3.6 INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL

Intellectual capital can be defined as knowledge that can be exploited for some money-making or other useful purpose (CRM.com definitions). The term combines the idea of the intellect with the economics concepts of capital, the saving of entitled benefits, so that they can be invested in producing more goods and services. Intellectual capital can include the skills and knowledge that a company has developed about how to make its goods or services; individual employees or groups of employees whose knowledge is deemed critical to a company's continued success and its aggregation of documents about process, customers, research results and other information that might have value for a competitor that is not common knowledge.

Knowledge management can be applied in an organisation but it is important to note that it is the employees in the organisation that have personal knowledge and create new knowledge. For an organisation to be competitive in a knowledge economy, it needs people with existing knowledge, the ability to create more knowledge and the willingness to share that knowledge, Brink (2001).

Bukowitz & Williams (2000:98) state that knowledge management is the process by which the organisation generates wealth from its knowledge or intellectual capital, therefore, we can conclude by saying intellectual capital and knowledge management cannot be separated. It is the knowledge that resides in a person's head that can be transferred into intellectual capital to the benefit of the whole organisation.

It is also evident that knowledge assets are becoming more important than physical assets. Koulopoulos (1999:33) states that as companies become increasingly dependent on their success and growth, their value is shifting from physical assets to intangible assets of knowledge.

3.7 MODES OF KNOWLEDGE CONVERSION

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1997) present four modes of knowledge conversion that are created when tacit and explicit knowledge interacts with each other. These modes are referred to as:

- Socialisation – from tacit to tacit knowledge.
- Externalisation – from tacit to explicit knowledge.
- Combination – from explicit to explicit knowledge.
- Internalisation – from explicit to tacit knowledge.

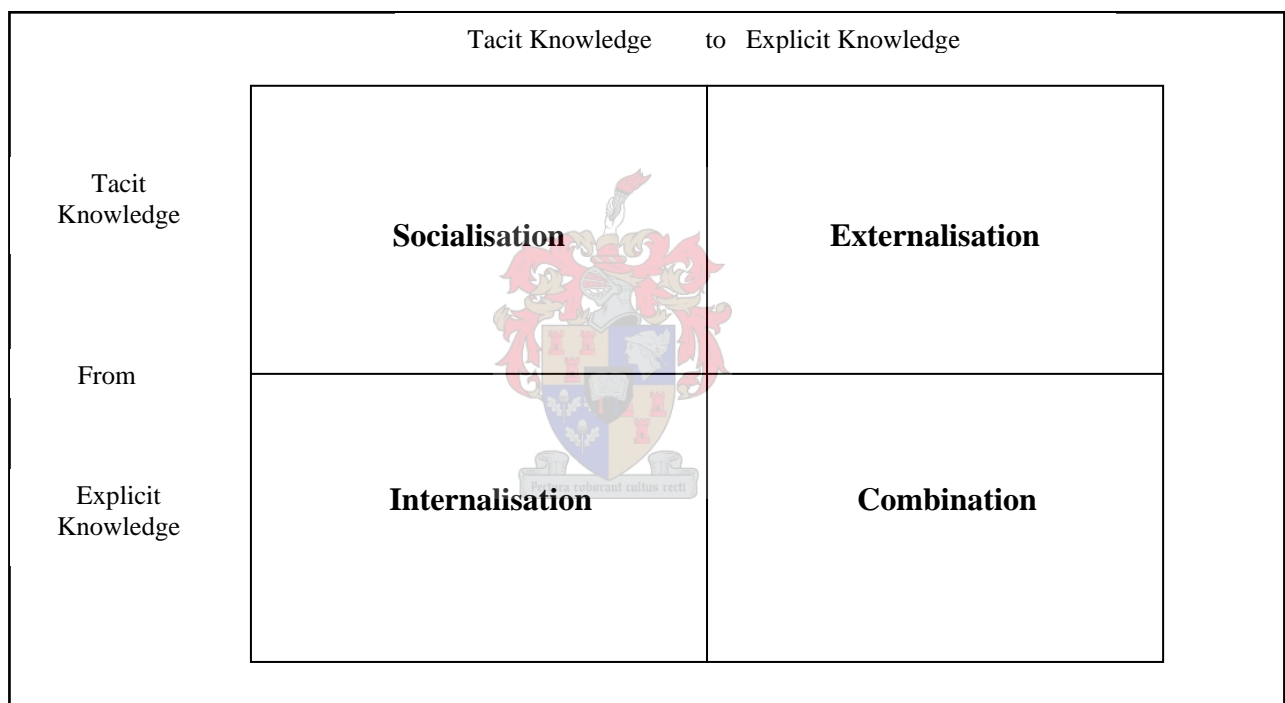


Figure 2: Modes of Knowledge Conversions. Nonaka & Takeuchi

Socialisation is a process of sharing experiences and thereby creating tacit knowledge such as shared mental models and technical skills. It can happen when people talk and share experiences, it takes place through communication.

Externalisation is a process of articulating tacit knowledge into explicit concepts.

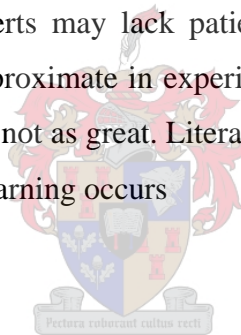
Combination is a process of systematising concepts into a knowledge system. This mode involves combining different bodies of explicit knowledge.

Internalisation is the process through which external or documented information is internalized.

With the above descriptions in mind, one would wonder where mentoring fits in. Swap et al. (2001) state that mentoring play a role in building up core capabilities of an organisation. Therefore, the mentoring process fits the description of both socialisation (sharing of experiences through communication) and internalisation (embodying explicit knowledge into tacit and learning by doing)

3.8 LEARNING VIA MENTORING²

Novices cannot be expected to leap directly to becoming experts. All experts pass through levels of knowledge acquisition. For mentors working with novices, the wide gap in knowledge presents problems. Experts may lack patience to guide novices, and from the novice's viewpoint, someone more proximate in experience may be a better teacher than the expert because the knowledge gap is not as great. Literature suggests both why wider gaps are harder to bridge and how informal learning occurs



3.8.1 Preparedness for Learning

Lacking the necessary knowledge and experience foundations, the novice has no hook to truly assimilate the mentor's instruction. In order for information to become knowledge, the learner must share some context and meaning with the one imparting the knowledge. Lacking that shared contextual base, messages will be assimilated into people's own idiosyncratic experiences and memories. As experiences accrue, perhaps under the guidance of a mentor, the learner becomes increasingly prepared for more advanced instruction, his/her zone of proximal development widens.

