



## **MENTOR - Mentoring between teachers in secondary and high schools**

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# **The method (model) of mentoring between teachers in secondary and high schools Handbook**

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**This handbook was developed by the group of authors below within the “MENTOR - Mentoring between teachers in secondary and high schools” partnership among various countries.**

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## Foreword

This is a handbook for educators by educators and is intended as a practical guide for the development of mentoring programs between teachers. It is dedicated to experienced teachers and headmasters as well as the beginning teachers – to anyone interested in teachers' development.

The handbook was elaborated as one of the products of the “MENTOR - Mentoring between teachers in secondary and high schools” Project, implemented within the framework of Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership for School Education Program and co-financed by the European Union. As our general aim is to encourage and support implementation of mentoring between teachers, and thus to contribute to teachers' professional progress, we would like this handbook to provide practical support rather than be another textbook. The examples and methods described in the handbook were proposed after implementing the preparatory phases, which were the questionnaire and desk research and formulation of Needs Analysis Report, as well as gathering the materials about teachers' mentoring models in the Research Database. Those two are the other products of the MENTOR project, and are available on the project website: <http://edu-mentoring.eu>.

Other tangible products of the MENTOR project, following the handbook, are: The Training Kit – “Manual: Training for Teachers Mentors” and The Guideline “How to implement the mentor model in the school. - Tips for the schools”. The former is to serve for preparing the training of the teachers willing to become the mentors for their beginning colleagues, and the latter is to be built based on the conclusions from the pilot phase of implementation of the proposed mentoring model, which could be useful for the implementation of teachers' mentoring.

The MENTOR team represents organizations and universities from different European countries. The experiences that each partner brought, as well as those already gained through the implementation of the project, have served as an input to create “The method (model) of mentoring between teachers in secondary and high schools” handbook. Some practical guidelines are proposed for implementing the mentoring program in schools, like in the chapter:



*“Planning mentor’s activities”*, and some parts are dedicated to teaching, like: *“Strategic management and quality management”*. If you wish to enrich your knowledge about mentoring between teachers and about other problems that could occur in the functioning of the school, we invite you to read the Supplement to the handbook, which we elaborated. It is also available on the project website: <http://edu-mentoring.eu>. In the Supplement, one can read about topics like *‘Developing emotional intelligence of the mentees’*, or *‘Conflict management in education’*, and so on. It is our sincere hope that the Reader will find them useful.



## Part 1: Introduction to Mentoring.

### 1.1. Mentoring: definition, types and differences from other terms

#### Definition of mentoring



One of the difficulties we can find when we want to define Mentoring is the large number of existing definitions. For the purposes of the present handbook we have chosen some of them, starting from a general approach and moving to an educational context.

**The term mentor**<sup>1</sup> is attributed to Homer and his epic work, The Odyssey. In his story, Odysseus, King of Ithaca, embarks on a decade of travel and adventure, leaving behind his wife and young son, Telemachus. Odysseus instructs his loyal and true servant, Mentor, to look after the royal household and keep a watchful eye over Telemachus. Mentor agrees and acts in loco parentis, becoming a father figure, teacher, role model, guide, sounding board and friend to Telemachus.

Athene, Goddess of Wisdom, sometimes takes the form of Mentor and provides encouragement and support to Telemachus. From this story, the word ‘mentor’ has come to mean a ‘father figure’ or perhaps a ‘mother figure’ (following Athene’s wisdom and advice) to younger people.

“**Mentoring** is a term generally used to describe a relationship between a less experienced individual, called a mentee or protégé, and a more experienced individual known as a mentor. Traditionally, mentoring is viewed as a dyadic, face-to-face, long-term relationship between a supervisory adult and a novice student that fosters the mentee’s professional, academic, or personal development”<sup>2</sup>.

**In the context of education**, mentoring is a temporary collaborative relationship between two teachers that is based on a relationship between an experienced teacher or a master teacher and a novice or new teacher.

The goal is to provide the new teacher with a support system that can help him/her succeed. Research has shown that there is a connection between teacher collaboration and student achievement and that teachers who are mentored are more likely to remain in the teaching profession than those who are not. Effective mentors need to have training and practice in working with adults, listening, conducting observations, and solving problems<sup>3</sup>.

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1 Ehrich Lisa Catherine, Dr. (2013): Developing Performance Mentoring Handbook.

2 Packard, B.W, (2003): Definition of Mentoring. Mount Holyoke College. [http://ehrweb.aaas.org/sciMentoring/Mentor\\_Definitions\\_Packard.pdf](http://ehrweb.aaas.org/sciMentoring/Mentor_Definitions_Packard.pdf).

3 UC Santa Cruz New Teacher Center. Peer Coaching Models Information. <http://education.qld.gov.au/staff/development/performance/resources/readings/peer-coaching-models.pdf>.



Furthermore, the success of the mentoring relationship<sup>4</sup> rests on the mutual excitement the mentor and beginning teacher have about a particular field and the commonality of their own working and learning styles.

In the most successful partnerships, participants achieve intellectual and creative growth with shared ideas acting as a stimulus for that growth.

### **Mentoring is:**

**Reciprocal:** The experienced and new teacher work together in an equal professional relationship where they are both teachers and learners.

**Dynamic:** Mentoring influences/changes the context; and the context shapes the relationship.

**Reflective:** The mentor facilitates reflection on the part of the beginning teacher to support the development of the beginning teacher's professional identity as a teacher; the mentor professionally challenges the beginning teacher in developing their theory of teaching, and sense of teacher efficacy.

In this context, **mentoring is not...**

- **Cloning**, or becoming a substitute parent, or acquiring a disciple, or an opportunity to prove how marvellous we are, or an opportunity to establish a power base.
- **An alternative to a counselling** or confessional relationship.
- **About one person** (the beginning teacher) becoming knowledgeable; it is about two people in a developmental relationship who are supporting mutual learning and growth.

Finally, in education, **mentoring is** a complex and multi-dimensional process of guiding, teaching, influencing and supporting a beginning or new teacher. It is generally accepted that a mentor teacher leads, guides and advises another teacher more junior in experience in a work situation characterized by mutual trust and belief<sup>5</sup>.

## **Mentoring / Coaching / Counselling / Training**

Mentoring will often require the use of coaching and counselling techniques, but differs from both.

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4 State of Victoria (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development), (2010): A Learning Guide for Teacher Mentors. Published by Teacher and Education. Support Development Unit. School Improvement Division. Office for Government School Education. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Melbourne, Australia. <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/partnerships/learningguide.pdf>.

5 Koki, Stan: The role of teacher mentoring in educational reform. Pacific Resources and Learning. <http://www.nmu.edu/Webb/ArchivedHTML/UPCED/mentoring/docs/Role-mentor.pdf>.



**A coaching relationship** is more limited in its scope and will often focus on the development of particular work skills and the acquisition of knowledge. Coaching is usually short term and performance oriented. A person may share a coaching relationship with many people<sup>6</sup>.

**Coaching** is (the process of) “unlocking people’s potential to maximise their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them.”<sup>7</sup>. Like mentoring, it can be understood in a number of ways, as there are many types of, and approaches to, coaching.

**Counselling** is a process conducted by counsellors or registered psychologists who address psychological issues and disorders. Mentors play the role of counsellor when they provide special types of support to others who find themselves in stressful or difficult circumstances<sup>8</sup>.

**Training** is a structured process of teaching whereby a trainer focuses on developing the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to complete a task or perform a job. Training as a direct form of instruction can sometimes constitute coaching and mentoring<sup>9</sup>.

### **Types of Mentoring<sup>10</sup>:**

There are **different types of mentoring** depending on the highlighted aspect: Formal or informal mentoring, traditional mentoring, group mentoring, peer mentoring, e-mentoring, etc. All of them can take place in **diverse contexts** such as school, workplace, different organisations, community settings and virtual communities.

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<sup>6</sup> State of Victoria (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development), (2010): A Learning Guide for Teacher Mentors. Published by Teacher and Education. Support Development Unit. School Improvement Division. Office for Government School Education. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Melbourne, Australia. <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/partnerships/learningguide.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Reference used in this case by Dr. Ehrich Lisa Catherine (et al 2013): Whitmore, J. (2009). Coaching for performance (4th Ed.). Brealey Publishing: London.

<sup>8</sup> Ehrich Lisa Catherine, Dr. (2013): Developing Performance Mentoring Handbook. Department of Education, Training and Employment. Queensland University of Technology, p. 7. <http://education.qld.gov.au/staff/development/performance/pdfs/dp-mentoring-handbook.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem, p. 7.

<sup>10</sup> Sub-chapter based on the text of Ehrich Lisa Catherine, Dr. (2013): Developing Performance Mentoring Handbook. Department of Education, Training and Employment. Queensland University of Technology. <http://education.qld.gov.au/staff/development/performance/pdfs/dp-mentoring-handbook.pdf>





Regarding to the **duration of a Mentoring program** there are also different opinions. However, as relationships and a sense of bonding occur over time between mentors and mentees, the duration and consistency of each mentoring relationship is very important. For some authors “at a mini-mum, mentors and mentees should meet regularly at least four hours per month for at least a year. There are exceptions, such as school-based mentoring, which coincide with the school year and other types of special mentoring initiatives. In such special circumstances, mentees need to know from the outset how long they can expect the relationship to last, so they can adjust their expectations accordingly”<sup>11</sup>.

“Writers in the field of mentoring make an important distinction between different types of mentoring arrangements. Two of these are ‘informal’ and ‘formal’ mentoring. Another important distinction is to see mentoring as being carried out by one’s peers, as in peer mentoring, or more traditionally by a senior or more experienced colleague, as in traditional mentoring. An increasingly important type of mentoring that has emerged over the last 10 years is e-mentoring, which uses e-technology to enable mentors and mentees to communicate”<sup>12</sup>.

**Informal mentoring** refers to two people engaged in a mentoring relationship without any intervention or guidance from a formal organisation.

Informal mentoring can be best understood when two people who work in a similar or related field find they have mutual interests and decide to work together. Thus an informal relationship is developed. The key defining feature of informal mentoring (as opposed to formal mentoring) goes back to Clutterbuck’s<sup>13</sup> point that informal mentoring occurs without any assistance or intervention from organisations.

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<sup>11</sup> MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership, (2005): How to Build A Successful Mentoring Program; Using the Elements of Effective Practice. A step-by-step tool kit for program managers. Mentoring and Coaching Council, (2008): Code of Ethics. <http://www.emccouncil.org/src/ultimo/models/Download/4.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Ehrich Lisa Catherine, Dr. (2013): Developing Performance Mentoring Handbook. Department of Education, Training and Employment. Queensland University of Technology, p. 7. <http://education.qld.gov.au/staff/development/performance/pdfs/dp-mentoring-handbook.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> Dr. Ehrich Lisa Catherine is making a reference to the paper of Clutterbuck, D. “Formal and informal mentoring presentation” presented at the Mentoring Connection National Conference in Toronto Marriott Eaton Centre, Canada in 2004.



According to Clutterbuck<sup>14</sup> **some of the advantages** of informal mentoring are:

- people who are informally mentored tend to be more satisfied than those who are in formal mentor relationships,
- informal mentors are ‘there’ because they want to be; informal mentoring is voluntary,
- longevity, greater commitment and motivation are features of this type of mentoring.

**A disadvantage** of informal mentoring is that not everyone who wishes to be mentored is chosen by a mentor.

**Formal mentoring** “Formal mentoring occurs where the organisation provides support structures to ensure that participants have clarity of purpose and the support they may need to make a success of the relationship”<sup>15</sup>.

It is an interventionist strategy modelled on the processes and activities of informal mentoring, used by organisations as a means of providing staff with development and support.

Common to formal programs is support, learning and growth, skill development, and improved confidence.

**Advantages** of formal mentoring:

- social inclusion purposes,
- such arrangements tend to be more focused and structured,
- specific goals of the program are known to all parties.

**Disadvantages** of formal mentoring:

- both parties take longer to develop a relationship,
- it is not always voluntary, and time pressure becomes more evident.

## **Peer-mentoring and group mentoring**

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<sup>14</sup> Reference used in this case by Dr. Ehrich Lisa Catherine: Clutterbuck, D. (2004a). Everyone needs a mentor: Fostering talent in your organisation (4th Ed.). Chartered, Institute of Personnel and Development: London.

<sup>15</sup> Ibidem.



**Peer mentoring** tends to involve two people of the same level or status who work together to support one another.

**Group mentoring** can be viewed and practised in a variety of ways depending on the mixture of people who form it.

For example, group mentoring includes: 1. a group of peers who work together and support each other 2. one mentor who works with a group of mentees 3. multiple mentors who work with multiple mentees, and all of these people are connected in one group.

The key feature of peer mentoring and group mentoring is that everyone involved works together to learn from and support each other.

