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# **MENTORING HANDBOOK**



# MENTORING HANDBOOK

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# INTRODUCTION

The present handbook is intended to provide theoretical knowledge of and practical advice on how to ensure proper communication between mentors and mentees in business. It was developed by the participants of the project "Development and Introduction of a Communication Competencies Model for Enhancing and Maintaining a Business Mentor Network" (2019-1-LV01-KA203-060414) from five partner organisations - Rezekne Academy of Technologies (Latvia), the Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre (Latvia), Utena University of Applied Sciences (Lithuania), Ecoinstitute (Italy), Burgas Free University (Bulgaria), and Białystok University of Technology (Poland).

The project aimed to examine barriers to communication competencies between the mentors and the mentees and come up with solutions to enhance and maintain the business mentor network by means of communication technologies. In many countries around the world, mentoring is considered to be an advanced business growth instrument for transferring experience between companies and actively sharing knowledge and contacts. It is mainly practised to promote development of new and less experienced companies. Business development and business cooperation culture are promoted through mentoring.

The Mentoring Handbook was produced as a result of the project. The handbook focuses on various aspects of mentoring, business, and communication. The handbook consists of six chapters, the introduction to each chapter lists the topics and concepts to be covered and is followed by a broader theoretical outline and practical examples, while at the end the readers can test their knowledge.

The handbook explains the role of mentoring in starting a business and the future benefits of practicing mentoring. It is important that along with the aspects of mentoring, the handbook gives advice, suggests techniques for starting a business and describes the benefits of practicing mentoring in business. The handbook suggests how to solve communication problems in mentoring and make proper decisions as well as explains the role of emotions in communication and how emotional intelligence can ensure a positive communication outcome. To ensure effective communication, the handbook recommends appropriate communication channels and means of expression.

The handbook is intended for teachers, students, mentors and mentees, and other stakeholders who want to enhance their verbal and non-verbal communication and ensure effective interaction between the mentor and the mentee.

The handbook is available electronically in all official languages of the partner countries involved in the project.

# 1. BENEFITS OF BUSINESS MENTORING

## Introduction

This section will answer the following questions:

- What is business mentoring?
- What are the benefits of mentoring for mentees and mentors?
- What are the benefits of mentoring for a company?
- How to start communication with and what questions are worth asking the mentor?

## Key concept

Business mentoring, Benefits, Business mentor, Communication, Competitiveness

The Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030 states that human capital is the most important resource of Latvia and innovation, in a result of which a new commercial product is created, is one of the most important drivers of development. The strategy emphasizes that the sustainability model requires an integrated approach to dealing with economic, environmental and social problems; therefore both vertical and horizontal cooperation mechanisms become especially important (Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030, 2009).

The quality of the business environment is one of the prerequisites of competitive development of the economy of Latvia (Ministry of Economics, 2020). To contribute to an increasingly attractive business environment for entrepreneurs, as well as investment attraction, the Ministry of Economics in cooperation with various national institutions and non-governmental organizations persistently works on the development and implementation of measures for enhancing the business environment (On the Action Plan for Enhancing the Business Environment 2019–2022, 2019). One of the measures aimed at developing the local business environment is the implementation of mentoring programmes. It involves a systematic relationship based on long-term and voluntary support from a successful entrepreneur who shares their knowledge, experience and views with another entrepreneur who is ready and willing to gain relevant experience and build up their professionalism (Konstantinova, 2007).

The mentoring programmes available in Latvia could be divided into three categories: pre-incubation, incubation, and product promotion programmes. Such programmes are implemented both as private initiatives and in cooperation with

various national institutions: universities, local governments, public authorities, and financial institutions.

Pre-incubators lasting 3 to 6 months and incubators lasting up to 4 years are short-term programmes that help entrepreneurs to develop their ideas and better understand the potential of their business ideas (Magnetic Latvia, 2018). Pre-incubation programmes are implemented by the largest universities of Latvia (e.g. Riga Technical University's Design Factory and Idea Lab, the Student Business Incubator of the University of Latvia etc.), local governments (e.g. a competition for business development held by the Marupe Municipality Council "Mom Business in Marupe"), and public administration institutions (e.g. the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia, the Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre etc.), as well as non-governmental organizations (e.g. Pierīga Partnership etc.). Product promotion programmes are often implemented in cooperation with financial institutions, such as the Development Financial Institution Altum, Magnetic Latvia Startup etc., and their duration depends on the amount of financial support granted.