3.8.2 Active Learning

Research confirms that when people actively participate in learning new material they are much more likely to remember it. Theorists are unanimous in claiming the importance of active learning in building up exposure to patterns that are at the heart of developing

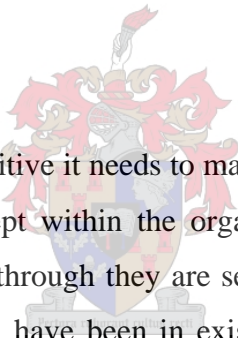
² As adapted from Swap, W [et.al] Using mentoring and storytelling to transfer knowledge in the workplace

expertise. One mentor urged presenting a prototype to a different customer set than was currently being courted; at times a protégé might be required to personally conduct informal market research on the meaning of his brand.

3.8.3 Learning by Observing

Research has revealed that children and adults learn through simply observing others, particularly models who are trusted, powerful or valued, even in the absence of any reinforcement and whether one intends to learn. What is critical to memory is how one processes material and not whether one intends to learn the material. When the novices are immersed in an organisation or culture they value and are being mentored by an expert they admire, a great deal of learning can occur through observing the expert's behaviour. In addition to encouraging hands-on experiences, providing feedback skilfully and serving as models, mentors have the ability to draw on their extensive experiences to relate stories to protégés.

3.9 LESSONS LEARNED

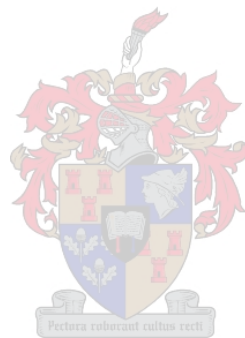


For an organisation to remain competitive it needs to manage and retain its current knowledge base. It is the knowledge that is kept within the organisation that makes Organisation A different from Organisation B, even through they are selling a similar product. Let's look at the consulting firms - many of them have been in existence for the same period, but what would make a company to prefer one consulting firm to the other? It is the knowledge that the consulting firm has.

Organisations manage their knowledge in different ways. Some have researched their methods of managing their knowledge, whilst others have come to terms with it through trial and error. The research have proven that mentoring can be another effective method of managing knowledge, as it is a long term process where sharing and transferring of knowledge happen between people of different levels and experiences.

Looking further at knowledge sharing and transferring, organisations are highly concerned that the knowledge that resides in people's heads must not leave the organisation and land up in the hands of competitors. Organisations can therefore use mentoring as a method to transfer knowledge from experienced employees to less experienced ones and also share knowledge

between employees who might leave the organisation due to unforeseen circumstances, e.g. death and sickness. Mentoring can be described as sharing of experiences through communication. This might be an enjoyable experience to employees as the majority of them enjoy talking/communicating with one another either formally or informally. One of the exciting things that organisations can benefit from mentoring is learning through the process of mentoring. The majority of employees do not enjoy learning as they believe that they have outgrown that; so mentoring can be a perfect learning tool for less experienced employees.



CHAPTER 4

MENTORING IN ORGANISATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Mentoring as a concept has been with us for some time, only recently have organisations begun to realise how important it can be to their success. However, not all organisations have realised the knowledge management aspect of it as discussed in the previous chapter. This chapter will focus on examples/levels of mentoring within the organisation; roles, rights and responsibility of various players in the organisation and planning and implementation of a mentoring process within an organisation, as well as issues impacting the mentoring process.

4.1 LEVELS OF MENTORING IN ORGANISATION³

4.1.1 Entry Level Personnel

Previously only a few of larger more stable organisations welcomed the arrival of special groups of new management or technical college graduates as interns entitled to a period of mentoring. Nowadays companies are adding groups of apprentices and skilled technicians as well as experienced personnel and even managers who are entering a new corporate culture to the ranks of their formal mentoring programmes. An example here can be Munich Reinsurance, where every new employee is allocated a mentor on joining the organisation. This mentoring relationship is “contracted” for six months and the two parties will decide whether to continue with it or not. During this period the mentor will show the new employees the “ropes” within the organisation as well as offer help when the new employee is unsure of something.

4.1.2 Career Enhancement Programme

As organisations move from steeply sloped pyramids and ladder structures to the downsized, flatter structures the career-building programmes of today, many of which warrant the help of a mentor, tend to be more systematic and modelled on a mentor/protégé partnership.

³ As adapted from Shea, Gordon F. 2003. Mentoring Organization. California :Crisp Learning

4.1.3 Breaking through the Glass Ceiling

These programmes aim at achieving a more balanced technical and managerial workforce, especially where in an organisation there is little balanced representation in terms of gender and race.

4.1.4 Workforce Diversity

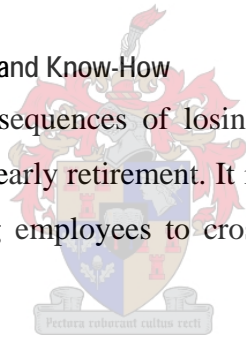
These programmes are designed to create a level of playing field for members of racial and ethnic minorities, by enabling diverse individuals to participate and contribute more equally to the advancement of the organisation.

4.1.5 Team Building

As a company changes from a highly individualistic and competitive work environment to a more cooperative team culture, employees may find that they don't know how to be truly trusting.

4.1.6 Conserving Organisational Memory and Know-How

Many organisations realise the consequences of losing skilled and knowledgeable people through precipitous downsizing and early retirement. It is becoming increasingly common for these organisations to ask departing employees to cross-train and mentor people who will remain.



4.1.7 Rebuilding Organisational Trust

Well trained mentors are a viable link in rebuilding and maintaining this important element of organisational culture. Even though the trust that develops is often interpersonal rather than institutional, surviving employees tend to feel less alienated, more involved and in some ways more secure when they have a mentor to help them address their concerns and problems.

4.1.8 Accelerated Transfer of Technical Skills and Knowledge

A technical mentoring network strengthens the ability to adapt to rapidly evolving technology and change. Transfer of technical know-how is one of the oldest forms of mentoring and growing more complex and critical each year.

4.1.9 Leadership Development

Some leaders have always used mentoring to enhance the competence and performance of those they lead. Great leaders tend to do this with exceptional skill and grace. Effective leaders regard personal mentoring and encouraging those who are mentored to expand the circle.

4.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF VARIOUS PLAYERS

In establishing a productive mentoring relationship it is critical to identify roles of various roles players. The expectations of different role-players towards each other in a development programme need to be an integral part of such a programme. Greater margins of success can be expected when role players in a small team knows exactly what the other role player expects from him/her in the programme. The different role players need to know what attributes each role player possesses and ,more importantly, how these attributes may affect the other role players in order to understand expectations and their inter relationship dynamics that will take place.

4.2.1 Roles and responsibilities of the Protégé⁴

- Register to become a protégé.
- Learn knowledge and skills from another mentor.
- Acquire and develop new skills and competencies needed for the future.
- Take responsibility for own development.
- Take initiative in managing the relationship.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Be receptive to coaching and feedback and new ideas.
- Listen and ask questions.
- Network with others inside and outside the organisation.
- Communicate openly and honestly.
- Share personal values, opinions and concerns as appropriate.
- Attend formal partnership development sessions.
- Set and work towards goals by objectively assessing own abilities.