Unlike traditional mentoring where there is a more experienced person, a mentor, who works alongside the mentee, peer mentoring and group mentoring tend to be construed as more egalitarian in focus and involve a community of participants.

**Advantages** of peer mentoring and group mentoring:

- they provide mutual support, learning and friendship,
- non-hierarchical approach,
- they have been used in a variety of contexts such as education, medicine and business.

**Disadvantages** of peer mentoring and group mentoring:

- peers may not have the expertise or skills to provide career support and career functions that can lead to particular types of outcomes for mentees<sup>16</sup>,
- peer mentoring may focus more on friendship and psycho-social support, rather than provide learning which is or should be a key feature of mentoring.

**E-mentoring** relies on computer-mediated communication (CMC) such as email and other electronic communication technologies, online collaborative platform, social media web 2.0 to enable the mentoring to take place. E-mentoring is an approach that can be used in formal or

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<sup>16</sup> Reference used in this case by Dr. Ehrich Lisa Catherine: Clutterbuck, McManus, S. E. & Russell, J. E. (2007) Peer mentoring relationships. In B. R. Ragins & K. Kram (Eds.) The handbook of mentoring at work: Theory, research and practice (pp. 273–297). Sage: Los Angeles.



informal mentoring arrangements, for traditional mentoring, or for various types of peer mentoring or group mentoring.

**Advantages** of e-mentoring:

- elimination of geographical distances,
- greater flexibility in scheduling,
- reduced costs in administering (i.e. cheaper than face-to-face),
- may attract persons who find it difficult to access a mentor via face-to-face means.

**Disadvantages** of e-mentoring:

- if using text-based communication methods (e.g. email), there is the possibility of misinterpretation or miscommunication due to asynchronous communication,
- may take a longer time to develop trust and rapport in the relationship,
- computer or internet malfunctions,
- different degrees of competence in writing.

Within the framework of this handbook we will develop a Peer Mentoring approach in a workplace context: Secondary and High Schools.



## 1.2. Ethics of mentoring

### The code of ethics of the EMCC<sup>17</sup>



As in all professions when we talk about professional mentoring it is also necessary to refer to an ethical code. Indeed the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC)<sup>18</sup> updated its Code of Ethics for general professionals and members of the EMCC in 2008 with a main aim “to promote best practice and ensure that the highest possible standards are maintained in the coach/mentoring environment providing the greatest opportunity for learning and development”.

The EMCC Code of Ethics covers the following professional areas: Competence, Context, Boundary Management, Integrity and Professionalism in which the professional mentors have to act ethically. Based on its proposal in the context of this handbook we want to highlight the following aspects:

#### 1. -Competence. The mentor will

- Ensure that his/her level of experience and knowledge is sufficient to meet the needs of the mentee.
- Develop and then enhance their level of competence by participating in relevant training and appropriate Continuing Professional Development activities.
- Maintain a relationship with a suitably-qualified supervisor, who will regularly assess his/her competence and support their development.

#### 2. -Context. The mentor will

- Understand and ensure that the mentoring relationship reflects the context within which the mentoring is taking place.
- Ensure that the expectations of the mentee are understood and that the mentor understands how those expectations are to be met.

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<sup>17</sup> European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC): Code of Ethics. Updated December 2008. <http://www.emccouncil.org/src/ultimo/models/Download/4.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> EMCC is an pan-European organisation founded in 1992 with headquarters in different European countries, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom. <http://www.emccouncil.org/>.



- Seek to create an environment on which mentee and mentor are focused and have the opportunity for learning.

### **3. -Boundary.** The mentor will

- At all times operate within the limits of their own competence, recognise where that competence has the potential to be exceeded and where necessary even refer the mentee to a more experienced mentor.
- Be aware of the potential for conflicts of interest to arise through the mentoring relationship and deal with them quickly and effectively to ensure there is no detriment to the mentee.

### **4. -Integrity.** The mentor will

- Maintain throughout the level of confidentiality which is appropriate and is agreed at the start of the relationship.

### **5. -Professionalism.** The mentor will

- Respond to the mentee's learning and development needs as defined by the agenda brought to the mentoring relationship.
- Ensure that the duration of the mentoring contract is only as long as is necessary for the mentoring process.

## **Other considerations on ethical aspects<sup>19</sup>**

London Deanery. Coaching and Mentoring organisation proposes its own ethical code for mentors which as above we have adapted for the use of this handbook.

- The mentor's role is to respond to the Mentee's needs and agenda; it is not to impose their own agenda.
- Mentors must work within the current agreement with the mentee about confidentially that is appropriate within context.
- Mentors must be aware of any current law and work within the law.
- The mentee should be aware of their rights and any complaint procedures.
- Mentors and mentees should respect each other's time and other responsibilities, ensuring they do not impose tasks beyond what is reasonable.

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<sup>19</sup> London Deanery. Coaching and Mentoring, (2008): Ethical Code of Practice.<http://mentoring.londondeanery.ac.uk/our-scheme/mentors/ethical-code-of-practice>.



- The mentee must accept increasing responsibility for managing the relationship; the mentor should empower the mentee to do so and must generally promote the learner's autonomy.
- Either party may dissolve the relationship.
- Mentors need to be aware of the limits of their own competence in the practice of mentoring.
- The mentor will not intrude into areas the mentee wishes to keep private until invited to do so. However they should help the mentee to recognise how other issues may relate to these areas.
- Mentors and mentees should aim to be open and truthful with each other and themselves about the relationship itself.
- Mentors and mentees share the responsibility for the smooth winding down of the relationship when it has achieved its purpose – they must avoid creating dependency.
- The mentoring relationship must not be exploitative in any way, neither may it be open to misinterpretation.

It is necessary to establish an ethical agreement between the mentee and the mentor in order to guarantee a professional and efficient relationship.



### 1.3. More about mentoring

#### Benefits and pitfalls: What can I expect from my mentoring relationships?



**In general**, “Mentorship promises potential benefits in at least the following three areas”<sup>20</sup>:

- 1. New teacher induction (mentee):** to help the transition of beginning teachers into the classroom and acculturate them to the specific school and district setting in which they will work.
- 2. Career enhancement (mentor):** to provide an avenue for leadership, public recognition, and reward for skilled veteran teachers who serve their schools and districts as mentors, professional developers, and/or contributors to curriculum and instructional improvement.
- 3. Professional development and program innovation (community):** to build capacity for school and district program innovation and to guide local education reform”

Specifically the following listed<sup>21</sup> **benefits for the beginning teachers** (mentee) and **teachers** (mentors) can be expected:

	<b>Beginning teachers (mentees)</b>	<b>Teachers (mentors)</b>
<b>1. Teachers’ pedagogic and didactic development:</b>		
Access to the knowledge, experience and support of a mentor teacher	✓	
Material and experience share	✓	✓

<sup>20</sup> SEDL organisation-Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, (2000): Mentoring beginning Teachers: Lessons from the Experience in Texas. Policy Research Report. November, 2000. <http://www.sedl.org/pubs/policy23/mentoring.pdf>

**NOTE:** The authors when mention the three areas have quoted the work of Little, J.W published in 1990, “The mentor phenomenon and the social organisation of teaching”, in C.B. Cazden (Ed.), Review of research in education, 16, 297-351. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

<sup>21</sup> **NOTE:** To develop this table we have taken as a reference different texts listed in the bibliography such as Ehrich Lisa Catherine, Dr. (2013) and State of Victoria (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development) (2010).





Methods of planning the distribution of the didactic contents in the school year	✓	
Assessment criteria of students' performance	✓	
Increased learning, renewal and teaching performance		✓
Refocus on instructional practices and the development of reflective skills		✓
<b>2. Continuing Professional Learning</b> (in the topic taught and in general aspects):		
Feedback on teachers' performance	✓	
Tutoring in the teachers' career path	✓	
Responding to individual needs of the beginning teacher	✓	
Personal, social and professional development	✓	✓
Professional recognition. Recognition as an excellent teacher conferred through status as a mentor		✓
Increased job success, self-confidence and self-esteem	✓	
Reduced trial-and-error learning and accelerated professional growth	✓	
<b>3. Classroom management:</b>		
Class team building: Motivating students	✓	
Conducting the meetings with parents	✓	
Benefit from attending mentor classes	✓	
<b>4. Interpersonal Communication:</b>		
Bigger proximity and support between teachers	✓	✓
Managing conflicts and crisis situations	✓	✓
Support in the contacts with parents	✓	✓
Increased sense of belonging at the school	✓	



Gratitude on the part of the mentee		✓
<b>5. School environment knowledge:</b>		
Better school integration	✓	
Knowledge of functioning of the organisational structure of the school	✓	
<b>6. Others:</b>		
Knowledge about education legislation and other issues	✓	
Enhanced personal and professional well-being because of reduced stress during the transition	✓	
Strategic management and quality management	✓	
Support for successful induction into the teaching career	✓	

Source: Own preparation

### **Pitfalls of Mentoring<sup>22</sup>:**

#### **1) Mentoring without a goal**

For the process of mentoring to become a satisfactory experience for both the mentor and the mentee, setting goals is paramount. Goals allow for a foresight in the mentee's aspirations, but also give a clear view of the mentee's current situation.

#### **2) Not scheduling regular meetings**

In a mentoring relationship it is very important to schedule regular meetings, and both parties sticking to them. This establishes a pattern of contact which improves reliability, consistency and progress.

The same goes for cancelling or postponing the appointment. Once a meeting is skipped, the likelihood of this happening again is very high.

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<sup>22</sup> Rosier, Bart Jacobsz (2014): 5 Pitfalls of Mentoring Relationships. <http://hi.dwillo.com/5-pitfalls-mentoring-relationships/>.



Therefore a lack of scheduling is the second pitfall of mentorship.

### **3) Incompatibility**

Mentorship relations require a match of character and/or interest to connect. They also require compatibility between the participating parties. When there is a mismatch between the mentor and mentee, the chances of the mentorship failing increase. Not on all aspects do the mentor and mentee have to be the same.

### **4) Cloning**

Cloning is what happens when a mentor, instead of listening and coaching the mentee, tries to shape the mentee in such a way that he or she becomes an exact replica of the mentor.

The goal for a mentor is to advise, inform and support the choices of the mentee.

### **5) Talking not listening**

It is of great importance for mentors to listen to their mentee, especially when the relationship is still fresh. Listening will give the mentee the chance to:

1. Tell their experiences without feeling the mentor has certain expectations.
2. Not be intimidated by the vast experience a mentor already has.
3. Feel comfortable to speak up.

All taken together, listening will allow a mentee to communicate without barriers and gain the most from the mentoring relationship.

**The basis of mentorship** is formed by regular meetings between a mentor and mentee, in which open communication is the standard. Having adequate compatibility and clear goals is what gets the mentorship going. A mentee who can define his or her own path will grow through mentorship and in the end both the mentor and mentee will benefit.



### **Possible mentoring activities<sup>23</sup>**

For the sound development of the mentoring program among teachers diverse activities have to be implemented with different formats, context and objectives. Just as an example we could implement some of the following ones:

**1. Participation in initial support group** for beginning teachers in the school:

- Assistance in orientation in school facilities and organisational structures.
- Introducing to other teachers and staff.
- Assistance in completing school documentation.
- Giving general information about activities, events, celebrations, etc.

**2. Extra classroom assistance:**

- Preparation of the teaching materials with the teacher mentor.
- Participation in mentors' classes in order to observe and learn from the expertise of the experienced teachers.
- Taking part in training seminars/sessions organized by the school.

**3. Special seminars for the beginning teachers:**

- Different forms of professional development education.
- Didactic resources (sharing materials, suggesting worth-using handbooks, etc.).

**4. Participation in a network of beginning teachers outside school**

- Keeping in touch with the Secondary and High School local community.
- Sharing pedagogical resources, knowledge, materials, experiences, etc. (Seminars, informal meetings, conferences, etc.).

**5. Regular or supportive communication with the school head**

- Formal and/or informal meetings with the management school team.

### **General mentoring guidelines**

The following general mentoring guidelines should be followed to ensure a successful mentoring process<sup>24</sup>:

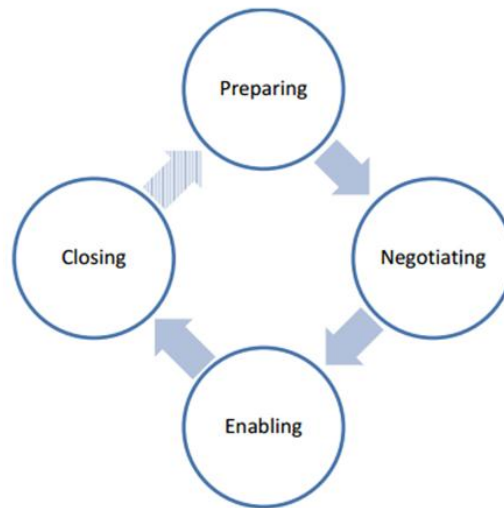
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<sup>23</sup> **NOTE:** For the example mentoring activities suggestion list we have used as a reference some of the texts listed in the bibliography, such as Mentor. National Mentoring Partnership, Hanover Research-Academy Administration Practice, (2014) and Arlington Public Schools (2013).



