

Coaching and Mentoring in Higher Education: a Step-By-Step Guide to Exemplary Practice

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I strongly support and admire this fantastic contribution to mentoring and coaching in higher education. This book is a unique resource that is written for those who are new to teaching and learning in higher education, and for those already in the field who are seeking further guidance and motivation. The author combines theory and practice and focusses on the provision of practical elements, real-world examples, and case studies from all over the world. The content is systematically arranged and the text used is clear and easy to understand. This accessible and timely manuscript adds value to less well-known literature on the academic training of mentors and coaches within the spectrum of higher education. It is worth noting that Andrews and Clark (2011), amongst others, also suggested the need for well-structured mentoring and coaching programmes in higher education for optimum outcomes. Whilst the text is aimed specifically to support mentors and coaches in higher education, the practical steps for their recruitment and promotion and evaluation of the process are similar and of value to those in other educational divisions.

Mentoring and coaching in higher education are one-to-one relationships that are globally accepted, and mentors or coaches need to be supported and supervised throughout the process. The practice provides a cost-effective way to support students' success in higher education. Mentors and coaches prepare students and promote a mechanism by which students can make friends, acclimatise to the university environment, and refresh their student identities with positive relationships (Andrews and Clark, 2011; Leidenfrost *et al.*, 2011). The results of a three-year study of peer mentoring conducted at six higher education institutions provided the empirical evidence that peer mentoring certainly works (Andrews and Clark, 2011).

There remains a lack of general agreement in the literature with respect to the differences between mentoring and coaching. The contrasts between them are often unclear (Swanwick, 2010). Dr Jill Andreanoff in her book clearly distinguishes between both terms through supporting literature; though, her academic work expresses a mutual relationship between the two processes and concentrates more on what is going on and why. The book is an invaluable effort that can certainly influence professionals to better design and improve their specific programmes.

In the initial chapters of the book, the author defines the role of the scheme coordinator as highly demanding with high level of responsibilities and skills. The text in this book enhances our understanding that the programmes should be needs based, goal oriented, group targeted, and outcomes driven.

The author underscores that for effective delivery, planning of mentoring or coaching programmes should consider scheme coordinator hours, venue, refreshments, recruitment, promotion, travel, support workshops, training materials, information technology, assessments, police checks, e-mentoring licence, honoraria, accreditation, and so on; thus, programmes will run on time and within budget. Moreover, the author advises that scheme



planners should be cautious to adhere to the standards for mentor or coach selection and the interviewing process, and the guidelines for their promotion.

The middle section of the text mainly focusses on suggested activities to train the mentors and coaches, illustrated with reflection notes, exercises, and real-world examples to demonstrate how relationships can be forged. These training activities reveal inbuilt potential to establish close relationships between the mentors or coaches, mentor and mentee, or coach and coachee. Attributes like trust, love, understanding, and respect are promoted. This section sensitises the reader to the skills that are essential for the role of a coach or mentor.

The final chapters discuss topics that are of mutual benefit to mentor and mentee or coach and coachee. They include but are not limited to mentee or coachee induction, promotion, and significance of mentor and coach profiles, matching events, matching through coordinators or software, importance of maintaining contact records, completing learning logs for coaches or mentors, employing reflective observations, and mentor or coach accreditation and supervision.

In addition, the sign of a best practice scheme is that it provides regular supervision of the mentors and coaches. They are guided and supported throughout the process by support workshops identified as basic common themes based on real-world challenges and issues encountered by mentors and coaches. The author places significance on the monitoring and evaluation of mentoring and coaching programmes. She underlines in her discussion that evaluation is not something to be left over until the end of the programme, but to be planned from the beginning, and suggests using a mixed-method approach at the pre- and post-intervention stages. Dr Andreanoff promotes e-mentoring as an option to consider for higher education institutions. Whilst supporting e-mentoring as a fit for mentors and coaches who work from a distance and have busy work schedules, she also discusses several limitations of using this technology, such as a potential lack of rapport building and training.

Nonetheless, this splendid book by Dr Andreanoff has my full support. Although the author has made a clear attempt to differentiate mentoring from coaching in the first chapter, that difference is not marked elsewhere in the advanced chapters or in the exemplary steps for best practice. The practical steps and suggested activities for effective mentoring and coaching training in higher education are praiseworthy, but are deprived of any impact studies. Typically, the author has included examples from higher education settings such as business, law, and social sciences, with the exception of health sector. Yet, this book has the potential to influence academics and planners and may guide them in developing, implementing, evaluating, and improving their planned schemes.

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