⁴ As adapted from Myburgh, Anchen. 2004. Mentoring programmes: a proposal towards management development. Unpublished.

- Suggest new ideas to mentor.
- Respect individual differences.
- Work towards goals established with the mentor.

4.2.2 Rights of the Protégé

According to Meyer & Fourie (2004: 167) the protégé has the following rights:

- Request from mentor.
- Collaboration in the formulation of a developmental plan.
- Undivided attention during consultation.
- Confidentiality.
- Sound advice and guidance.
- Face-to-face contact.
- Accessibility.
- Termination.
- Feedback.

4.2.3 Roles and Responsibilities of the Mentor

- Create and build trust and respect with assigned protégés.
- Maintain confidentiality, serve as a confidant.
- Serve as a valuable resource for protégé.
- Teach corporate strategies, values, vision and cultural priorities.
- Commit to a long term relationship.
- Offer broad managerial and organisational experience and knowledge.
- Act as a sounding board and help protégés to identify and achieve reasonable goals.
- Invest time and energy into developing a strong foundation and relationship with protégés.
- Share appropriate experiences, skills critical knowledge, networking strategies and lessons learned.
- Provide insight, perspective and constructive feedback to protégés.
- Confront negative behaviours and attitudes when appropriate.
- Provide insight relative to the organisational culture.

- Be a positive role model and teach by example.
- Ask for advice or help from the protégé as appropriate.
- Offer encouragement and wise counsel when appropriate.
- Respect individual differences.
- Provide protégés with career/professional development guidance.
- Attend formal partnership development sessions.

4.3.4 Rights of the Mentor

According to Meyer & Fourie (2004: 167) the mentor has the following rights:

- Setting limits.
- Respect from protégés.
- Honesty from all parties.
- Support from organisational structures.
- Resources.
- Access to the protégé.
- To terminate the relationship.
- Feedback from the protégé.



4.3.5 Roles and Responsibilities for the Protégé's Supervisor

It is also imperative that the supervisor of the protégé also play a role in the whole mentoring structure. The following are the roles and responsibilities that need to be played by the protégé's supervisor.

- Focus on job-related instruction, guidance and career development.
- Understand and recognise the importance of mentoring.
- Establish practices and values that support mentoring.
- Provide opportunities for protégé and mentor meetings.
- Respect the confidential nature of mentor protégé discussions.
- Remain responsible for career development and compensation of the individual.
- Support and assist both mentor and protégé.
- Sharing important information of scheduling concerning the protégé.
- Being accessible to both mentor and protégé.

4.3.6 Rights of Protégé's Supervisor

- Rights to access and transparency of the programme.
- To provide input concerning the mentor/protégé sessions.
- Feedback concerning mentor/protégé programmes.
- Consultation/input in formulation of development plan.

4.3.7 Roles and Responsibilities of the Organisation

In many instances it has been proven that mentoring programmes often fail because of the organisation's lack of fostering an environment of open communication, information sharing, trust, diversity, collaboration, risk taking, learning and growth. It is the duty of the organisation to establish a process to recruit potential mentors and provide opportunities for protégé and mentor meetings. Furthermore, the organisation should establish practices and values that support mentoring and support training and counselling to mentors and protégés.

4.4 PLANNING OF MENTORING PROCESS

Organisations often have very good intentions with their mentoring programmes but due to a lack of planning and communication, the process is not implemented very effectively (Meyer & Fourie 2004:166). Like with any other project the planning part thereof can either make or break the whole process. It has been mentioned in a previous chapter, that in planning a mentoring programme various stakeholders in the organisation need to be involved, right from the top management to the actual protégés. Many organisations also implement the mentoring process either too slowly or quickly while new supporting systems are not yet in place. The result of this is an ineffective system with many errors and shortcomings. Moreover, if the organisational culture does not support change, it will be very difficult to implement mentoring, especially if employees are not used to continuous change, innovation, autonomy and empowerment.

The following by Meyer & Fourie (2004:167) are normally areas that many organisations don't look at and the whole process of mentoring ends up as a flop.

- **A lack of protégé involvement and consultation:** when employees and protégés are not actively involved in planning and implementing mentoring, the mentoring

programme will fail, especially when management unilaterally drives the programmes.

- **Ineffective Communication:** communication is the most important skill in establishing and maintaining a mentoring system to work. A well developed mentoring strategy will require communication throughout the organisation. A lack of communication, information sharing and feedback about the mentoring strategy is the main reason why mentoring programmes fail.
- **Insufficient training:** a lack of training, insufficient training and other support structures retard the implementation of mentoring interventions. Training mentors alone is not enough.
- **Resistance to change:** mentoring requires a change in management style. Many managers are not used to the modern style of management and leadership and will therefore resist an empowerment programme such as mentoring. These managers feel that they are giving way too much power if they have to implement mentoring.
- **Incorrect selection of mentors:** many companies select the wrong mentors based on the misperception that the most experienced staff members will be the best mentors. A mentor is someone with exceptional people and relationship skills, as well as a good insight into the organisation, its department and functions.
- **Isolated mentoring programmes:** it is the one that is not well integrated with other human resources development programmes in the organisation. The programme is a separate entity that was initiated by a particular manager who could see the benefits of mentoring.

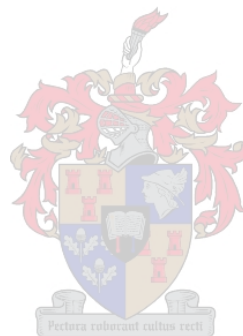
For a mentoring programme to be successful, Meyer & Fourie (2004:172) identifies the following as characteristics of successful mentoring programmes;

- **Obtain commitment based on sound business principles:** clearly identify the need for the mentoring programme. The benefits of the programme should therefore be highlighted; part of this process is to get a buy-in from senior management. Their support is necessary, not only because funding comes from them, but also that one can demonstrate to the whole organisation that senior management takes an interest in the career development of its people.

- **Keep line managers on board:** it is advisable to develop a triangular relationship between the mentor, protégé and the immediate manager. Managers should be confident that the programme will not undermine their authority or ability to oversee their staff.
- **Proper identification and screening of mentors:** determine who will participate as mentors. Managers should be strongly encouraged to participate as mentors and then be evaluated on their success in their roles.
- **Appropriate matching of mentors and protege's:** the matching of participants is of utmost importance. Sometimes it is advisable that mentors should have experience in the speciality area of interest to their protégés. One should also be aware of potential personality clashes.
- **Training of all mentoring parties:** training of mentors can increase the probability of the success of a mentoring relationship by as much as 40%. However, it should be noted that all role players should be trained to understand the dynamics of the mentoring relationship and the roles and responsibilities of all parties.
- **Sound communication:** communication is very important for mentoring to work. A well developed mentoring strategy will require communication throughout the organisation. A lack of communication, information sharing and feedback about the mentoring strategy is the main reason why mentoring programmes fail. A communication plan must be developed by the mentoring co-ordinator.
- **Openness to diversity:** this is an important characteristic of successful mentoring programmes. This means that the mentor must know how his/her own background impacts on the mentor-protégé relationship. In addition, s/he must be sensitive towards the background of the protégé.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** one will never know the progress of a project if there is no continuous monitoring and evaluation of the project to determine the success or failure thereof and adjust where needed. Same with mentoring, its progress and results must be monitored to assess whether the programme achieves its objectives.