The mentioned business support programmes are united by the goal of providing support to the entrepreneurs by providing high-quality and individually tailored solutions, thereby promoting both the emergence of the new companies and development of the existing ones through taking over the experience of other companies or entrepreneurs.

The above-mentioned support measures represent mentoring programmes that are external to the new entrepreneurs or companies, which means the mentor has not previously been associated with the start-up or the new entrepreneur. However, it is also common in the world to use internal mentoring programmes or the opportunity for new employees to have a mentor within their company.

## **1.1. THE ROLE OF MENTORING IN BUSINESS**

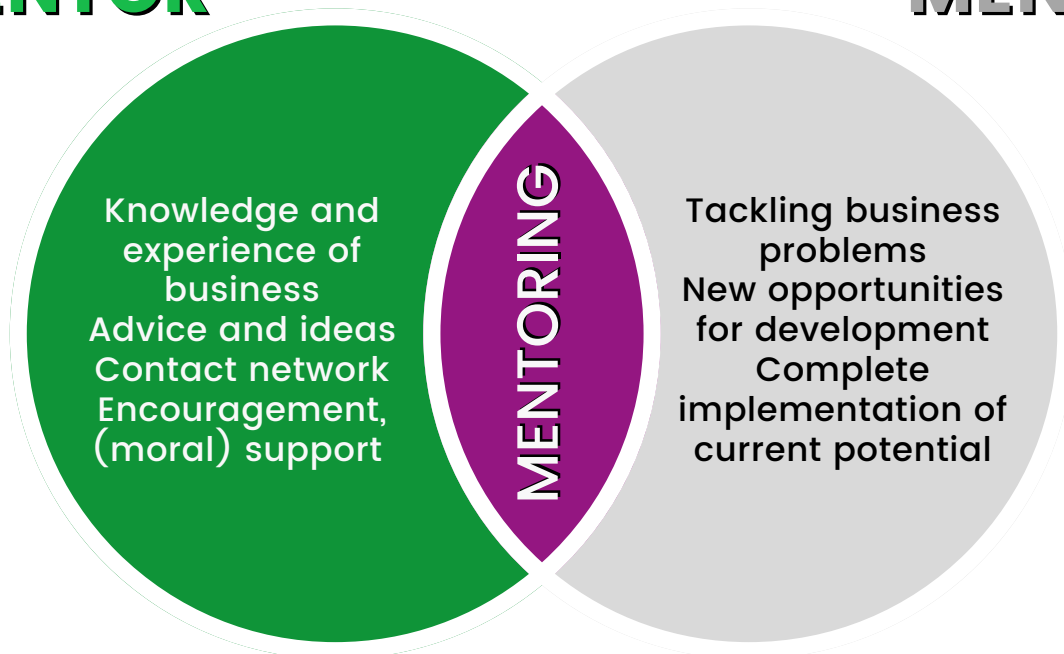
In many countries around the world, mentoring is regarded as an advanced instrument for business growth. The unique value of mentoring involves sharing successful experience among companies, actively sharing knowledge, experience and contacts, as well as creating an open business cooperation culture. It is mainly used to facilitate the development of new and less experienced companies (Business Mentor Network....).

Mentoring is basically an employment relationship between two individuals, usually between an older, more experienced person (mentor) and a younger, less qualified person (mentee), which helps the mentee to adapt to the business environment (Gisbert-Trejo, Landeta, Albizu, & Fernández-Ferrín, 2019).

This is a systematic relationship based on a long-term and voluntary support between a successful entrepreneur who shares their knowledge, experience and views and another entrepreneur who is ready and willing to gain experience and build up their professionalism (Konstatinova, 2007) (Figure 1.1.).

## MENTOR

## MENTEE



**Fig. 1.1. Key characteristics of mentoring**  
(Business Mentor Network ...).

The mentors are experienced business leaders, entrepreneurs, and professionals in their field (NaudaBiznesam). The business mentors usually are individuals having the knowledge and experience that they can use to help others to develop their careers through personal and professional development. They often serve as role models. Mentoring relationships are often long-term relationships (Informi) as both the mentor with their knowledge and experience, and the mentee in need of personal and professional growth maintain them (Figure 1.2.).