- Provide constructive feedback rather than pointing out mistakes.
- Be receptive to constructive criticism and willing to try suggestions from others.
- Freely share what you learn, even if through mistakes, with others.
- Be willing to share your connections to networks with peers.
- Always maintain confidentiality within the relationship.
- Disclose your own personal experiences when they are relevant.

There are **4 distinguished phases of the mentorship process**<sup>25</sup>:



### **Phase 1: Preparing**

Both mentor and mentee must prepare individually and in partnership.

Mentors explore personal motivation and their readiness to become mentors, assess their skills and identify their own areas for learning and development.

Both establish clarity about expectations and roles.

### **Phase 2: Negotiating**

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<sup>24</sup> RIT-Rochester Institute of Technology. The Wallace Center. Faculty Career Development Services. <https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/facultydevelopment/mentoring/mentee>.

<sup>25</sup> NESSE. Network of Early career Scientists & Engineers Mentorship Program Tips. (These materials are based on the “The Mentor’s Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationship” by Lois J. Zachary. <http://www.sustainablescientists.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Mentoring-Tips.pdf>).



Partners come to an agreement on the learning goals and define the content and process of the relationship. They establish ground rules and create a shared understanding about assumptions, expectations, goals, and needs.

They discuss confidentiality, boundaries, and limits regardless of how difficult these topics are to discuss.

They agree on the following: when and how to meet, responsibilities, criteria for success, accountability, and timeline for closure.

They review, complete and sign a Mentoring Agreement.

### **Phase 3: Enabling**

They learn and develop, communicate openly, reflect on the learning progress continuously.

It is the Mentor's duty to nurture the Mentee's growth, establish and maintain an open and affirming learning climate and provide thoughtful, timely, candid and constructive feedback.

Both monitor the learning progress to ensure the learning goals are being met.

### **Phase 4: Closing**

They must be aware of the signals that indicate it is time for closure.

They judge whether the learning goals have been met or whether the relationship is no longer effective.

They evaluate their personal learning and celebrate the progress made.



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## **Part 2: Mentoring between teachers.**

### **2.1. Mentor's role and responsibilities. Rights, duties, skills.**



A particularly important role in the mentoring between teachers belongs to the mentor, who is a teacher working in the same school as the mentee. His/her attitude and competencies are crucial for the success of the mentoring program.

The following criteria should be taken into account to decide whether a certain teacher, can properly act as a mentor:

- 1) having adequate personal characteristics,
- 2) having adequate knowledge, skills and experience in the teaching profession,
- 3) having adequate attitude and motivation.

The mentor's activities should be based on his/her voluntary involvement in the mentor's role and in introducing a beginning teacher (mentee) into his/her role as a teacher in the new job environment. That is why the most important factor for the success of the mentoring program between teachers is the mentor's voluntary and personal involvement. On the other hand, the mentee should also be open to such a relationship and have confidence in the mentor. Otherwise, the mentoring activity will not be efficient, and will result in frustration and discouragement.

For the efficiency of teachers' mentoring, it is important that the teachers (both mentors and mentees) understand the mentor's role.



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In his publication “Keeping Great People with Three Kinds of Mentors” Anthony K. Tjan<sup>26</sup> described three types of mentors:

1. Buddy / Peer Mentor.
2. Career Mentor.
3. Life Mentor.

However, in education, in school, not only should the mentor combine all those three types, but also, according to the situation, he/she should perform the tasks of a coach, a guide, an expert, a role model, a problem-solver, a motivator... Such a mentor is expected by the teachers, which appeared to be clear from the research made within our project (see: „Mentoring between teachers in secondary and high schools” - The Needs Analysis Report). Most of the respondents think that the mentor’s role is to help faster teachers’ inclusion into the school life and support in solving students' school problems. Moreover, an important mentor’s duty is helping the mentee in better classroom organization and management.

Relating to the above mentioned types of mentors, an example of career mentor is a supervisor of the work placement of the beginning teacher in the formal teachers’ professional promotion system, which appears in some of the European Union countries.

It is also worth mentioning, that in the school environment the mentor is like a friend, who supports the mentee not only psychologically, but first of all in professional skills. The majority of respondents stressed the importance of the mentor’s role in the improvement of the mentee’s teaching practices and pedagogical knowledge.

Generally, the respondents pointed out the willingness to share his/her skills, knowledge and expertise as the mentor’s most valid characteristics. Positive thinking is also essential in this job. When it comes to the mentor’s skills, the most desired ones are interpersonal communication and coaching skills. The mentor should also know how to encourage and motivate others and want to contribute to other people's growth and success.

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<sup>26</sup> Tjan, Anthony K. (2011). Keeping Great People with Three Kinds of Mentors, <https://hbr.org/2011/08/keeping-great-people-with-thre.html>.



As already mentioned, the mentoring program should follow the rules of:

- 1) volunteering – neither the mentor nor the mentee should feel as being forced to participate in the mentoring activities,
- 2) relationship and matching of mentor-mentee pair based on mutual understanding and acceptance between them.

In the mentoring between teachers this relationship is particularly important. It depends on the personality, of course, but one should not forget that development of relational skills could be supported, for example through training. To define it better, we could follow the European Competence Matrix “Mentor“, elaborated within the project „Certi.Men Tu – Certification for Mentors and Tutors” – project number LLP LDV TOI 12-AT-0015, Fohnsdorf 2012. In the section „Develop good relationship with learners in the mentoring process” reference is made to mentors’ necessary knowledge, skills and competencies.

According to European Competence Matrix “Mentor“, the mentor should:

- 1) Have comprehensive knowledge of:
  - specific theories, models and methods of communication,
  - specific conflict resolution theories, methods and models, active listening principles and techniques,
  - specific issues on confidentiality.
- 2) Have factual knowledge of the environment in which communication, active listening and conflict resolution take place as well as of the role each stakeholder has in this environment.
- 3) Have a comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills to:
  - communicate effectively with the mentee using practical communication tools and techniques,
  - develop creative solutions to abstract problems taking into account the input from the mentee,
  - demonstrate active listening skills when talking with the mentee either on the phone or face to face in order to resolve different issues,
  - help the mentee gain awareness of and clarify his/her personal and professional goals and priorities, better understand his/her thoughts, feelings, and options.



4) Competence:

- Create and maintain an effective working relationship with the mentee that will help to reach his/her professional goals.
- Ensure the welfare of the mentee and, if need be, support him/her with personal issues.
- Review and improve own role in the development of a working relationship that will maximize the results of the mentoring process.

Although the European Competence Matrix “Mentor“ relates to the working environment of an enterprise, after adjustment we could apply it to the school environment.

Based on the results of the questionnaire research of our project – „MENTOR - Mentoring between teachers in secondary and high schools” – we can say that mentor teachers should have the following features:

- Excellent knowledge of the school life and all the aspects of the teacher’s work,
- Ability to share the knowledge,
- Ability to motivate to work,
- Strong personality,
- Ability to cooperate,
- Awareness of key stages in a teacher’s professional development,
- Knowledge of legal matters connected to the teacher’s job.

It is very important for the mentor to have interpersonal communication skills and to properly use all communication channels.

The mentor should have skills of:

- establishing contacts,
- leading a conversation,
- listening,
- verbalizing his/her thoughts, feelings and observations,



- giving feedback.

The mentor should have at least several years of working experience in the school, whereas the mentee is new in the profession. However, the mentor's age is not significant. The mentor's position in the school and his/her pedagogical successes are more important.

For the prosperity of the mentoring activity, the following are also influential: the mentor's attitude to his/her role, his/her sense of initiative, involvement in the role and persistence.

The mentor's rights are resulting from his/her special role, influencing the school. These rights could be divided into two groups:

1. The rights defining the mentor's position (situation) in the school. They are:
  - a) The right to ask for and obtain help and support in fulfilling the mentor's role from the school management (headmasters), including having the opportunity for training and easy access to publications in order to develop mentor's competencies.
  - b) The right to refuse to perform the mentor's role towards a certain mentee, if this role could not be performed properly for some reasonable causes, for example personal causes resulting in not comfortable relationship with the mentee.
  - c) The right to obtain help in linking the mentor's duties with the professional duties (as a teacher), for example by adjusting the lessons' schedule to the meetings with the mentee plan.
2. The rights defining the mentor's position in the relationship with the mentee. In particular they are:
  - a) The right to be respected and valued because of the fact that the mentor dedicates his/her time and effort voluntarily for the good of the mentee.
  - b) The right to finish the activities resulting from the mentor's role at any time, after the mentor concludes that:
    - his/her role as a mentor has been fulfilled and the mentee is fully prepared to perform his/her tasks as a teacher,



- he/she is not able to function as a mentor towards the certain mentee because of any justifiable reasons.

It should be recalled that the roles of the mentor and the mentee are equal. "They are partners. Their relationship is based on mutual empathy, understanding and trust. Respect is the foundation of the cooperation. Moral assessment is not acceptable. Irrespective of either side's personal opinions, neither of them should make moral assessments. For the respect of the other person, as an individual, his/her views should be tolerated. It is important that the mentor follows the mentee and dedicates to certain issues as much time, as the mentee needs."<sup>27</sup>

On the other hand, feedback on the mentee's work and control to some extent are crucial in mentoring between teachers. The mentor should bear in mind that the mentee, as an adult learner, has a strong sense of maturity and independence in his /her learning process, and for this reason, he /she should be treated accordingly. Actually, following this approach will have a positive effect on both the learning process itself and the results of the mentoring activities. That is why, when giving feedback, the mentor should focus on the mentee's behaviour and the results of his work, but not judge the person. The control, which is easier to be accepted by the adult learner, should have formative nature, that is, not only should it inform about "what is", but also about "how you can improve it, change, make it better".

The relationship between the mentor and the mentee develops in three areas:

- personal – based on mutual trust, positive attitude, motivation and enthusiasm of both,
- intellectual – based on similar professional interests and readiness to share the knowledge and job experience gained by the mentor, as well as on the mentee's openness for the new experiments and knowledge,
- organizational – based on more or less formal contact between themselves, specifying the format and frequency of the meetings and other activities.

The mentor's basic duties are the following:

1. Respecting the mentee, willingness to cooperate and accept his/her choices.

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<sup>27</sup> Polish Psychologists' Association. (n.d.). *Czym jest mentoring?*  
[http://www.polishpsychologists.org/projektybk/czym\\_jest\\_mentoring/](http://www.polishpsychologists.org/projektybk/czym_jest_mentoring/).



2. Helping the mentee in faster inclusion into the school life.
3. Helping the mentee in work with students, including assistance in solving students' school problems, better classroom organization and management, and improvement of the teaching practices and pedagogical methods.
4. Helping the mentee in his/her contacts with students' parents/carers, including the parents' councils (or other representation bodies) and external school stakeholders.
5. Mobilizing and encouraging the mentee to constantly develop his/her pedagogical skills and professional qualifications.
6. On-going contact and help for the mentee in any aspects of the teacher's job at least four hours per month.
7. Keeping confidentiality, even after the termination of the mentoring program.

The mentee's basic duties are the following:

1. Meeting with the mentor to discuss and agree on priorities for the mentoring and keep these under review.
2. Participating fully in the agreed mentoring program.
3. Raising any concerns with mentor as soon as possible.

It is advised to establish a contract (agreement) between the mentor and the mentee. The agreement helps to regulate the relationship. It can include more detailed rights and duties of both sides, according to the personal needs and characteristics of the two parties. In particular, the agreement should mention the mentoring goals, expectations, outcomes, future meeting times, structure of meetings, values, what the mentor can / cannot do for the mentee, mentoring period, etc.



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## 2.2. Ethics of Teaching. Ethics in mentoring between teachers.

### Ethics and Deontology in Teachers' Practice



As already mentioned (Chapter. 1.2.), ethics is important in the mentoring process. Research on teacher education states that the teaching profession involves ethical and deontological demands into personal and professional development. As Sadio<sup>28</sup> estimates, “education is much more than developing skills, acquiring abilities or competences, socialising and - surely-much more than teaching. A strong professional conscience and its correlative deontology should be an essential teacher training dimension”. Unethical behaviour can ruin trust and respect between teachers and their colleagues. The teacher has to be honest, fair, unbiased and with professional responsibility.



Codes of ethics aim to give guidance on how one could act as a morally responsible member of the group when situations require an element of compromise between principles. A deontological code for teachers should unify the various regulations, which are dissipated in acts, laws, statutes or standards. A deontological code for teachers is usually built of two parts, the first of them being the Commitment to the Student, and the second - Commitment to the Profession. The latter could be enlarged with the ethical requirements towards the mentor.