4.5 MENTORING IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The implementation process of mentoring like all other organisational projects need to be carefully planned and executed and using a professional approach in terms of both the process and content of the intervention. Meyer and Fourie (2004: 183) adapted this approach on mentoring programmes of the Institute for Organisational Development and Transformation



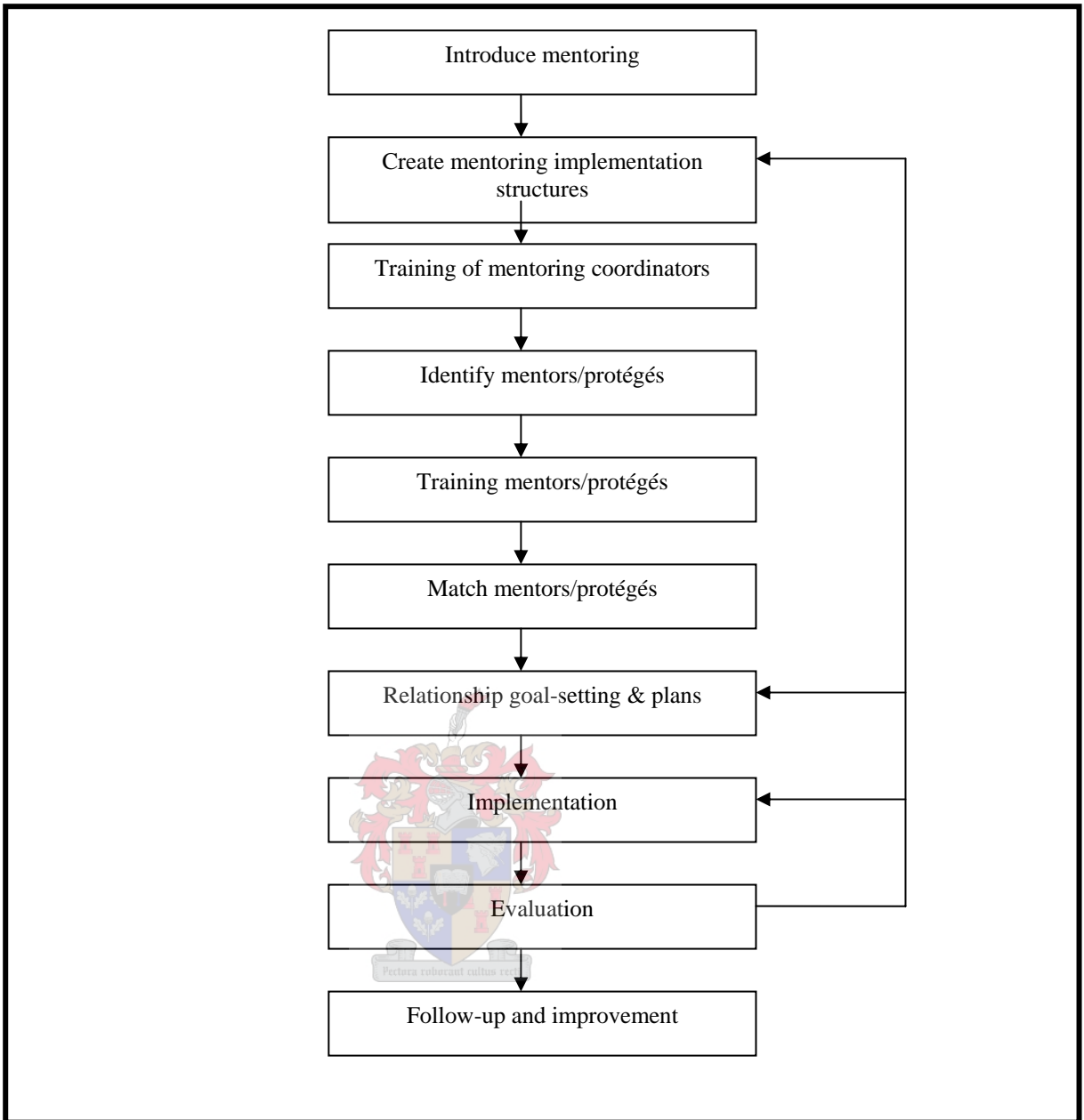


Figure 3: mentoring implementation process (Meyer & Fourie)

4.5.1 Introduction and Launching the Programme

A mentoring process is introduced in an organisation when an individual has the vision to see that mentoring can accelerate the speed of empowerment. The mentoring programme needs to be introduced as a way of supporting the process of empowering the members of the organisation. For mentoring to be effective, the support of management for the process is required. At this stage it is important to specify the objectives of the mentoring programmes of the organisation.

4.5.2 Create Mentoring Support Structures

Support structures are needed to steer the implementation of the mentoring strategy. These support structures can take various forms, depending on the unique nature of the organisation.

4.5.3 Training of Mentoring Co-ordinators

Although mentoring co-ordinators are very positively inclined towards the process and its implementation, they need knowledge and skills to implement mentoring effectively. Their training would typically revolve around the mentoring process as well as the skills and protégés.

4.5.4 Identifying Mentors and Protégés

The steps one would take to market the mentoring programme and recruit participants depend on what is available and appropriate in a particular organisation. In deciding how to publish the programme, consideration should be given to the appropriate communication channels in the organisation.

4.5.5 Training of Mentors and Protégés

Mentors and protégés need orientation and training as per their role and responsibility in the mentoring relationship. Joint induction training for mentors and protégés provide valuable opportunities for them to become acquainted and reach agreement about expectations. Even those who know each other very well need to set parameters of their existing relationship to encompass the roles of mentor and protégé.

4.5.6 Matching Mentors and Protégés

Ideally the linkage between the mentor and protégés should be a natural process. There are times where it is necessary to ensure that all protégés are linked to a mentor and have a

mentoring relationship at a formal level. The correct matching of mentor and protégé is absolutely critical.

4.5.7 Relationship Goal Setting

This is a stage where mentor and protégé have a discussion about where the developmental goals are set. Part of this discussion includes the quality of evidence required to determine whether the objectives of the programme will be met. To ensure that there is clarity of what needs to be done between two parties a mentoring agreement should be developed to ensure effective communication and understanding.