**Fig. 1.2. Long-term relationship maintenance model in mentoring**  
(the authors' construction based on the Informi homepage)



In Latvia, the idea of mentoring with the aim of facilitating business activity has been actively and purposefully developed since 2003, yet the first mentoring programmes for entrepreneurs were launched in 2005. Since then, mentoring has been offered to the entrepreneurs under various programmes, projects and activities. In Latvia, the mentoring programmes are implemented as systematically organized programmes or a specific programme within a project for a certain target audience (LIAA, 2009).

Mentoring is a long-term mentor-mentee relationship that meets the need for development, helps to develop to its full potential and benefits both parties involved. The mentor works individually with the company to assess business opportunities, problems or potential development opportunities, provide practical advice and suggestions on business development and specific actions (EEA and Norway ..., 2014). When implementing a mentoring programme, the mentor and the mentee should know that a relationship is developed between them with the aim of improving the mentee's work efficiency. This is especially important if participation in the mentoring programme is not formally agreed upon. In this case, the mentor might not pass on all the knowledge they have that would be useful to the mentee, unlike if they had agreed on it from the very beginning (Villalon, 2019). The mentoring process shall normally include six interlinked areas mentioned in Fig. 1.3.



**Fig. 1.3. Mentoring process**  
(Villalon, 2019)

In the case of a purposeful mentoring relationship, the formal meetings and interviews are held between the mentor and the mentee, as well the environment for informal communication is established with the aim of getting to know each other. Such relationships are also controlled by schedules ensuring that the communication is conscious and planned. Successful mentoring means that the mentee gains knowledge, inspiration, skills, develops and also builds up an understanding of what position they are currently holding in a particular industry (Villalon, 2019).

Mentoring is often confused with coaching, yet both types of support are different because coaching is provided over a shorter period, focusing on one specific skill or matter that needs to be improved. The mentor, in turn, provides the mentee with support, advice and shares important knowledge that can be useful for the mentee and help the mentee to grow (Informi) in a particular profession or industry in the long term.

## 1.2. STAGES OF MENTORING

The following stages could be distinguished in the mentoring process: initiation, cultivation, separation, redefinition (Table 1.1.). The time spent at each of the stages is different, depending on the particular mentoring case, yet the main thing is that the mentoring partners always have to go through all the stages.

### Description of the stages of business mentoring (Memon et al., 2015)

**Table 1.1.**

STAGES	STAGE PHASE	DESCRIPTION
<b>Initiation</b>	<b>Engagement phase:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of a cooperation pair</li> <li>• Formation of an attachment to each other</li> </ul>	At the first phase or engagement phase, the mentor and the mentee discuss and clarify their common goals, shared values and dreams. There may be lack of communication at this stage as both individuals try to know each other at this stage, and there is still lack of trust between them.

STAGES	STAGE PHASE	DESCRIPTION
<b>Cultivation</b>	<b>Active phase:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmation of roles</li> <li>• Mutuality of self-disclosure</li> <li>• Clear relational boundaries</li> <li>• Information sharing</li> </ul>	<p>Cultivation is the first stage of entrepreneurial learning and development. The mentor and the mentee create a contract for their relationship. The contract outlines entrepreneurial and social goals. The contract could include a legal contract, which may include equity in the mentee's business or other monetary terms. The pair may assess their progress, success, and failures after agreed time period and reaffirm or redesign their goals. The goals of the mentee must be their own goals, not the goals set by the mentor.</p>
<b>Separation</b>	<b>Ending phase:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical and emotional separation</li> <li>• Obtaining closure</li> </ul>	<p>At the ending phase, it is obligation of both the mentor and the mentee to make sure that the end of the relationship is accepted by both partners. Usually, the problems between the mentor and the mentee increase when one of them wants to end the relationship, and the other is not ready for it yet. The mentee may feel abandoned, deceived or unprepared in case of any premature separation. The mentor might feel deceived or used if the mentee do not consult the mentor or seek their guidance anymore.</p>
<b>Redefinition</b>	<b>Friendship phase:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive colleagues</li> <li>• Possible friendship</li> </ul>	<p>The mentoring ends with a redefinition of the mentoring relationship. To have a successful redefinition of the mentoring relationship, there must be successful termination of the relationship. The mentee should feel a sense of achievement, knowing that, while in a mentoring relationship, the desired goals have been achieved successfully.</p>

## 1.3. THE ROLE OF A MENTOR IN BUSINESS

A mentor is a support person – an entrepreneur or manager experienced in business, who has built up knowledge, or an industry specialist, who dedicates their time, experience, and advice free of charge and in good faith to help the young entrepreneur navigating the business environment, develop their business and achieve the goals set by the mentee (Investment and Development..., 2009; Business Mentor Network...).