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<sup>28</sup> Sadio, Fernando, Professional Deontology in Teacher Training. Report on a Training Experience, in “Publicaciones de la Facultad de Educacion y Humanidades del Campus de Melilla”, Granada, vol 41, 2011, from <http://revistaseug.ugr.es/index.php/publicaciones/article/view/2192/2324>, accessed 23.07. 2015.



For that purpose we could adapt the Ethical Code delivered by the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC). Some patterns of behaviour, required of every mentor (including teacher mentor), are universal. Among them is the need to treat the mentoring activities with seriousness and regard of the mentee's dignity, autonomy, and responsibility of one's behaviour. Moreover:

1. Regarding the competencies – the teacher mentor should be aware whether his/her experience and knowledge is proportional to the expectations and demands of the mentee.
2. Regarding the context – the teacher mentor should:
  - understand that the mentoring relation is reflecting the context it is based in,
  - make sure that the mentee's expectations are properly understood by him-/herself and that the mentee understands the ways those expectations could be met.
3. Regarding the management of the limits of his/her function – the teacher mentor should:
  - act always within the limits of his/her responsibilities and be able to recognize the situation, when those limits are or could be crossed,
  - be aware of potential conflicts that may emerge during the mentoring relationship and be prepared to deal with those situations.
4. The teacher–mentor should be righteous and honest; s/he should maintain confidentiality, boundaries which should be established in the beginning of the relationship with the mentee.
5. Regarding the professionalism – the teacher mentor should:
  - react in a positive way to the needs connected with the vocational development of the mentee,
  - not take advantage of the mentee in any way, especially financially or professionally,
  - respect the rule saying that the responsibility remains even after the end of any relationship with the mentee.



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### **2.3. Knowledge about legislation in education and about school documentation.**



In most countries of the European Union, mentoring between teachers is not regulated by law. Legal and formal regulations of the relationship between the mentor and the mentee in school environment are not common. The most detailed regulations appear in the United Kingdom. They are included in “Induction for newly qualified teachers (England) Statutory guidance for appropriate bodies, headteachers, school staff and governing bodies. “ This guidance refers to Sections 135A, 135B and 141C(1)(b), of the Education Act 2002 and associated Education (Induction Arrangements for School Teachers) (England) Regulations 2012.

Despite this fact, in the laws of other countries may appear regulations of relationships between new teachers and their so called mentors or tutors, as well as rules valid in schools and for the school managers, heads, etc. Usually, they concern activities similar to mentoring, for example the responsibilities of the school management bodies towards the induction of new teachers and keeping documentation in proper place. In some of the EU countries the regulations concern the organization of the work placement of the beginning teachers within the formal teachers’ professional promotion system.

That is why when implementing the concept and activities of the mentoring between teachers the existing legal regulations must be taken into account. Those regulations may directly relate to mentoring or concern similar situations, e.g. the work placement of the beginning teachers or any fragmentary aspect of the mentoring program.

To conclude, before planning and implementing mentoring between teachers it should be checked if any legal acts would determine the program. One should also bear in mind that the legal regulations are changing and being amended. That is why it is advised to make use of assistance from the supervising bodies and their specialists in the field of education law.



### **The examples of legal acts in force on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015:**

**POLAND** – mentoring activities could be related to the implementation of the work placement of the beginning teachers within the formal teachers' professional promotion system, which is regulated by:

- a) Act of Parliament from 26th January 1982 named "The Teachers' Charter" consolidated act Statute law book (Dziennik Ustaw) from 2014 nr 191 with the changes. Chapter 3a. The professional advancement of teachers.
- b) The Educational Ministry Order from 1st March 2013 in the matter of the obtainment of the professional advancement degrees by teachers - Statute law book (Dziennik Ustaw) from 2013 nr 393.

#### **ROMANIA:**

- a) the Educational Law nr. 1/2011, which in art. 247 paragraph 1 specifies the mentor quality of the teacher,
- b) Ministry Order nr. 5485 from 29/09/2011 named "Methodology for mentor teachers to coordinate the practical internship of a beginning teacher to fill a teaching position" and the annex "Status of the teacher mentor".

**GREECE** – there is no law in force regulating the issue of Mentoring.

#### **PORTUGAL:**

- a) Despacho nº 9488/2015 regulates the issues of induction of the new teachers employed with the undetermined time contracts. These teachers have "probationary period", whose purpose is to evaluate the teacher's competence and to verify if he/she can adapt to the requirements of the job. The junior teacher is supervised by a senior teacher (chosen by the school management), who defines an individual plan for him/her to accomplish. This plan focuses on several domains, and aims to evaluate the junior teacher's didactic, pedagogic and scientific skills. At the end of the probationary period, both teachers



(supervisor and supervised) have to make a report. These reports are analyzed by an external judge (who is also a teacher).

- b) DL 43/2007, 22nd February defines the conditions required to start the teaching activity. Among other issues, it says about students' internships that imply practice of teaching with the supervisor having at least five years of experience in teaching.

### **TURKEY:**

- a) Basic National Education Law Nr. 1739, Article 43 Paragraph 6 (from 2014) titled Teaching Profession defines general qualifications of teachers.
- b) The Regulation on the Appointment and Replacement of Teachers of Education Organizations Affiliated to the Ministry of National Education (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Öğretmen Atama ve Yer Değiştirme Yönetmeliği) from 17th of April 2015 regulates the assessment of beginning teachers through a national exam administered by Ministry of National Education and interviews run by school director, senior teacher and an inspector according to the Performance Assessment Grid for Beginning Teachers.

### **SPAIN:**

- a) EDU/2886/2011, 20<sup>th</sup> October, regulates the call, recognition, certification and registration of the activities of teacher training. In Articles 6 and 7, explains training projects in educational centers, such as seminars, work groups and congresses, with a tutor being in charge of the online activities to provide help and guidance to the teachers who participate in the activities. In Article 6, paragraph 3, it is explained that work groups will be coordinated by one of the participants (who are teachers), and paragraph 4 states that training projects in educational centers are based on the collaborative work among equals.
- b) ECD/686/2014, 23<sup>rd</sup> April, in Article 21 explains that tutoring and guidance of the students (individually or in groups) in primary education are part of the duties of teachers, who will provide educational orientation and help them with problems if necessary.



- c) ECD/1361/2015, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, in Article 16, named “Tutoring and guidance” also states that tutoring and guidance of the students in secondary education are part of the duties of teachers, which will have as an objective the integrated and balanced development of students.

It is important to mention the documentation required to be done by teachers. Teachers are obliged by law to prepare some certain documents related to their job and to fulfill this obligation could be particularly difficult for the novice teachers. Some examples of the most important documents, from Polish background<sup>29</sup>, are:

- Curriculum, describing the implementation of the educational tasks. The teacher chooses the curriculum from those published and certified by the Ministry of Education.
- Core Curriculum, elaborated by the Ministry of Education and describing the educational aims, school tasks and learning outcomes on the certain educational level.
- Didactic plan, elaborated by the teacher and presenting the distribution of the learning material of the certain subject for the certain educational level.
- Students’ Performance Assessment System, elaborated jointly by the teachers. It is internal for the certain school or adapted for the certain subject.
- Lessons scenarios, elaborated by each teacher aiding in planning and implementing the lessons taught by them.
- Class Register, for the documentation of students’ performance, attendance and didactic plan implementation. It is becoming more and more available in the electronic format with the access for parents to monitor their children’s performance.

The examples mentioned above are only part of the documentation the teacher must learn and master. That is why it is worth including the acquisition of skills for preparing teachers’ documentation in the mentoring activities. Additionally, as a load of such work falls in the beginning of the school year, it is recommended to foresee mentoring activities related with documentation at the very beginning, maybe even before the school year starts.

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<sup>29</sup> Dobies, I. (n.d.). Dokumentacja pracy nauczyciela [PowerPoint slides], <http://slideplayer.pl/slide/803777/>.





***Reference:***

Dobies, I. (n.d.). Dokumentacja pracy nauczyciela [PowerPoint slides]. Rethrived from <http://slideplayer.pl/slide/803777/>.



## 2.4. What it means to be a teacher: responsibilities, duties, rights.

### Teaching.

#### Duties, responsibilities and rights of teacher.



What does it mean to be a teacher? It is hard to answer this question as the teacher has to perform different roles when planning, organizing and conducting his lessons: 'organiser', 'manager', 'conductor', 'facilitator', 'counsellor', 'prompter', 'resource', 'instructor', 'tutor', 'examiner', 'assessor', to name just a few.

*"Brown, H. Douglas (2007) mentions that teachers can play many roles in the course of teaching and this might facilitate the learning. Their ability to carry these out effectively will depend on a large extent on the rapport they establish with their students, and on their own level of knowledge and skills."*

Furthermore, the teacher has a series of duties and responsibilities inside and outside the classroom, the main of which include:

- Preparing lesson plans, teaching classes and evaluating student progress;
- Encouraging students and acting as teacher–advisors for students;
- Maintaining discipline in the classroom;
- Teaching according to the educational needs, abilities and achievement of the individual students and groups of students;
- Assigning work, correcting and marking work carried out by his/her students;
- Assessing, recording and reporting on the development, progress, attainment and behaviour of one's students;
- Communicating with parents about students' progress;
- Communicating, consulting and co-operating with other members of the school staff, including those having posts of special responsibility and parents/guardians to ensure the best interest of students;
- Reviewing and evaluating one's own teaching and learning strategies, methodologies and programme/s in line with the National Curriculum Framework guidelines;
- Participating in school assemblies;
- Sharing in any possible and reasonable way in the effective management, organisation, order and discipline of the school.



The list of teachers' duties and responsibilities is undoubtedly a long one and varies from country to country, sometimes even from school to school. The ones mentioned above are common to most educational systems.

Although a lot of ink has been spent on defining the teacher's duties, little has been written about the teacher's rights. Gill and Macmillan highlight the following:

- The right to physical, emotional, social, intellectual, creative and sexual safety.
- The right to respect from students, colleagues, leaders and parents.
- The right to teach in an atmosphere of order and attention.
- The right to demand social structures within the school that guarantee respect for the teachers' rights.
- The right to ask for help when needed.
- The right to fair, just and effective leadership on the part of the school principal and vice-principal.
- The right to express any need or grievance they may have.

It is essential that these rights be respected by all parts. Only then will teachers be able to focus on their main task: teaching.



### What is teaching?

Teaching is providing the amount of support necessary to ensure that new learning occurs. For that to happen, the teacher must know what the learner needs and how to teach it. The teaching and learning process has four key elements: **assessment, evaluation, planning, and teaching.** The goal of any teaching is to produce new learning, which in turn provides a new assessment sample for the teacher to evaluate.



The teacher must create suitable conditions under which assessment supports students' learning, provides useful feedback for correction actions and encourages students to continue studying.

The importance of feedback must not be underestimated. Through feedback it is possible to:

- correct errors,
- develop understanding through explanations,
- generate more learning by suggesting further specific study tasks.

In other words, it is feedback that keeps the teaching-learning cycle moving. The cycle never ends. The teacher keeps planning and teaching his lessons. The teacher assesses student's work and evaluates their performance. He gives feedback and starts all over again. But the truth remains that no learning can take place without the student's consent. The teacher is no longer the dominant figure in the classroom. The student is in the centre of the cycle. The student decides whether he will be the recipient of teaching or not. Therefore, all teachers must adopt a student – centered teaching approach, they must shift from teaching to learning and try to understand how their students learn so as to enhance their learning ability.

Säljö<sup>30</sup> describes students as having one of five conceptions of learning:

1. Learning as passive receipt of information.
2. Learning as active memorization of information.
3. Learning as active memorization of information or procedures, to be used at some time in the future.
4. Learning as understanding.
5. Learning as a change in personal reality: seeing the world differently.

The teacher ought to explore and discover which conception of learning each student has and take this into serious consideration when planning and conducting assessment. For each student has unique learning needs and abilities and they cannot all be assessed by the same criteria.

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<sup>30</sup> Säljö, R. (1982) Learning and Understanding, Goteborg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.



A holistic assessment approach must be employed, which will not focus on the student's weaknesses, but will consider all different aspects of the student's personality. Last but not least, the assessment should praise the student's efforts and encourage further studying.

Continuous assessment throughout the school year will bring about enhanced teaching methods and techniques and better learning outcomes.

To sum up, the teacher's job is very demanding and it requires a combination of different skills and qualities. Teachers-to-be are provided with a theoretical background at university or in teacher training courses. They are taught about the teacher's duties and rights, the different roles they may have to play during a lesson, the latest teaching and assessing methods and techniques, etc. In practice, however, new teachers are confronted with so many problems that they realize their theoretical knowledge is not sufficient to solve them.

This is when a mentor is really needed. A mentor is an older, more experienced, fully qualified and well trained teacher, who will take on the responsibility to prepare, induce and instruct his mentee, the beginner teacher, how to cope with all these issues.