4.5.8 Implementation

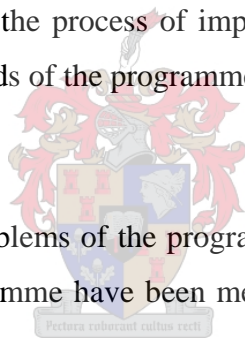
Once all the steps have been followed, one will be ready to implement the mentoring process. This means that the goals and action plans for the mentoring relationship have already been set and that the parties are now working actively to make the mentoring process work. Flexibility is very important during the process of implementation, in other words adapting the mentoring process to suit the needs of the programme.

4.5.9 Evaluation

This means that the success and problems of the programme must be evaluated to determine whether the objectives of the programme have been met. All role players must form part of the evaluation process.

4.5.10 Follow up and Improvement

Like any other function in an organisation, mentoring depends to a large extent on the human element, which means that mistakes are inevitable. All parties concerned should therefore see the programme as a learning and development experience. The long term objective should be to improve the programme. Continuous follow-up is therefore needed to identify opportunities from improvement.



4.6 ISSUES IMPACTING ON THE MENTORING PROCESS

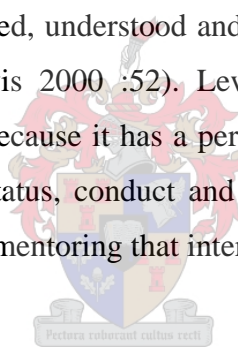
The implementation of the mentoring process might be impaired by several issues, which can either be controlled or managed, below are some major issues which are experienced by different organisations in their implementation of the mentoring process.

4.6.1 Diversity Issue

In the South African context women and Africans normally find fewer individuals like themselves in the upper ranks of the organisation. In cross-racial relationships there may also be inadvertent stereotyping on the part of the protégé or mentor. There may also be assumptions that the one is too different from the other to develop a relationship.

4.6.2 Organisational Cultural Issues

The culture of an organisation will influence the mentoring relationship within the organisation and it must be recognised, understood and dealt with in order for the mentoring relationship to be productive (Lewis 2000 :52). Lewis continues further by saying that organisational culture is important because it has a pervasive influence over all relationships within the organisation. It affects status, conduct and perceived importance of mentors. In particular, there are some aspects of mentoring that interact directly with culture.



4.6.3 Cultural Differences

With most research on cultural differences to date referring to the differences between nationalities or countries within a heterogeneous environment, there is still little understanding of the interaction of these different cultures within diverse groups and how that impacts on certain developmental strategies.

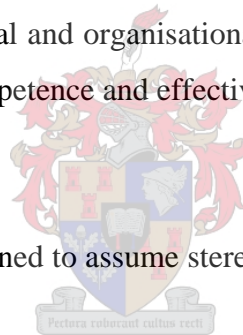
Barham and Conway (1998:15) emphasise cultural differences hidden and often unconscious assumptions that might be expected to affecting mentoring. “The way the iceberg factors operate in different cultures can affect a number of aspects of mentoring: the expectations and role of the mentor, protégé and line manager, the nature of the mentoring agreement and the participant’s feedback style and attitudes to confidentiality” (Barham and Conway 1998:18).

Hodgetts and Luthans (1997:26) identified some key aspects in which cultural diversity has been shown to impact on organisational management approaches:

- Centralised versus decentralised decision making: there is variation in the extent to which important organisational decisions are made by senior management or whether decisions are made down the line with authority devolved.
- Safety versus risk: in some cultures, managers have a very low tolerance of uncertainty and manage in ways to control this
- High versus low organisational loyalty: there is a variation across cultures with regard to the extent to which people identify with their organisation or employer.
- Informal versus formal procedures: whilst informal procedures are used extensively in some cultures, other cultures prefer the use of formal procedures.
- Co-operation versus competition: some cultures emphasise co-operation in the organisation, others foster competition.

4.6.4 Gender Issues

There are several categories of cross-gender relationship complexities, and each of these complexities are shaped by individual and organisational factors, and each have the potential to be destructive by limiting the competence and effectiveness of both men and woman (Kram 1985:60)



- Men and women are inclined to assume stereotypical roles in relating to each other in work settings.
- The role modelling function is frequently unsatisfactory to both the mentor and protégé.
- The mutual liking and admiration characteristics of all significant work relationship may lead to increasing intimacy and sexual tension.

Fowler (2002:112) states that it might be possible that mentors in cross-gender relationships benefit from feedback and views expressed by protégés of the opposite gender who may provide alternative and/or diverse approaches to work and other tasks. Also mentors in cross-gender relationships may experience heightened satisfaction with work due to their successful relationship with a protégé of the opposite gender.

Another issue which can impact mentoring is the issue of time. Lately, people are now complaining about time to do everything: their day-to-day tasks in office as well as other

responsibilities assigned to the employee from time to time. There might be a cry as well, that they will not find enough time to mentor junior colleagues in the middle of their busy schedules. However, potential mentors need to be shown the future organisational benefit of mentoring in general; that they will not have to work extra months when they go on retirement to train someone, but they will be doing it as they go along during their tenure.

4.7 MENTOR AS A ROLE MODEL

Lewis (2000:59) argues that mentors will be successful in the organisation if they act as role models for the learner. Within the mentoring relationship there are some specific and functional reasons for the learner to role model the mentor. The mentor is likely to have a set of habits, approaches, tools and skills that will benefit the learner, also during the course of the relationship the learner is likely to be able to see at first hand how the mentor uses his/her skills.

Some examples where mentoring can be used as role models are:

- **Project management:** a mentor will often have mastered the management cycle of plan, action, and review to a greater extent than the learner.
- **Setting goals:** if a mentor is good at setting goals and monitoring progress towards their achievement, then the learner is likely to gain the habit and the skill.
- **Time management:** mentors will rarely be able to devote unlimited time to learner.
- **Behaviour/style:** sometimes, this is the biggest revelation or contribution that mentors can make to the development of a learner. When learners see how mentors cope and go about their business, particularly in relation to interpersonal relationships, it can open their eyes to possibilities of alternative ways of doing things.

4.8 LESSONS LEARNED

The research has pointed out that mentoring can be used on various levels within the organisation, from employees who have just joined the organisation and are taken through mentoring as a tool to familiarize them with the organisational structures, to those who want to have career advancements. One level of mentoring that stands out is that of building organisational trust, especially if a senior employee from one department mentors a junior employee from another department, this will give an indication that senior management is committed in developing all employees in the organisation, which will lead to more employees having an increased trust in the organisation and its management.

For a mentoring process to run smoothly, roles and responsibilities of all the parties need to be outlined clearly. The mentor needs to understand his/her roles & responsibilities as well as those of his/her protégé. This will enhance a smooth mentoring process where everyone knows and understands where his /her role starts and where it ends. To have a firmer support, the mentoring process should be supported fully by the organisation, through all its structures. Organisations should make sure that each employee is given time within his/her work schedule to mentor and or be mentored.