The mentor understands the mentee's personal values and future goals and is able to provide the most effective mentoring according to the mentee's skills and knowledge (Montgomery, 2017). The mentor follows a certain, pre-defined action plan and is actively involved in the implementation of this plan, adapting it to the situation, if necessary.



**Fig. 1.4. Elements of the mentoring action plan**  
(Montgomery, 2017)

The mentor's action plan begins with self-reflection (Figure 1.4.), and during the mentoring process, the mentor must perform self-reflection several times. This is necessary because self-reflection serves as a way of identifying individual mentoring needs based on the self-determined career goals. The next step in the action plan is to establish and maintain a mentoring relationship with the mentee, as well as a plan for their development based on specific needs.

It should be taken into account that any relationship undergoes different stages, and although mentoring is carried out according to a certain plan, it is possible that cooperation between the mentor and the mentee becomes impossible due to their psychological incompatibility. Therefore, it is important to plan this kind of communication even if the progress is not possible and it is necessary to redefine and/or terminate the mentoring relationship.

## 1.4. BENEFITS FOR MENTEES AND MENTORS

Successful mentoring programme involves finding a suitable mentor for the mentee (Mentoring Complete), as the mentoring relationship is based on mutual trust, respect, and communication. The two parties meet regularly to exchange ideas, discuss progress and set goals for the further development, so it is important that there is psychological and character compatibility between the two, which is often a crucial aspect in their communication. Both the mentee and the mentor can consider their benefits of participating in the programme (Table 1.2.).

### Benefits of participating in mentoring programme for the mentee and the mentor

(Memon et al., 2015)

**Table 1.2.**

BENEFITS FOR MENTORS	BENEFITS FOR MENTEES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test of professional skills, experience</li> <li>• Satisfaction</li> <li>• New knowledge</li> <li>• New experience, new insight into another business</li> <li>• Leadership skills are developed</li> <li>• Self-fulfilment and self-development</li> <li>• New contacts, a wider business communication network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More business experience and knowledge</li> <li>• The mentor helps to see the strengths and weaknesses of the business, helps to develop opportunities and solutions</li> <li>• The mentor helps to make more informed decisions on issues that the mentee has doubts about</li> </ul>

BENEFITS FOR MENTORS	BENEFITS FOR MENTEES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentive for new ideas</li> <li>• Participation in the programme does not allow to drown into the daily routine</li> <li>• Ability to protect the young entrepreneur from his/her own mistakes</li> <li>• Useful meetings with mentoring group members</li> <li>• New inspiration</li> <li>• Increase of self-esteem</li> <li>• Different opinion on things</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to discuss both daily and strategic business issues with an experienced person</li> <li>• Advice from an experienced entrepreneur or manager can be obtained</li> <li>• Broader network of contacts</li> <li>• New ideas and knowledge</li> <li>• Increased self-confidence and courage</li> <li>• The mentor's moral support and encouragement</li> <li>• Cooperation with the mentor continues after the programme is over</li> <li>• Assessment of the operation of the company by the external expert</li> <li>• Different perspective and opinion on the company's operations</li> </ul>

Succeeding in business or moving up the career ladder require continuous improvement of knowledge and skills. The Maslow's (1943) theory of the hierarchy of needs identifies "social recognition" and "self-fulfilment" as the highest needs of the individual. These needs are important for people who have reached a certain level of life and knowledge. This means that the mentor not only shares their knowledge but also satisfies their needs. Mentoring is a two-way communication whereby the mentor also gains emotional satisfaction, passing on their knowledge and skills to the mentee (Bizzloans homepage, 2020).

Gaining a new experience, the mentor contributes to their growth, critical thinking, as well as a sustainable business strategy. In some sense, the mentor becomes a leader and is able to convince the mentee by means of logic, argumentation, theoretical substantiation, and practical findings. The mentee, however, should also learn to communicate with different people, thereby improving not only their communication skills but also leadership skills to be able to:

- ✓ Assess personal opinions based on arguments
- ✓ Creatively analyse other points of view
- ✓ Involve colleagues in understanding and implementing the strategy (Šmite, 2015)

These prerequisites are relevant in describing the leader's communication (Šmite, 2015); however, if comparing the leader and the mentor, many common features could be seen.