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## **2.5. Organizational Culture. Myths, heroes' stories. Cultural Dimensions. Highlights in determining a school's organizational culture.**



Even though schools are perceived as similar from the outside, each of them has distinct characteristics and a culture that makes them different from other schools. School culture is one of the important factors contributing to the school's efficiency and success.

There are different definitions of the Organizational Culture. One of the scholars, Edward Sapir, identifies three main meanings of culture:

- the technical meaning, which aims for the unification of all human elements (the coextensive human culture, identic term with „civilization“),
- culture as a personality ideal, concerning education and training,
- culture as spirit or nation genius.

We can therefore conclude by saying that organizational culture mainly speaks for values, symbols, rituals, ceremonies, myths, attitudes and behaviors typical for a given society. These elements are then transmitted from generation to generation. Organizational culture can be understood as a way of thinking, feeling and acting, having an enormous influence on the results and the evolution of a given organization.





## **Main components of the organizational culture**

### **Symbols and Slogans**

The symbol - concept characterizes the organizational phenomenon, as well as its manifestation on different levels. Sometimes one can use symbols in relationship to other cultures, in order to underline similarities and differences.

Symbols represent objects, events or ways in which one can submit ideas. They reflect the philosophy, the values, the beliefs and the expectations one employee might have. Through them, different concepts and behaviors are being transmitted and promoted in the framework of an organization.

Symbols can take several forms. They can be splinted up in action symbols, verbal symbols or material symbols:

- Action symbols can be understood as behaviors, facts that transmit major meanings for the participants coming from a certain organization.
- Verbal symbols can be found under the form of slogans, logos, jokes, funny stories, special expressions, etc.
- Material symbols: a way of designing a building, the architecture, the offices, the utilized furniture, the clothing, etc.

Each school has its own symbols, which are utilized by school management / managers in order to express certain values, the organizational culture or their vision concerning the future.

### **The values of the organization**

Organizational culture is defined by beliefs, values and behavior related norms which represent the basic level on the participants' perception concerning the things that happen in the organization, aspects that are required and accepted, as well as potential threats. Norms and values in organizations require a common perception in the things that are important, positive and desired in that given organization. In this way, the ideals and behaviors the organizational





participants should embrace can be foreshadowed. Values are essential for the organizational culture.

Some of the domains in which we can identify the school values are: performance, competence, competitiveness, innovation, quality, customer service, teamwork, care and consideration for people. For example, out of a research made in Romanian schools on existent organizational cultures<sup>31</sup>, the following values were detected (in order of preference): order, study, people, surviving, network, power, personal success.

### **Behavior norms**

Norms describe behaviors recognized and accepted by all members of the group, highlighting the expected behaviors by the group participants from the inside and outside of the organization.

Each organization, including a school, has its own specific code, as a reflection of its members, of the activities and of the settled goals. The codes give new meanings, specific connotations to some words selected by the organization's participants. A particular form is the jargon, used by the organization members in order to communicate in an easier way. If a member of the organization does not know and cannot use the jargon, it is obvious that he is not part of the group.

### **Rituals and ceremonies**

Rituals and ceremonies represent some of the most visible forms of symbolic behavior in an organization. Rituals are planned actions, usually with an emotional content, which highlight the ways of expression of the organizational culture. In this way, social models are confirmed and reproduced.

We can distinguish the following ritual-types:

- personal, developed by the individual and connected to their role in the organization;
- concentrated on tasks / objectives, which focus on the activity performed by one or more people;

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<sup>31</sup> Iosifescu, S. Culturi organizaționale în școala românească, I, II, ISE, 2001, 2002.



- social, initiated by informal groups;
- organizational, events with a bigger formality.

The role of ritual is to strengthen the organizational culture, to reduce stress and to transmit symbolic messages to the outside. Rituals are specific for organizational cultures and are often perceived as unwritten rules of communication. They help strengthen the individual and group identity, highlighting how strong the organizational culture can be. The ceremony involves a collective, formal and solemn manifestation which highlights the tradition and history of the organization. It is an event that focalizes the organizational culture and that remains in the collective memory for a long time. Under ceremonies we understand jubilees, anniversaries, the opening of a new school, the establishment of new specialization programs, or celebrations of the institution.

Through these ceremonies, greater unity is created between members of the organization, feelings of pride are conveyed, new members are initiated, relationships are developed, and the feeling of hope is created.

### Stories and myths

**Stories** initiate the new entry into what organization - life means, facilitating the meaning which we should give to different events. The stories are based on real facts, but also contain elements of imaginary fiction as they are transmitted by word of mouth, oral creation bearing the mark.

**Legends** are stories that show the uniqueness of a group or leader in a simple, but symbolic manner, talking at the same time about the history of the organization.

**Scenarios** are stories about the future of the organization, like the leaders imagine it to be, in their attempt to anticipate their role and position in future events.

**The myth** is one of the most sensitive and difficult concepts to link to the real events of one organization. Myths also may be understood as organizational metaphors, as a form of expression that conveys symbolic messages beyond the actual content of the words, phrases. A



myth is in the end similar to a story or legend, both in content as well as purpose. Myths communicate basic beliefs, values that can not always be supported with facts.

### **Analyses of cultural organization in schools**

There is no universally valid type of culture of the institution. Culture can not be borrowed, can not be imitated. It develops gradually and it is unique. We can also say that there is no management of culture, but just the type of management that takes into account the concept of culture, as there are also attentive leaders to such things.

According to Emil Paun<sup>32</sup>, a number of factors operates on school climate and / or culture, some of which are easily observable, while others have a less visible action. For example:

- Structural factors, relating to organizations structure, i.e. the distribution of the statuses and roles the organization individuals have. Out of these, the most important are: size of the school, human resources by age and sex, the degree of homogeneity of training, etc.
- Instrumental factors that have the conditions and the means to achieve organizational goals. We are talking about physical environment, material basis, relations within the school staff, management style of the manager and team, etc.
- Socio-affective factors with a direct role on the motivation of the school participants. In this category we can find factors that promote acceptance / rejection, affection / indifference, personal relationship with the director and his team, satisfaction / dissatisfaction with school work, promotion opportunities, motivation techniques, etc.

As Daniela Ion Barbu has shown to us, there are six types of school climates mentioned in specialized literature: open, autonomous, controlled, familiar, paternalistic and closed. According to other researchers' opinions, we could distinguish:

- Open climate: is characterized by cooperation and collaboration between team members. These show respect and mutual support. Participants show professionalism, being totally concentrated on achieving objectives. The director supports staff and personnel, he represents an

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<sup>32</sup> Păun, E. (1999). Școala – abordare sociopedagogică. Polirom: Iași.



example for his staff and he respects those he works with. There is autonomy, resulting in not feeling the influence of rules, guidelines and bureaucratic control;

- Closed climate: assumes a total lack of interest from teachers, who lack motivation, and develop their activity by routine, indifference and disengagement. The director practices inefficient but authoritarian management using excessive control, submitting rigid and unattractive assignments, showing inflexibility and lack of tolerance.
- The employed climate is represented by a manager who is rigid, autocratic, trying to control whatever happens in school by any means. Despite such a situation, teachers, characterized by high professionalism, dedication and motivation, ignore the director's behavior and lead themselves. Collegiality, team spirit and pleasure to work for the benefit of the school prevails among teachers.
- Unemployed climate is typical for a school in which only the manager demonstrates professionalism. He is strongly motivated and involved, showing openness and supportive behavior. On the other hand, we have teachers that are disinterested, disengaged and even interested in sabotaging the efforts made by the school director in his attempt to reach his goals. In the director-oriented school, the director is constantly trying to stimulate his staff, respects them and offers them ways to succeed professionally while teachers do not get along either with each other, or with the director.

Between the four dimensions, the preferred option is obviously the school with an open environment in which participants feel like being part of a huge family, without experiencing pressure or unnecessary rules or behaviors that corset and brake. As a result, job satisfaction is visible, members of the school are highly motivated and performance is accordingly.

As a conclusion, we may recall Professor Emil Paun's remark that "there is no ideal climate, but it appears that we can talk about efficient or less efficient climate."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Păun, E. (1999). Școala – abordare sociopedagogică. Polirom: Iași.



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## 2.6. Strategic management and quality management



Institutions, like organisms, live in an environment as part of a larger system. The environmental conditions force the organisms to adapt to new circumstances. Institutions are made up of rules and individuals. Just like the individuals, the rules consisting of internal and external constraints, governing an institution also evolve through time. The most basic set of rules of an institution is its management style. Management is the core of the organizational system which revolves around making choices in “*planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling*”<sup>34</sup>. Nanda<sup>35</sup> emphasized the uniqueness of this central core of management which is not found in other activities.

Management is an ancient human activity and changed dramatically over time. The concept of strategic management is relatively new and can be dated back to 1911 when Frederick W. Taylor published his well-known book titled “*The Principles of Scientific Management*”. Major changes in business and academic fields have led the topic of strategic management to change in the last century. Coskun<sup>36</sup> talked about this evolutionary change in management science and stated that the “*strategic management is a comprehensive management approach incorporating numerous elements of the theory of management science*”. In the beginning, this new management style was defined as long-term planning, then it has evolved to strategic planning, and eventually it was called strategic management<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Koontz, H. & O'Donnell, C. (1984). Management: Series in Management, McGraw-Hill, p. 130.

<sup>35</sup> Nanda, J. K. (2006). Management Thought, Sarup & Sons.

<sup>36</sup> Coskun, S. (2011). Strategic Management and Total Quality Management: Similarities, Differences and Their Implications for Public Administration, TODAI's Review of Public Administration, 5(2), pp. 59-94. Available at: [http://www.todaie.edu.tr/resimler/ekler/5e27aa478196b7c\\_ek.pdf?dergi=Review%20of%20Public%20Administration](http://www.todaie.edu.tr/resimler/ekler/5e27aa478196b7c_ek.pdf?dergi=Review%20of%20Public%20Administration).

<sup>37</sup> Ugboro, I. O. and Obeng, K. (2005). The Practice and Use of Strategic Planning Systems in Public Transit Organizations, Urban Transit Institute, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, the report prepared for U.S. Department of Transportation, p. 5.



Numerous definitions of strategic management have been made, but it can simply be defined as *“a tool to forecast the future and place the institution in the best possible position for future success”*<sup>38</sup>. Even though strategic management started in the private business sector, governments also applied this new approach to their functions. Institutions are driven by various internal and external forces to adapt their management styles. Strategic management is an effective approach to face these emerging challenges. Education institutions responded to the demands of changing and evolving conditions of society in a similar way and they adapted their internal structures and functions. By implementing the strategic management approach, the education institutions focus on strategic and operational goals, objectives and strategies based on organizational policies, programs and actions designed to achieve the institution’s aims and desired results<sup>39</sup>. The success of the institution derives from the proper implementation of strategic plans which encompass all the functional areas of an education institution.

Education institutions have been engaging in strategic management to optimize their functions. While strategic planning is a central component of strategic management, strategic planning and strategic management are not the same thing. So, a key to a successful strategic management is a well-prepared and documented strategic plan. In general terms, strategic planning is the process of deciding on long-term objectives of an organization. Strategic planning was introduced after the 1980s with much of the early literature focusing on local government applications<sup>40</sup>. Balanced Scorecard Institute<sup>41</sup> defined strategic planning in detail as an organizational management activity that is used *“to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working toward common goals, establish agreement around intended outcomes/results, and assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment”*. An effective strategic plan is needed for a successful strategic management. Since strategic plan is a written document, then strategic

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<sup>38</sup> Van Niekerk, E.J., Du, P. & Van Niekerk, P. (2006), “Strategic Management in South Africa Education: The leadership Dimension”, *Africa Education Review*, 3(1), pp. 84-99.

<sup>39</sup> Kahveci, Tuba Canvar & Taskin, Harun (2013). “Integrated Enterprise Management System for Higher Education Institutions Based on Strategic and Process Management: The Case Study of Sakarya University”, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 106, pp. 1505-1513, doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.12.170.

<sup>40</sup> Poister, T. H. and Streib, G. (2005). “Elements of Strategic Planning and Management in Municipal Government: Status after Two Decades”, *Public Administration Review*, 65 (1), pp.45-56.

<sup>41</sup> Balanced Scorecard Institute, (2015). *Strategic Planning Basics*. Available at: <http://balancedscorecard.org/Resources/Strategic-Planning-Basics>.



management is the sum of the activities that transform the static plan into action. Then, it is possible to say that “*strategic management ensures the strategic plan first happens and then remains a “live” flexible process, not a fixed unchanged document*”<sup>42</sup>. Historically, management has been called as a form of “art”; hence discrepancies occur between the written plan and its application. That is the reason why the same strategic plan can lead to different results.