What you put in is what you get! You cannot plant apples and expect oranges! This means that whatever efforts or time one spends in planning the mentoring process, will determine the success or failure of the programme.

CHAPTER 5

COMPANIES WITH MENTORING PROGRAMMES

INTRODUCTION

Several global companies have successfully or partly implemented mentoring programmes in their respective organisations. Some mentoring programmes successes and progress have been noted in the public domain, either via journal articles or online media (websites, etc). One of the objectives of this study was to get live examples from South African companies which have mentoring programmes running, however, due to the fact that I did not get any feedback from the communication I sent to the identifies companies, I had to settle with what is available in the public domain. Hence the information below is not the true reflection of what is available in the real world.

5.1 TANDEM MENTORING (FRANCHISING)

Tandem franchising involves a mentoring and financing programme for new franchisees from previously disadvantaged backgrounds (Holmes 2006).



It is a brainchild concept of Eric Parker, which is seen as a possible solution to one of the country's economic challenges: how to boost Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) at the individual level while transferring skills? This concept puts a promising BEE candidate (emerging franchisee) and an experienced mentor (franchisor's nominee) together in a joint venture. In order to understand the concept better Eric Parker (as cited in Real Business April 2006) sketches the following scenario:

“The fledging franchisee buys as initial minority stake in the venture. He and the mentor (typically a member of franchisor's management team) operate and manage the business “in tandem” until the franchisee is able to run it single-handedly” This helps the franchisee to learn the ropes while in close contact with the mentor to make sure that the franchise stay a success.

A mentor may be a qualified manager or even an existing franchisee and must have all the skills needed to run the specific business and must receive appropriate incentives to keep them motivated. Like all other mentoring programmes, “tandem mentoring” must be well structured to facilitate continuous monitoring of progress and to ensure that goals are met.

This method of mentoring has already been adopted by SA Breweries (SAB) to help with people who own SAB franchises as distributors. SAB use a multi-disciplinary approach rather than one person acting as a mentor. For example, for anything involving human resources the HR manager for the region would do the mentoring, for operations it would be the operations manager for the region. This is to ensure that people experienced in a certain field make their expertise available to the franchisee, (Holmes 2006).

5.2 COMPANIES WITH MENTORING PROGRAMMES

HP China emphasises the importance of unleashing employee potential. Their knowledge management efforts were concentrated on providing training and developing a mentoring system among its employees. The very objective of this mentoring system was to bring the employees together with industrial experts or experienced veterans so that the employees can learn closely with mentors. In this way, an organisational mechanism was established in HP China that encouraged and facilitated knowledge sharing (Lu & Kwok 2006).

Du Pont is using a mentoring programme to develop employee career enhancing skills and to leverage the knowledge and experience of their senior executives, in addition Du Pont use the mentoring programme to develop future leaders and retain their “Superstars”. Du Pont had the mentoring system running since 1992, and in this period it has created mentoring relationships for 6,000 of the company’s 60,000 employees. Based on their experiences, Du Pont lists (as cited in Orinte & Feld 2006) the following as reasons why their mentoring programmes work:

- Helps attract and retain “Superstars”.
- It provides targeted, individualised training and coaching.
- It provides timely information for a protégé.
- Helps with diversity efforts.
- It sets the company apart from its competitors.
- Helps develop future leaders.

MentorNet (www.mentornet.net) one-on-one mentoring programmes pair community college, undergraduate and graduate students, post graduate students and untenured faculty as protégés with professionals as mentors for one-on-one, email based mentoring relationships (e-mentoring).

The programme has proven effective by providing “real world” information, encouragement, advice and access to networks that are otherwise often unavailable to women and people of colour in the male dominated fields of engineering and science.

How it works? Mentors and protégés sign up for a one-on-one programme through the MentorNet website, filling out a profile with their information and preferences. Protégés are then presented with up to five potential matches. They may either choose one mentor or opt to let MentorNet attempt to make the match for them. Once a match has been made and the mentor has confirmed his/her availability, the e-mentoring relationship begins and lasts for eight months. Both parties communicate by email about career goals, balancing work and life, course work, etc.

Since 1998, MentorNet has enabled the creation of over 15,000 mentor and protégé relationships.



Voluntary Protection Programmes Participants Association (VPPPA) mentoring programme is a prime support for companies applying for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for the Department of Energy’s Voluntary Protection Programmes (VPP). The mentoring programme has proven to be a highly effective tool that allows for a higher quality VPP application to be submitted to OSHA. The mentoring programme has successfully matched hundred of sites since its inception (www.vppa.org).

Siemon Network Cabling Solutions (www.siemon.com) began a Mentoring Programme for elementary and middle school children in the town of Watertown, as its Corporate Social Investment project. In the mentoring programme, Siemon’s employees’ volunteer time weekly to spend with an assigned child from a local school, giving support, encouragement, coordinating activities and being positive role models. The results of this programme were remarkable: students showed improved grades and improved attitude towards school and increased self esteem.

IBM Integrated Supply Chain has 19,000 staff members located in 61 countries and uses phrase mentors, which challenges an employee to look left and right when selecting a career path. When seeking employees to be mentors as well as employees seeking mentors, the company encourages broad participation throughout the organisation and encourages people to identify individuals they would want to have as a mentor – role models from whom they can benefit.

Many employees in **IBM** stick within their functional division to find a mentor. The company offers a diversity of constituencies for role models, as there has to be some natural affinity around the mentor and protégé as well as passion for people doing the mentoring. An important part of IBM's mentoring programme is a new shadow programme, which allows any employee to sign up to shadow an executive for a day. A database of participating employees willing to be shadowed has been created for this purpose (Witt 2005).

MDI (www.mdigroup.com) has participated in the Georgia Governor's Mentor/Protégé Programme. The success of this involvement has led MDI to institute its own programme within the company. MDI believes that mentoring is most effective when it is provided by organisations with experiences that match the protégés experience. The goals of the MDI mentoring programme are:

- To support its client's supplier diversity initiatives.
- To help emerging businesses to better deliver products/services within local economies.
- To identify diversity suppliers to provide products & services.
- To broaden experience and skills of MDI leadership.

MDI mentoring programme assigns a senior executive sponsor to work with selected diversity owned protégé firms to enhance their competitiveness, to support growth and to enable them to better compete for contracts and business. However, because the protégé may encounter a variety of issues, the executive sponsor is encouraged to find the right subject matter expert within MDI to assist. This ability to match the protégé with the appropriate expert within MDI creates true corporate mentoring.

Rand Merchant Bank (RMB) has introduced reverse mentoring for sensitising top leadership to the issues of gender and racial diversity. It believes this will help the bank to achieve the diversity and equity challenges set out in the financial sector charter of 2004. The programme is called Reverse Forward and is aimed at not only meeting the hard targets for diversity but also combating more subtle workplace phenomena like gender stereotyping and institutionalised racism (Gqubule 2006).