Cooperation between the mentor and the mentee is successful if:

- ✓ There is good communication between them
- ✓ There are clear goals and principles of cooperation
- ✓ There is enough time
- ✓ There are no geographical barriers
- ✓ There is a mutual respect (Business Women Association (2012))

In the case of successful mentoring, there is a positive interaction between the mentee and the mentor, as both partners complement each other, yet the mentoring programme should focus on the mentee. This means that the mentee's development needs should be primary, and the mentor should act in a way that makes it easy for the mentee to develop their skills. It has been observed that a successful mentoring cooperation is implemented in the cases when the mentee and the mentor have an opportunity to choose each other (Mentoring Complete).

## 1.5. BENEFITS OF USING A MENTOR FOR BUSINESSES

Business mentoring is a systematic relationship based on long-term and voluntary support between a successful entrepreneur with experience who shares their knowledge, experience, and beliefs and another entrepreneur who is ready and willing to gain experience and build up their competence (Association Leader).

The key objectives of business mentoring are to:

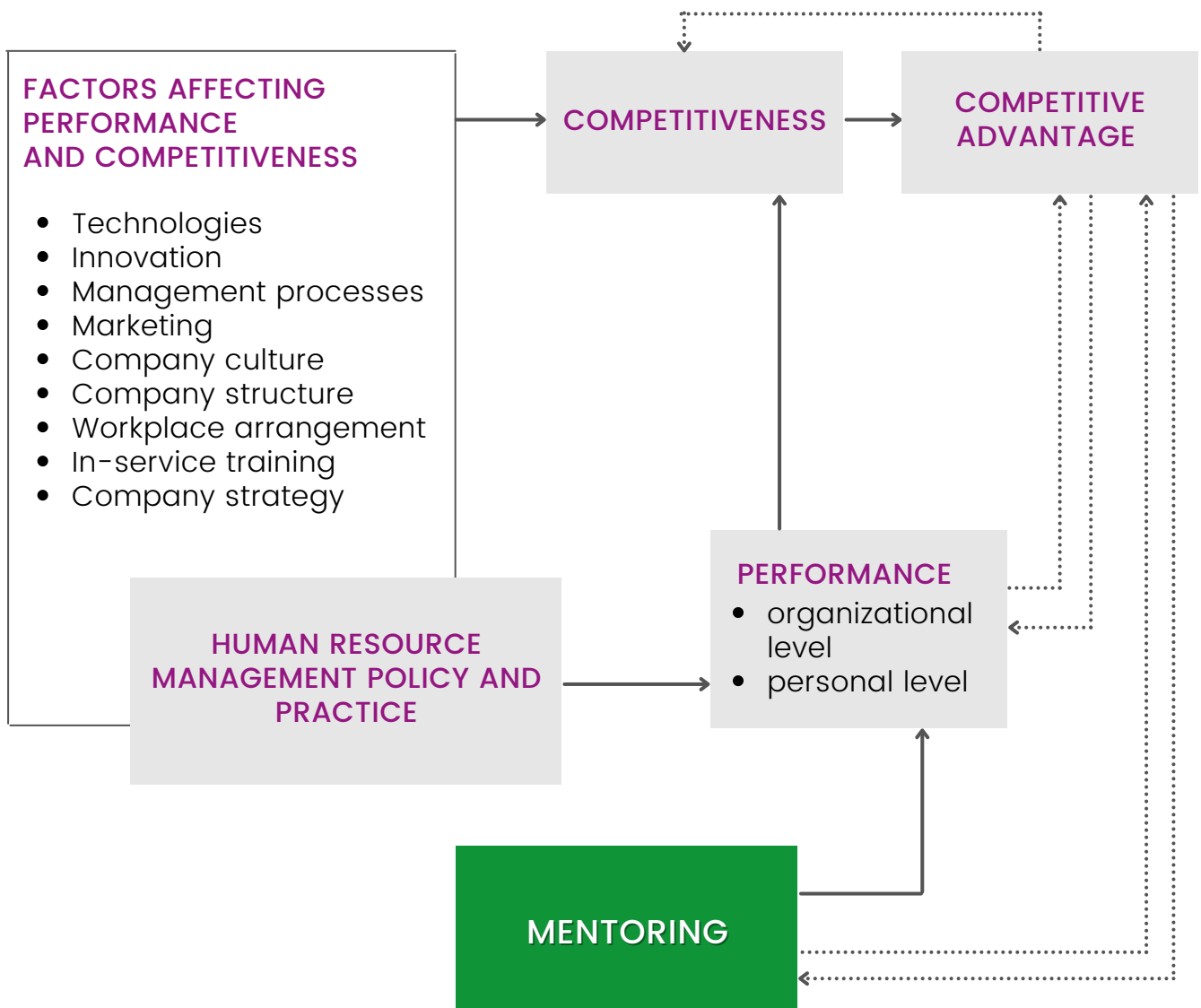
- ✓ Help young entrepreneurs to achieve their business goals.
- ✓ Ensure the sustainability of companies at the start-up phase.
- ✓ Involve entrepreneurs in a network of active entrepreneurs and help to start cooperation with new business partners.
- ✓ Facilitate innovative, knowledge-based entrepreneurship.
- ✓ Contribute to career guidance, new knowledge.
- ✓ Contribute to sharing experience and avoiding mistakes (Konstantinova, 2008).