A strategic plan is developed with a time horizon of more than two years, and usually developed with a five-year projection<sup>43</sup>. There are some certain steps to be followed to create a strategic plan. Even though methods of creating a strategic plan change in different frameworks, most of them follow a similar pattern. Financial Marketing Agency<sup>44</sup> listed four basic steps in strategic planning. A successful strategic plan should involve (1) analysis and assessment of the current internal and external factors, (2) the strategy formulation, where a detailed documentation of the basic organizational strategic plan is made, (3) the execution of the strategy, where the documented plan is turned into a feasible and practical process by all participants and (4) the evaluation of the implemented plan, where strategic management processes are refined. As it is obvious in the second step of this formulation, strategic planning is one of the organizational management activities. Basically, “*strategic management links planning and budgeting*”<sup>45</sup>.

Following these common steps will help the education institution to create a sound strategic plan. These plans also have some common attributes. The Association for Strategic Planning (ASP) developed some criteria for assessing strategic planning and strategic management frameworks. So, a good strategic plan should be simple, clear and practical. Furthermore, inspired from the ASP’s<sup>46</sup> criteria, it is possible to state that a strategic plan should be able to (1)

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<sup>42</sup> Luxton, A. (2005). Strategic Planning in Higher Education, The Higher Education Management Series Number 1, General Conference Department of Education, Silver Spring, MD, p. 8.

<sup>43</sup> New Mexico Tech, (2013). Strategic Planning Overview. Available at: <https://www.nmt.edu/docman-necessary-menu-item/spc/6-2013-12-13-strategic-planning-overview-v1-0-1>.

<sup>44</sup> Financial Marketing Agency (2013). Strategic Management and Planning, Available at: <http://financialmarketingagency.net/strategic-management-and-planning/>.

<sup>45</sup> Vinzant, J.C. and Vinzant, D.H., (1996). “Strategic Management And Total Quality Management: Challenges And Choices”, Public Administration Quarterly, 20(2), pp. 201-219. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40861675>.

<sup>46</sup> Association for Strategic Planning, (2015). Best Practices for Strategic Planning & Management. Available at: [http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.strategyassociation.org/resource/resmgr/BOK/ASP\\_Strategic\\_Management\\_Bes.pdf?hhSearchTerms=%22best+and+practices%22](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.strategyassociation.org/resource/resmgr/BOK/ASP_Strategic_Management_Bes.pdf?hhSearchTerms=%22best+and+practices%22).





keep the end in mind, (2) effectively transform an organization to high performance, (3) provide better actionable information to decision makers, (4) assess the external and internal environment, (5) lay out the customer's and stakeholder's needs and expectations, (6) include strategic initiatives on performance improvement projects, (7) align and integrate strategy according to the organizational culture and system.

Creating a meticulous strategic plan and implementing with a strategic management approach does not necessarily mean that an organization will meet all challenges successfully, but it does significantly increase the odds. The apparent benefit of engaging strategic management is so immense that organizations are still implementing it with an increasing rate. Lerner<sup>47</sup> listed a number of benefits of strategic management for education institutions. Most importantly, strategic management allows systematic implementation of a pre-defined strategy. First of all, working within a strategic management approach creates a framework for determining the direction an education institution takes to achieve its desired future. Within this framework all partners and stakeholders participate and work together towards accomplishing goals. This participation will eventually raise the vision of the constituencies and encourage them to reflect creatively on the strategic direction. Strategic management also allows the dialogue between the participants improving understanding of the organization's vision, and fostering a sense of ownership of the strategic plan, and belonging to the organization. Through the strategic management the education institution will align its aims with the environment and set its priorities to achieve the desired goals.

In an education institution, in general terms, a successful strategic planning and management process should recognize some issues<sup>48</sup>. To begin with, the institutional plan needs to synchronize with planning in the wider educational community of the country. The process should also recognize that strategy and planning in business and in education are different; for this reason, a different strategic management approach is needed. Since decision-making tends

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<sup>47</sup> Lerner, A. L. (1999). A Strategic Planning Primer for Higher Education, College of Business Administration and Economics, California State University, Northridge. Available at: [http://www.fgcu.edu/provost/files/strategic\\_planning\\_primer.pdf](http://www.fgcu.edu/provost/files/strategic_planning_primer.pdf).

<sup>48</sup> Luxton, A. (2005). Strategic Planning in Higher Education, The Higher Education Management Series Number 1, General Conference Department of Education, Silver Spring, MD, p. 8-11.

to be more top-down in business, management also takes place in an environment that is more tightly coupled than in an education institutions. Different than the business, education institutions have more normative operating styles. Within such an environment, careful management of change will be vital to avoid unnecessary obstacles, therefore the strategic plan and planning process must be flexible and allow for changes and quick responses to external and internal opportunities and challenges.

Strategic planning is the backbone of the strategic management, but the success of strategic management mainly relies on the human capital. Supporting this argument, Kantardjieva<sup>49</sup> suggested that “*strategic management represents the concept of how to utilize [by the administrators] the resources of the organization in the most efficient way possible, with the variable environment as a reference point*”. So, other than the strategic plan, strategic management also requires an assessment of “*organizational capacities such as administrative capacity, structure of power, culture, organizational structure and leadership*”<sup>50</sup>. Finally, strategic management is a contemporary management approach which is a dynamic process that needs constant decision making activity based on the feedback received from the educational processes and other circumstantial requirements.

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<sup>49</sup> Kantardjieva, M. (2015). “The Relationship between Total Quality Management (TQM) and Strategic Management”, Journal of Economics, Business and Management, 3(5), pp. 537-541. Available at: <http://www.joebm.com/papers/242-M10006.pdf>.

<sup>50</sup> Coskun, S. (2011). Strategic Management and Total Quality Management: Similarities, Differences and Their Implications for Public Administration, TODAY's Review of Public Administration, 5(2), p. 63. Available at: [http://www.todaie.edu.tr/resimler/ekler/5e27aa478196b7c\\_ek.pdf?dergi=Review%20of%20Public%20Administration](http://www.todaie.edu.tr/resimler/ekler/5e27aa478196b7c_ek.pdf?dergi=Review%20of%20Public%20Administration).



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## Part 3: Implementing the Mentoring Model in secondary and high schools

### 3.1. Planning mentor's activities



Each experience of mentor-mentee relationship is particularly different depending on individual definitions of mentoring<sup>51</sup>. Therefore, to establish the guidelines for a mentoring program, we have to be aware that this involves the management of different participants, so it is essential to spend some time and work on planning<sup>52</sup>.

In this chapter we suggest some steps that may be useful for those who believe that mentoring is beneficial to teaching and for those who are interested in implementing those activities.



#### STEP 1 – Presenting the validity of the mentoring in the school

The most fundamental step is to get the institutional support of the School Administrators<sup>53</sup>. They will have a decisive role in the program dissemination and in the mentors and mentees'

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<sup>51</sup> Zeind, C. S., Zdanowicz, M., MacDonald, K., Parkhurst, C., King, C. & Wizwer, P. (2005). Developing a sustainable faculty mentoring program. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 69, 5, 1-13.

<sup>52</sup> Ferré, X., Tobajas, F., Córdoba, M.L. & de Armas, V. (2009). Guía para la puesta en marcha de un programa de mentoría en un centro universitario. *Mentoring & Coaching - Universidad y Empresa*. Vol. 2, pp. 133-151.

<sup>53</sup> Ibidem.



recruitment. Implementation of the mentoring in the school depends on the school management, e.g. headmaster, principal. They could initiate the mentoring activities between teachers in their school if they find it relevant. There may appear a need of help from the institutions supervising the schools (e.g. local education authority). It is very important to have the management body convinced to the mentoring, so that they can make a supportive decision as well as properly monitor the program implementation.

It is needed for the headmaster / principal to have adequate knowledge on mentoring between teachers and consider it as needed to be implemented in the school. Whose role is to inform the headmaster / principal about the opportunities of mentoring and convince him/her about its positive effects? It depends. The initiative may belong to the supervising body, a teacher training institution or the teachers themselves. In each case of the initiative coming from outside the management body, the first goal is to meet with the headmaster or principal in order to explain the advantages of a mentoring program. At this point it is convenient to understand whether the school management is aware of the importance of these initiatives to improve the novice teacher's fit with the school, the teachers' work satisfaction, and their pedagogical strategies, and subsequently to increase the students' success.

It is worth investigating whether any mentoring activities have been implemented in this school before and with what results. If they ended up with not very positive effects, the reasons of that should be traced and acknowledged, and the talks with the headmaster / principal should be led based on that previous experience.

In addition, as we do not want to overload our participants, we should take the opportunity to check if it is viable to integrate mentoring activities in the teacher's schedules. In sum, since it involves a high personal investment, what benefits will participants have? During this meeting it is important to display the benefits to all actors: school, teachers and students.

## **STEP 2 – Analyzing context**

It is useful to understand the characteristics of the specific context in which a mentoring program will be implemented.



The following are some examples of questions that can be informally asked to teachers.

- *How do teachers help each other's integration?*
- *Is there any kind of rituals among colleagues?*
- *Have you tried anything like mentoring?*
- *What's your perspective on this subject? How do you feel about mentoring?*

An important question to raise is the actual practice at schools. It may happen that teachers already have some formal or informal activities that could be integrated in the mentoring program so that it could be more effective. If nothing has been done to help the novice teacher integrate we can move forward onto the next phase.

### **STEP 3 – Planning mentoring program's activities (intervention)**

The most important step is to properly plan everything right from the beginning, because these interventions are fragile and if some activities fail we can have a lot of dropouts. The earlier we start the program, the more fruitful the outcome<sup>54</sup>. Below we present some elements to focus on when we plan a mentoring program.

#### **3.1 – Participants' selection**

To select mentees the school headmaster / principle should decide whether the school wants to help only teachers who are new at school or also those who have been there for a year or two, who the school headmaster / principal considers that will also benefit from mentoring activities.

The number of mentors and the form of mentoring: one-to-one (one mentor and one mentee) or group mentoring (one mentor and several mentees) depends on the number of mentees.

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<sup>54</sup> Boyle, P. & Boice, B. (1988). Systematic mentoring for new faculty teachers and graduate teaching assistants. *Innovative Higher Education*, 22, 3, 157-179.



The next activity is the selection of mentors. It should be done with the support of the school administration. The characteristics a mentor should have are described in chapter 2.1. *Mentor's role and responsibilities. Rights, duties, skills.*

As written there, the following criteria should be taken into account to decide whether a certain person, in our case a teacher, can properly act as a mentor:

- 1) having adequate personal characteristics,
- 2) having adequate knowledge, skills and experience in the teaching profession,
- 3) having adequate attitude and motivation.

The mentor's activities should be based on his/her voluntary involvement in the mentor's role. To avoid the risk of competition between the mentor and the mentee, it is advised that they teach different subjects.

### **3.2. – Send mentor for the training**

We find it necessary that the mentors receive a special training to know how to develop a mentoring relationship and how to use the tools available for them.

If the mentor did not participate in the training preparing for teachers' mentoring, we recommend him/her to do so. It is worth looking for training courses for mentors in the institutions educating teachers (teachers' training institutions) or on-line courses. If such courses are not available, the prospective mentor could use the Training Kit, the outcome of the project „MENTOR - Mentoring between teachers in secondary and high schools”, accessible on the project website: <http://edu-mentoring.eu>.

### **3.3. – Define activities**

Apart from selecting the mentor(s), the headmaster or school management should decide what activities supporting the mentoring process will be implemented in the school (eg. regular or





supportive communication meetings of mentor(s) or/and mentee(s) with the school head, special seminars for the beginner teachers, and so on).

The headmaster or school management should consider preparing a proposal of an agreement between the mentor and the mentee. At the same time it should be reminded that entering into the agreement relies only on the will of the two parties. As the school is not a party in such an agreement, it cannot force either the mentor or the mentee to do it, but can only suggest it.

It is crucial to prepare carefully the first meeting of the mentor and the mentee. During the first meeting, the mentor and the mentee ought to define which the mentee's needs are and together to agree on the following:

- a. Mentoring objectives/ personal vision:
  - List of the mentoring goals in order of priority.
- b. Decide which improvement points they will be willing to solve and decide the learning objectives:
  - Choose one or two goals as a starting point from which to develop a mentoring action plan;
- c. Set a timeline to develop the vision and objectives:
  - Decide how often the mentor-mentee meetings should take place.
  - Set a target date to assess progress and adjust as necessary.
- d. Decide the meetings periodicity.

#### **STEP 4 – Monitoring**

Monitoring of the mentoring program is the task of the school headmaster or principal. This is important, especially if the existing legal regulations require administrative documentation of the mentoring. Participants can contact the headmaster or school management to present their doubts and their major difficulties.

The headmaster or school management has to be particularly aware of interpersonal problems that may arise, since we know that the mentor-mentee relation strongly influences the outcome.