How it works? Senior RMB executives and board members, including CEO are mentored by previously disadvantaged colleagues in a series of discussion sessions about organisational challenges. The Bank invited Africans, coloured and Indian employees to nominate themselves or be nominated by a colleague for the programme. They were then vetted by a balanced selection panel of four. Candidates were selected to ensure “fit” in terms of skills, motivation and personal chemistry. The programme put the responsibility for a positive outcome on both mentor and protégé. The intention is to create better understanding of diversity and in this way positively influence the company’s leadership capabilities and influence attraction and retention of a diverse and highly skilled workforce.

This programme helped to improve the organisational atmosphere and will certainly influence discussion on succession planning.



Munich Reinsurance has a mentoring programme developed to make the new recruits comfortable in their tenure as “new employees” How it works? Before the new employee starts, the Human Resources identify an older/experienced employee of the same gender within the organisation, but in a different department. On the first day the new employee will be introduced to his/her mentor and it will be the responsibility of the mentor to walk the “protégé in the organisation, introducing him/her to all other people in the organisation.

The mentor will also be a contact to discuss some of the company issues that s/he might not be comfortable to discuss with his immediate manager. The relationship is contracted to last for six months, which is also the probation period; after this period, it will be up to both parties to decide whether they continue with the mentoring relationship or not.

This programme is very helpful especially if the new employee is in the support function and in future s/he sees him/her self in the brokering industry, the specialist might be able to help

the protégé with necessary skills and training to him to realise his/her career plan or even to move up the corporate ladder.

Accenture Consulting, SA has two types of mentoring, one being internal and the other internal to external.

With regard to internal mentoring a junior colleague is assigned to a senior colleague as a mentor within the same function, i.e. support function to support function and consulting to consulting. The protégé is at liberty to choose any senior staff member to be his/her mentor for an indefinite period. This is a formal mentoring programme, although there is no database of record where mentors can register them selves.

The internal to external mentoring is between university students who are on the Accenture Foundation Programme. There are a set of executives who avail themselves as mentors to these students in their study years and prepare them for the corporate world. Mentoring takes form of either a group or one-on-one. The relationship continues even when the student is part of the organisation, to the point where s/he can mentor other colleagues or has settled in well within the organisation. (S Mrwebi, personal communication, December 5, 2006)

With due respect to other religions, I would like to quote a few examples from the Bible which I consider as mentoring examples:

- David to Solomon.
- Elijah to Elisha.
- Moses to Joshua.
- Jesus to his twelve disciples.

5.3 CAN MENTORING BE A CAREER?

This is a very interesting concept to determine whether people can take mentoring as a career. Although one cannot formally study through a university or college to be a mentor, mentoring I believe can be taken as a career. To be eligible as a mentor one has to have extensive experience in a specific field. S/he must be in a position to freely transfer skills and knowledge to the protégé and have excellent people skills (Garrun 2006).

Currently a Coaching and Mentoring Association of South Africa (Comensa), a new professional body for the coaching and mentoring *profession* in South Africa, was launched in April 2006. This association will for the first time in SA set standards and formulate a code of ethics to enhance the credibility of mentoring and coaching.

Many professions have associations; hence with Comensa in mind I believe that mentoring and coaching will be a recognised profession in South Africa. Recently the Department of Public Works have advertised vacancies for mentors in the construction and mechanical industry.

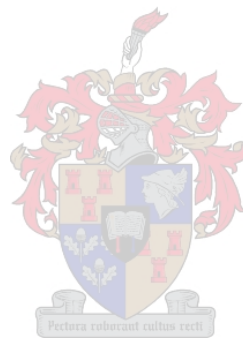
5.4 LESSONS LEARNED

We have seen from the examples discussed that various companies have different mentoring programmes tailor-made for their specific needs, with the bottom line idea of retaining talent, managing, sharing and capturing knowledge that exists within their structures. Mentoring programmes can be started by small departments, however to be recognised and have more value, mentoring programmes should have senior management as well as the whole organisation's support. The more it has the support of the whole organisation, the better the recognition and support it will receive.

Learning organisations can even take this further by involving their human resources and knowledge management departments to create a stand-alone mentoring department/function. This will allow mentoring to have high level attention and employees will know where to go if they need more information or want to be involved in the mentoring process.

With the recent high staff turnover and employees being retrenched due to economic and other pressures on organisations, one might ask: How will the mentor feel if he still has to do mentoring knowing that he is facing retrenchment? With the concept of knowledge/learning organisations not so entrenched in employees' systems, employees who are to be retrenched might not feel obliged at all to do mentoring. However, if mentoring is treated as a process and not only started when the news of retrenchment comes, there won't be too much resentment to do mentoring as most of the knowledge would have been transferred/shared through the years, and should the mentor feel that s/he does not want to continue with mentoring because s/he is being retrenched s/he would have shared about 95% of his/her

knowledge to employees who might remain in the organisation. Hence it is always important for organisations to treat mentoring as a continuous process that does not start because an employee will retire soon and will resign in a month's time, but is conducted to make sure that knowledge is retained within the organisational structures, even when unforeseen circumstances arise. Employees will also see the importance of mentoring and not just as tool to suck what they have learned through their experiences in the organisation in a short period of time.



CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 SUMMARY

This paper gave a description, differentiation and understanding of mentoring and coaching in general. Above all it has given a clear understanding of the role that mentoring is playing within the organisation as a tool to share and transfer knowledge, to ensure that it remains within the organisation, when an experienced employees leave the organisation.

Research shows that mentoring can be a very effective way to advance one's career and improve on one's skills and knowledge. According to *The Star*, Workplace (7 June 2006) traditional models of mentoring have failed to keep up with trends in the business world programmes based on career longevity within one organisation. Mentoring programmes in organisations help to attract top-notch employees, retain valued talent and manage diversity. Mentoring also plays a key role in succession planning, both as a method for identifying top talent and as a way to impart important organisational knowledge to the organisation's future leaders.

Mentoring as a concept did not start in the Information Age; it has always been there as a means of transferring culture and tradition from one generation to the other in both African and Chinese culture. Organisations have only realised its importance to share and transfer knowledge in the Industrial and Information Age.

South Africa, I believe is still behind with mentoring, however we are catching up very well, and in 2006 we have seen the introduction of a mentoring and coaching association which will develop standards and guidelines of mentoring in South Africa. This is for mentoring in general, however it is believed that this association will also help organisations to get onto the bandwagon of mentoring. The United States (www.helpusa.org) and United Kingdom (www.mentoring-uk.org.uk) have “general mentoring programmes which have encouraged companies to start mentoring programmes and realise the importance of mentoring”.

It needs to be understood that mentoring and coaching are two different concepts; however they both have to do with developing an individual's potential. We see mentoring as an activity that can either take the form of a formal or informal programme and coaching having no policy framework. Unlike mentoring, coaching is focused on training, and in most cases the coach is the immediate line manager. In mentoring programmes a line manager cannot be a mentor as s/he has performance related duties and they might inhibit the mentoring programme as the protégé might not feel open to share his/her developmental concerns.

Mentoring is a powerful tool for developing employees, but organisations need to ask if they are interested in making sure their managers are ready for the challenge they will face. Many prominent leaders across the public and private sectors attribute their success to the strong mentoring relationships they developed in their career. Even Bill Gates, who rose from nerdy, dishevelled programmer to software company giant, benefited from an early mentoring relationship.

An organisation can choose to implement a mentoring programme that will suit their needs and situation. We have discussed several types of mentoring which can be applied individually, or at times organisations can use a combination of mentoring types to implement their programmes. At times mentoring can be done as face to face, however with the rise of technology, and organisations going global and situated in different countries with different time zones, it has become practical for them to implement electronic mentoring (e-mentoring). This can be done through a system or via electronic mail (e-mail)

The paper has proven that mentoring is not a silo activity. One cannot regard him/herself a mentor on his/her own, as there has to be two parties, mentor and protégé. It is not necessarily a giver and taker situation - both the mentor and protégé should gain something out of the relationship. In most cases, and that is how traditional mentoring has worked, we find that the protégé is the one who will gain the most from the mentoring programme.

Mentoring outside the organisation and between two individuals needs commitment from both parties. However, within the organisation, there are other parties who need to be involved and offer their support and weight towards the programme; they are the supervisor to the protégé, if necessary executive sponsor (normally a managing director or other senior

manager) and the organisation at large, which in most cases will provide equipment and other infrastructure to support the whole mentoring programme.

Mentoring has been used by organisations as a human resource tool, to help with succession planning. In a sense this is also another form of knowledge transfer; however organisations did not see the knowledge management perspective in that, they were concerned with who will take over the reign of an executive when s/he retires.

Knowledge Management in organisations have been used as a tool to make sure that organisational knowledge or intellectual property of the organisation is trapped inside the structures of the organisation itself and also to ensure that employees with critical knowledge do not exit the organisation before their knowledge is captured by the system in place. However, very few organisations have realised the value and importance of using mentoring as another tool to share and transfer knowledge between various levels of the organisation and experience.

Looking at Nonaka and Takeuchi's model of knowledge conversion we find that mentoring fit the description of socialisation and internalisation, as it is about sharing of experiences through communication (meetings between mentor and protégé) as well as embodying explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge by doing – after the protégé has communicated with his/her mentor, s/he will be challenged by his/her mentor to do in action what s/he has learned.

Mentoring can be a useful tool of learning, it has been used in the past Industrial Age as a tool to transfer skills between novice and expert, however the protégé has to be prepared and active to learn at all times and be prepared to learn through observing.

6.2 CONCLUSION

This research formulated research questions and these are answered by this study as follows:

- What is mentoring and its relationship to knowledge management (KM)?

The research answered this question by concluding that there is a definite relationship between mentoring and KM. Mentoring can be used as a KM tool to transfer knowledge between highly experienced and less experienced colleagues so as to ensure that knowledge is retained in the organisational structure at all times and that it is captured before being lost to the world or competitors.

Mentoring has been defined by Shea (2003) as an exceptional developmental, caring and sharing relationship where mentors invest their time and know how. From this definition we can see that mentoring is about SHARING between two people with the goal of developing the less experienced person. Knowledge management is concerned with capturing and “management” of knowledge and transferring explicit knowledge into tacit, where-as mentoring is about “handing over” the mentor’s experience to the protégé.

- How can knowledge sharing/transfer be achieved in an organisation?

For knowledge to be transferred or shared in the organisation, this research has found that there are different “traditional” methods that have been used and explored in various organisations, however not much research has been done with regard to mentoring as another form of transferring knowledge. Davenport and Prusak have stated that the best way to manage knowledge transfer is to get people to talk to one another. Hence this research sees mentoring as another means to get people to talk. The positive things about talking in mentoring is the fact that communication is between a more experienced colleague and a less experienced one; therefore there will be a lot a knowledge transferring happening.

It is important for organisations in this age to share knowledge between employees, to allow the flow of knowledge on all levels of the organisation, which will ultimately lead to the survival of the organisation and business. Mentoring is a tool to share knowledge between employees, as they pair between the more experienced to the less experienced ones. Sharing

of information enables every function in the organisation to engage in mentoring and exchange of information.

- Difference between mentoring and coaching.

This research concludes that mentoring and coaching are different in the sense that coaching is concerned with performance issues to develop an employee; whereas mentoring is about developing the person's behaviour, attitude and work performance. Coaching is also about equipping employees with tools, knowledge and opportunities to develop more effectively. An individual however, can have both a mentor and coach in his/her career, the latter being his/her immediate manager, while the former can be someone s/he has chosen by him/herself or someone who has a direct influence in his/her life.

- What role does knowledge management and mentoring play in an organisation?

This research has proven that knowledge management and mentoring together can play a very pivotal role in any organisation (big or small). These two concepts are both concerned with the management, transferring and conversion of knowledge from explicit to tacit. If organisations want to win the war for talent, brain drain and manage their intellectual capital, they need to make sure that they implement mentoring as another KM tool, if they have a KM programme running. If there is no KM programme running, the organisation need first to plan and work around the implementation of that and look at other possible KM tools and mentoring as one of them, or take them bit by bit, like the Chinese proverb says: "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step".

The research has found limitations in the fact that there is little literature written on the link between mentoring and knowledge management. Perhaps this will be a call for further research on the topic as well as looking at the new concept of e-mentoring.

In conclusion, mentoring as a knowledge management tool in organisations holds a good future. It is believed that if organisations implement and manage their knowledge through mentoring it will lead to unlocking the wealth of talent and celebrate diversity in our country.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is believed that if the following recommendations are implemented in organisations South Africa will be following the United States and United Kingdom in terms of mentoring.

- Mentoring should be linked to performance review systems of the older generation. Make it mandatory that every older/experienced employee should have a junior employee to mentor, provided that the older employee has the type of personality required for successful mentoring.
- Make sure that organisations have a clear understanding of the difference between mentoring and coaching and not deal with them as similar actions.
- Organisations' mentoring programmes that are run via human resources departments should have a link to the knowledge management department.
- Receive high level support to the mentoring programme.
- Mentoring programmes should be marketed as widely as possible and not only be open to certain levels in the organisation. It should be open to everyone from senior management right down to a very junior employee.
- Organisations should create an environment where people are empowered to achieve their full potential in a consciousness of sustainable well-being.
- Link mentoring to the whole work-life balance initiative. Give protégés a sense of belonging and know that there are people who take care of them.

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