### **STEP 5 – Evaluating**

The program can be tested by analyzing the mentored teachers' evolution, taking into consideration the information collected by diaries, questionnaires, discussion groups, interviews. The choice of means and tools for evaluation belongs to the headmaster or school management.

The evaluating persons can also make comparisons between mentored-teachers and non-mentored teachers' achievements, based on such variables as teaching, absenteeism and relations with students. However, particularly in this case, they need to be careful in order not to pervert the outcome of the intervention. The main goal is the enhancement of the school environment, not the punishment of teachers who have more difficulties in improving their skills in the initial years of their career.

### **STEP 6 – Enhancement**

Finally, the first year of the program should be seen as a “pilot year”<sup>55</sup>. With the evaluation done it is time to understand which were the strengths and weaknesses of the project. Then, if necessary, the implementation of the mentoring program should be improved.

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<sup>55</sup> Kuyper-Rushing, L. (2001). A formal mentoring program in a university library: Components of a successful experiment. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 27, 6, 440–446.



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### 3.2. Methodology required for adults' teaching / learning



Mentoring as a form of learning has been known for a long time. Today, it is a relationship based on adult learning strategy. The theory and practice of education of adults is called andragogy. Originally used by a German educator Alexander Kapp in 1833, andragogy was developed into a theory of adult education by Eugen Rosenstock - Huessy and was popularized in the US by American educator Malcolm Shepherd Knowles.

Malcolm S. Knowles dedicated particularly two of his books to the topic of andragogy:

- The modern practice of adult education: From pedagogy to andragogy. 1980. Chicago: Follett.
- Andragogy in action. 1984. San Francisco: Jossey - Bass.

The andragogical learning theory proposed by Malcolm S. Knowles is contrasted with the children's learning methods - pedagogical learning. Malcolm S. Knowles mentioned the following main differences between the assumptions of children's and adults' learning:

1. **Self-concept:** The person who learns is viewed differently. According to some pedagogical theories, the learner is dependent on the teacher and subordinate to his/her will. It is the teacher who bears the whole responsibility for the education process, who sets the goals, methods and forms of teaching. Whereas in andragogy, the learner is viewed as a subject, independent and having control over the process of education. The teacher, or better to say – the facilitator, is only supporting the process of revealing the learning needs of the adult learner and helps in satisfying them. The adult learner should take part in creating the education process and the program, or in choosing the most suitable didactic methods.
2. **Experience:** It relates to the learner's experience. A child is completely dependent on the teacher and the knowledge provided by him/her. The dominant methods of transferring the information are based on the "giving". In the case of adults' education, the experimentation is



the most influencing method in the education process. The learner pays a lot more attention to what he/she experiences, than to a “package of information” received in the passive way.

3. **Readiness to learn:** the teaching of children is an organized process, divided into defined subjects, with the stress on transferring the information (encyclopaedism as a method of teaching). The adults learn eagerly only what is considered by them useful and practical. Because of that, adults’ learning should be organized in such a way, so that it satisfies their individual needs, and can be adapted to their abilities and expectations.

4. **Orientation on learning:** It is an attitude to learning. According to M.S. Knowles, children learn what they are expected to learn by adults in order to gain their approval. What is inseparable from the education process then is the fear of failure and making mistakes. In the case of adults’ learning, they have certain needs for competencies, self-development and/or problem solving. That is why they look for the usefulness of the new knowledge and skills in practice.

5. **Motivation to learn:** In M.S. Knowles’s opinion, the intrinsic motivation is the most important for adult learners. As mature people, they become more motivated by various internal incentives, such as need for self-esteem, curiosity, desire to achieve, and satisfaction of accomplishment.

The mentor-teacher’s awareness of the principles of adults’ learning is particularly important because he/she normally works with children and youngsters. The attitude to educating the mentee should be different.

Pedagogy of today is more and more focused on methods, which stimulate initiative and independence of the learners. In those cases attitudes to children’s and adults’ education is similar. In all respects, our intention was to contrast the two approaches of traditional pedagogy and andragogy to stress the most important factors of adult education that the mentor- teacher should be aware of.



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### 3.3. Mentoring and Team Building.



Mentoring between teachers is most commonly implemented between two persons: a teacher–mentor and a teacher–mentee. However, it could also be done as a group mentoring: one mentor works with a group of mentees.

Regardless of its form, mentoring is, by definition, an inspiring team-work. No valuable result can be achieved by individual success as the activity requires continuous adapting and sharing expertise, results and efforts in order to reach the commonly set goals. It is about efficient communication, building and developing relationship, development of social awareness, presence, authenticity, clarity, empathy and interacting capacities. Although mentorship might seem to generate a formal hierarchy established between mentor and mentored teachers, the authority developed by the mentor should only be the informal authority generated by expertise and the relationship based on such authority should foster development of knowledge, competence and attitudes only by sharing and not by imposing.

Groups are functional work units, no doubt. Individuals working in a group do act according to roles and status previously established and they usually share norms and values that rule their comportments within the group, with regard to the common goal to be reached. The most important difference that team-work brings refers not necessarily to the complementary competences of the individuals, but to the commitment of the members to the same goals and the same direction of action, by willingly sharing the responsibilities demanded for reaching those goals<sup>56</sup>.



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<sup>56</sup> National Network of Feminine Entrepreneurship Mentors, The European Commission for Enterprises and Industry (2012), MENTORSHIP - course support, [http://mentornet.ro/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Manual-mentorship\\_pdf.pdf](http://mentornet.ro/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Manual-mentorship_pdf.pdf).



The most important characteristics of teams, compared to working groups, arise from ***identity*** – teams share the same understanding of the work to be done, the same values and the clear image of the importance of the work to be done. The identity of the team is visible in individuals expressing the present and the future tasks of the team by using the plural instead of the singular. Identity will thus naturally lead to stronger bonds within the team, instead of working connections, which generates another defining characteristic of the team – cohesion.

***Cohesion*** is thus another important characteristic that teams reveal, unlike groups working together. Cohesion is given by the team-spirit, meaning the state of mind of the team with which each member of the team is able to identify and feel as part of it. Cohesion determines commitment to the same purpose and conscious fulfillment of tasks involving shared responsibility and quick response to new situations and/challenges. This smoothly generates another distinct characteristic of teams, which is flexibility.

***Flexibility*** provides the teams with a great advantage – by sharing responsibilities, members of the team are able to provide rapid solutions. The team is result-oriented, still flexibility allows a better identification of needs and thus a more rapid response. The strengths of each member of the team are better identified than in a group, so better solutions will emerge due to capitalization of adequate reaction to needs. Flexibility provides development of teams as a whole as well as development of each member of the team.

The ***team spirit*** is generated by the high levels of motivation that allow the members to be proud of being part of the team. Groups can aspire to becoming teams if they might develop the skill of producing results that will further lead to high levels of satisfaction for their members. Enthusiasm will generate not only better results for the team but also professional development for each member of the team. Team spirit also defines the type of communication within the team, which is another determinant in defining the team.

***Communication*** inside the team is a key-factor; this is the reason why the issue is to be further developed. None of the characteristics previously discussed can be developed unless open and





efficient communication is possible. Communication generates response capabilities of the team, allows flexibility and strengthens cohesion of the team by means of trust, acceptance, honest and quick feed-back.

According to the ideas presented, it becomes obvious that teams do not emerge naturally, by simply bringing together members of a certain group, during accomplishment of work that has to be done together. Teams are not sums of individuals and results of those individuals are not team-work results if certain conditions are not provided, as previously shown. Teams are to be built by conscious effort and rules are to be drawn and followed in order to provide the benefit of efficient communication and the synergy of efforts for the best results in pursuing common goals and mutual advantages. Thus, building the team should focus on relations, roles, communication and sharing responsibilities, the mentor having the important mission to empower, enable, and mentor the new leaders that the teaching process needs.

Specialists have determined several stages in building teams, each stage providing its own results and progress in the process of team development that is: forming, storming, normative, performing and transforming<sup>57</sup>. Thus, stages are important not only for the process as a whole, but also for the benefits that can be provided during each stage to the accomplishment of the main goals, the shared major purpose that generated the team.



Forming the team is the adapting process that leads different individuals, having different knowledge, producing different ideas – and obviously in our case having different competence – individuals who usually tend to perform differently, facing challenges in own way, according to

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<sup>57</sup> National Network of Feminine Entrepreneurship Mentors, The European Commission for Enterprises and Industry (2012), MENTORSHIP - course support [http://mentornet.ro/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Manual-mentorship\\_pdf.pdf](http://mentornet.ro/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Manual-mentorship_pdf.pdf).



their expertise and set of values. There is, during this stage, certain incertitude on both sides, trust has not yet been developed and each member of the team is very attentive to what they do and what they say. The benefits of this stage refer to this state of alertness when higher level of attention leads to conscious achievement of new working routines, the creative effort of adapting knowledge, competence and attitudes to a new context, producing valuable outputs.

Storming is the next stage when all the richness of ideas previously generated might sometimes lead to confrontation, even conflict. Adaptation is not yet fully achieved and the enthusiasm of the mentee might not always meet the requests imposed by the mentor's expertise and calmer approach of the situations to be managed. It is even possible that during this stage both mentor and mentee might experience the feeling that the team might not become functional. The outputs of this stage count the abundance of ideas generated and the conscious efforts on both sides to harmonize the new ideas and the requests of the context. It is a stage of creativity and wisely managed it can lead to new and productive teaching and classroom management approaches. Benefits will not only enrich the mentor and mentee's experience and competence, but the students will also benefit from the combined efforts of mentor and mentees resulting in more creative teaching approaches during this stage.

The normative stage is probably the key-stage in building the team. Founded on the efforts of the previous stage, this is the stage when the team identifies its own vision and following this vision the team is able to establish their own objectives and tasks. Partners in this effort, the members of the new team have learned to know each other and now they are able to better understand each other, to better meet their partners' expectations and to develop others' creative ideas in a more productive manner. The outcomes of this stage are important for the future evolution of the team, by generating performance; also, during this stage, the cohesion and identity of the team are founded. The functioning of the team will become smoother and more efficient, as rules and norms are established from within the team and thus freely accepted by the members of the team. On the other hand, this inner normative approach will better suit the personalities and the working styles of the partners, so the efficiency of such normative frame will serve the results of the team better than any outer set of rules that might have been externally imposed.



Performance is the natural consequence of the normative stage. The team has gained its cohesion, it performs by united efforts within the own-defined set of norms and rules that everybody has understood and agreed on, so performance will be reached by better knowing each other, trust, clear and open communication. The outcome of this stage is obvious, being the main purpose for building the team. Again, there will be a multiplied effect – better results for the team, personal and professional development for mentor and mentees, who will mutually intensify their expertise, and invaluable benefit for their students.

As a result of this development of individuals working together, the team as a whole will develop and will have to re-define itself. It is the transforming stage when objectives are adapted to the new evolution. The team being a flexible working environment, adaptation will be easier; trust has been developed, communication is clear and open so objectives and tasks will easily be re-defined. This stage will then develop to a new cycle of evolution when new sets of rules and norms will emerge, greater performance being the result.

As the stages of building the team reveal, interpersonal relations within the team are the most important foundation. According to the comportment studies within groups, all individual compartments within groups should result from the resolving of three basic interpersonal needs: inclusion, control and opening/affection<sup>58</sup>. As far as mentoring team-work is concerned, the mentee's comportment will be determined by his/her worries referring to his/her acceptable behaviour, how he/she will establish the connections inside the team, how much he/she is willing to offer, to what extent the mentee's real personality can be revealed, to what extent support is available inside the team.

The need for control is not very obvious in the mentoring team-work case; such needs refer to organizing the groups and the activities by means of defining procedures, norms, hierarchies, power and control. The mentor is organizing the work and defining strategies and main directions to follow. Still, the mentor is not the chief, the manager, the autocratic character that

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<sup>58</sup> National Network of Feminine Entrepreneurship Mentors, The European Commission for Enterprises and Industry (2012), MENTORSHIP - course support [http://mentornet.ro/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Manual-mentorship\\_pdf.pdf](http://mentornet.ro/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Manual-mentorship_pdf.pdf).



imposes directions or targets; the mentor should be a great leader, inspiring the next generations of teachers-to-be; on the other hand, team-work involves less control and more co-operation.

Given the specific relationship imposed by the nature of work in mentoring for teaching, the opening interpersonal needs will be much more important than the control interpersonal needs. Comportments will be shaped by the worries referring to being open, showing involvement or even affection, offering and receiving support, ways and extent of expressing feelings.

Comportments inside the team reveal the roles of the members; these should be carefully considered, in order to increase efficiency and generate favorable work environment. If group working involves role assignment, team-work is more about role-sharing. In the first stages of building the team, establishment and maintaining the cohesion is achieved by the mentor's encouraging role – being friendly, open, appreciating the mentees' ideas, accepting their contributions – and mediating role. Setting standards is another important role for the mentor, following the group should be assumed by the mentees – although not in a passive way – while tension releasing roles should be undertaken by both sides.

During the normative and performance stages important roles should be shared – initiating new ideas or perspective, searching for information and sharing findings, offering opinions, clarifying, resuming – these are roles that should be undertaken by mentor and mentees, alike, while orientating, testing and coordinating are the roles that mentor should shoulder.

The efficient communication is the first facilitator for constructing and developing the teams. According to Thomas Gordon<sup>59</sup> there are four major communication catalysts that teachers should consciously use and twelve serious obstacles to be avoided in classroom relationship. These are also important issues to consider in mentoring activities when creating and nurturing real team relationship in teaching is required. So, for the efficient exchange of expertise and valuable feed-back, which both the mentor and the mentee will benefit from, it is important to focus on the following communication catalysts:

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<sup>59</sup> Gordon, Th., (2011), Teacher Effectiveness Training (Romanian version Sava, I.), Bucharest, Trei Publishing House.



1. Passive listening – encouraging free speaking, even if not fulfilling the interactive communication needs; it can be used either by the mentor for own information and/or transmitting a certain acceptance message, or the mentee, for information; still it does not involve warmth and empathy.
2. Acceptance answers – are more useful if empathic communication is involved. Both the mentor and the mentee will thus be aware that the communication partner has clearly understood the information shared; such answers also transmit a certain acceptance attitude increasing the mentee's confidence while communicating with the mentor.
3. Invitation to discussing – opening the door of the communication is very useful when the mentee seems to be facing a certain problem. Such invitations might help a novice trying to share a problem, but using them too often might burden the dialogue, becoming somehow repetitive.
4. Active listening – the mentor shows the mentee that his/her ideas are understood, accepted and respected. This facilitates communication, allows identification of eventual problems thus leading to the solving process. Practicing active listening allows the mentee a better understanding of the ideas expressed by the mentor and increases the understanding and the respectful collaboration.

The efficient communication within the team should avoid communication traps mentioned by the same author, so it is important to know that:

1. The mentor should not give orders, being not a commander but a leader; the mentor should not direct the mentees, but inspire them. The term *must* should be avoided, as much as possible, since imposing implies lack of confidence between the partners.
2. Within a team there is no need for authority enforcement expressed by warnings or even threatening; these might nourish hostility and surely will shape further undesirable attitudes of the mentees.
3. Lecturing has become obsolete even in the classroom, so using it in mentoring will prove not only inefficient, but even boring, irrelevant, time-consuming and totally inadequate for a team-work relationship where partners should share ideas and experiences.



4. Advice is – to a certain extent – desirable; since mentorship is a guided experience, solutions should be found together and suggestions are not always the most appropriate approach.
5. Self-esteem is very important within the team, so judging, criticizing and/or blaming are the most important enemies of the development of the young professional, destroying the team at the same time. Any form of negative assessment of the mentee should be avoided – the mentor should not look for excuses but for an open collaboration involving quick feed-back and prevention instead of criticizing, irony, or even verbal punishment. Even if this might seem surprising, unrealistic praising is not beneficial since it might involve a superior attitude or a superficial assessment, a lack of interest in understanding the mentee's effort and results. The objective evaluation expressed in a friendly or at least empathic manner will prove to be the most efficient for the progress of the individual and the strengthening of the team.
6. Supportive attitude should be expressed but mostly regarding professional activities – as far as personal life is concerned, limits imposed by the involved person should always be respected.

In conclusion, team-work is by far the most efficient way of managing mentoring for teaching, as the interpersonal relationship is bound to increase both partners' performance. The secret for a successful team involves joint purpose and objectives, accepted and respected by all team members, establishment of clearly defined roles and responsibilities, so that each partner will value their own best abilities and develop during the teaching process, and efficient working systems – clear and open communication, clearly defined decision-making procedures, balanced participation in the activities, mutually accepted rules and, most of all, founding their interpersonal relationship on trust and honesty.



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### 3.4. Relationships with parents and local community



The school is no longer a protected place where teachers teach and students learn behind bars and locked doors. It has opened up to the local community and plays a significant role in the local family, social and cultural life. It is noteworthy that networks have been created all over the world to enhance and support the relationship between schools, families and local communities.

Teachers and parents in particular ought to work hand in hand for the students' benefit. In the 1980 decade the European Research Network about Parents in Education (ERNAPE) was created, which has gathered plenty of material on the results of research based on the relationship between the school and the parents.



The effort to build a communication bridge with the parents and the local community is not just part of the marketing policy of the school, but it helps on several levels, such as:

1. The school staff get to know the special characteristics, problems, etc, each student has, as they are integrated in the wider local community
2. There is a coordinated and unified direction student's support from home and from school
3. Parents exchange experiences with one another and can create communities of mutual support
4. Parents realize their extreme mistakes in the communication with their children (i.e. overprotective and indifferent mainly) and replace the old supervision model with the





new one, that of the parent – advisor. Mistakes bring barriers in the relationship between parents and students and they are not conducive to the creation of a climate suitable for the children to speak their minds and freely talk about their problems to their parents.

5. Parents and teachers can take common intervention measures in conditions of crisis.

The question is: how can a mentoring program between teachers act as a link between the school, the family and the local community?

### **The school**

The mentor's role in the school is to facilitate the teaching procedure, support the inexperienced teacher, and achieve as good learning results as possible. One of the mentor's initial responsibilities is to establish a trusting relationship with the new teacher. Research indicates that mentoring is most effective when the beginning teacher trusts the mentor. The mentor builds this trust by creating a risk-free learning environment for the beginning teacher by providing support that is non-judgmental and confidential.

While the mentor does not share any evaluative information about the beginning teacher with anyone (including administration and the principal), topics, content, and strategies can be shared with administrators. The school administration and principal cannot stay out of this procedure. To begin with, it is the school principal who will decide and implement a mentoring program in his school, on a regular and ongoing basis. Secondly, the school principal will consent to the selection of a mentor who meets all the criteria and is accepted by the mentee. Thirdly, the principal will facilitate and support both the mentor and the mentee in every possible way to ensure the maximum results.

In return, the principal will receive a helping hand from the mentor with the beginning teacher's orientation and support. In practice, there will be a considerable reduction in the time and effort needed for the novice teacher's recruitment, development, supervision and problem solving. Last but not least, the performance of both beginning and mentor teachers will be improved.



### **The Students' Parents and Families**

The students' parents are one of the main school partners and the cooperation with the students' parents and families is an essential element of functioning of any school. It is also a way of promoting the school. Such collaboration takes different forms, in particular it is performed within the framework of the School Parents' Association or the Parents' Committee.

The School Parents' Association or the Parents' Committee should be informed by the headmaster or principal about the fact that the mentoring between teachers takes place in the school. It is good to encourage them to support the mentor and the mentee teachers. Such support could take various forms, for example inviting those teachers to the meetings and discussions about the functioning of the school, as well as in the programs and actions for the school and students.

Of particular importance are also parent-teacher conferences. Such meetings, regardless of the school policies, require from the teacher much tact, sensitivity and patience. The mentor's role is to help the mentee prepare for those conferences. In justified cases the mentor could participate in them. Moreover, the mentor should inform the mentee about the established ways of collaboration between the teachers and students' parents in the school, as well as about the institutions providing support in parent-teacher contact and cooperation. The basic condition of the fruitful collaboration between a teacher and parents is gaining their trust. Parents who trust the teachers of their children, could provide him/her with the important knowledge, also regarding the family situation, etc. The conversation and sharing of opinions about the teachers and school work should be sincere. The mentor's role is to show the mentee how to build such trust.

### **The Local Community**

As already mentioned, the school nowadays has opened up to the local society and plays a significant role in the local family, social and cultural life. It includes the members of local society in its activities and should constitute a community of teachers, students, parents and citizens, where all of them have the right to decide on school issues, cooperate together and



support each other, and good communication provides them with an opportunity to establish an honest collaboration.

Activities of the school in its local context can take different forms. The school can benefit from implementation of the lessons outside the school, or meetings with representatives of different professions. It can also function as an active player in the local environment, for example by organizing local events with the citizens and institutions.

Every school should operate in close link with the local society. Those connections are especially important in the case of vocational schools which closely cooperate with enterprises, and schools in smaller societies, e.g. in rural areas.

The mentor ought to introduce the mentee in the activities for the local society and prepare him/her to cooperate with the local community. This is especially vital in the case of a mentee that does not come from the school local society.

Also, the mentor should encourage the mentee to cooperate with the local community and include him/her in the activities organized by him-/herself.



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### 3.5. Improvement of the students' achievement.



The teacher has a primary role in the learning process (education). In order to perform this role, the teacher should be effective. According to the Polish pedagogue Stefan Wołoszyn, an efficient teacher is a person who:

- is a specialist in the field s/he teaches and can not only transmit the knowledge, but also awaken the students' interests, encourage them to self-learning and educate to independent thinking;
- can take advantage of the facilities given by the technological progress;
- is a kind educator of the young people and a kind adviser of the parents;
- inspires educational and cultural activities of the youth and the society;
- has interesting personal features and is a positive role model;
- is open-minded towards the world, people, new ideas and views and wants to experiment and innovate.

It is the school's role to help the teacher be efficient. In this handbook it is suggested that 'Mentoring between teachers' is the best means to this end. More and more schools and school districts are employing mentoring or induction programs. Increasingly, research confirms that teacher and teaching quality are the most powerful predictors of student success. In short, principals ensure higher student achievement by assuring better teaching. To do this, effective administrators have a new teacher induction program available for all newly hired teachers, which then seamlessly becomes part of the lifelong, sustained professional development program for the district or school. What keeps a good teacher are structured, sustained, intensive professional development programs that allow new teachers to observe others, to be observed by others, and to be part of networks or study groups where all teachers share together, grow together, and learn to respect each other's work.





It is beyond doubt that students can only benefit from a mentoring program in their school. *They have teachers who:*

- *focus on the students' needs rather than their own survival,*
- *are less authoritarian and dominating and more reflective and disposed to continuous improvement.*
- *are self-confident enough to use a wider range of instructional strategies and activities.*

In other words, they have better teachers.

Since the mid-1980s a lot of research has been conducted on the impact of mentoring or induction programs on the mentees and their students' performance. Richard M. Ingersoll from the University of Pennsylvania and Michael Strong from the University of California, Santa Cruz, examined 15 empirical studies and found that students of beginning teachers who participated in induction had higher scores, or gains, on academic achievement tests<sup>60</sup>. Similarly, Dara Barlin<sup>61</sup>, based on clear and consistent research, concludes that the quality of teachers is the most powerful school-related determinant of student success. Finally, Harry K. Wong<sup>62</sup> carried out a research which confirms that mentoring programs are closely interrelated with better teaching and improved student achievement.

The question remains, though. Can students' achievement be measured and how? Yes, the students' achievement can be measured with measurable evaluation criteria which the class teacher has set and explained at the beginning of the school year and are based on the learning goals and not on the comparison with the fellow students. There is continuous assessment of the

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<sup>60</sup> R. M. Ingersoll, M. Strong, *The Impact of Induction and Mentoring Programs for Beginning Teachers: A Critical Review of the Research*, "REVIEW OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH" 2011, vol. 81, nr 2, s. 201-233. <http://rer.sagepub.com/content/81/2/201.short>.

<sup>61</sup> Barlin, D. (2010, March 23) Better mentoring, better teachers: Three factors that help ensure successful programs. *Education Week* 29(27), p. 9. <http://www.edweek.org/archive/ew/articles/2010/03/23/27barlin.html>.

<sup>62</sup> Wong, H. K. (2004). Induction Programs That Keep New Teachers Teaching and Improving. *NASSP Bulletin* vol. 88, no. 638, pp. 41-58. <http://bul.sagepub.com/content/88/638/41.short>.



students' progress throughout the year, which provides constructive feedback and is incorporated within the teaching-learning process.

Systematic collection of a student's work samples, records of observation, test results, etc., over a period of time is recommended for the purpose of evaluating student growth and achievement. These are measurable evaluation criteria as they can be easily scored and compared to the students' previous scores, i.e. last semester's or even last year's. Or before, during and after the class teacher's induction program.

However, not all evaluation criteria are measurable. According to Dr Chiourea, a School Advisor from Greece, these are the most commonly set student evaluation criteria worldwide:

- Active participation in the lesson.
- Effort made.
- Critical and creative thinking.
- Consistency and reliability.
- Oral and written examination results.
- Cooperation with fellow students.
- General social activity within the school routine.

A combination of different forms of assessment should be employed to ensure more objective and reliable judgments. On the whole, the teacher's knowledge and skills definitely affect and determine the quality of the student's learning. Therefore, a successful mentoring program is bound to have a positive impact on both the mentee teacher and his students.



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