Accordingly, several benefits of mentoring could be identified (Konstantinova, 2008):

- ✓ Mentoring programmes help young entrepreneurs to assess their business started, the business model applied and help to see the "whole picture" of the business, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- ✓ A business mentor can both provide advice and share ideas to help the mentee to grow. The mentor can also provide useful tips to prevent potential failures of the mentee and inspire the mentee to take unplanned steps.
- ✓ The main role of a business mentor is to listen to and stimulate the thinking of the mentee. The mentor helps to develop the ideas of the mentee and find solutions to business challenges faster.
- ✓ The mentee has an opportunity to use the mentor's business network or the mentor could help to develop and attract new clients and partners to the mentee's company. The mentor can also recommend professionals who can help the mentee to develop the business.
- ✓ The business mentor does not solve all the problems of the mentee and does not work for the mentee. The mentee has to do the work themselves and invest their time and efforts to make changes occur in the company. The mentor helps to set goals and milestones and shows the direction for action to make it easier for the mentee to make the changes.
- ✓ The business mentor draws the mentee's attention to the goals, which in turn helps to stay on track.
- ✓ Routines are specific to various business cycles and periods. Often, the company's profit does not increase because the entrepreneur does not change anything in their daily activities. Although the company's profit does not increase, it does not make a loss. The goal of a business mentor is to challenge the mentee to perform additional activities, change approaches, become more modern, as well as develop the company technologically, thereby facilitating the company's long-term growth.

Competitiveness is also referred to as a significant benefit in business (Mathews, 2006). As shown (Figure 1.5.), competitiveness is affected by a number of factors: technology, innovation, marketing, etc. Creating competitive advantages contributes to competitiveness, which should be examined in detail – at the levels of the organization and the individual. No matter how well-developed a human resource management policy is, however, as it is known, it is not possible to predict every specific situation in business. By working with the mentee, the mentor not only shares their experience but also indirectly gains a competitive advantage for themselves. In a direct way, the mentor can improve both organizational and personal skills through their performance. Through the interaction of mentoring and human resources policies, the company becomes more competitive.





**Fig. 1.5. Mentoring as a criterion for increasing performance and competitiveness**  
(Mathews, 2006)

## 1.6. QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED THE MENTOR AND THE MENTEE

One of the resources used by the mentee to gain the information they need is time. The mentor's time and the mentee's time. This is a resource, the value of which is not possible to calculate, yet better prepared the mentee is, the more efficient the meeting is and the more targeted the questions are asked to the mentor. Lack of preparation wastes the time of both parties involved, and often useless questions are asked, as well as longer-term mentoring might be needed.

To get the most out of the mentoring, the mentee should have a clear goal of why they need a mentor and might need to encourage the mentor to act as a mentor. The easiest way to achieve this is to prepare for the conversation and ask questions (Table 1.3.) that relate to the career goals and business challenges of the mentor and the mentee.

## Mentee questions for the mentor (Miller, 2018)

**Table 1.3.**

ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONS
Tell us about your career. Why did you become a manager/ decided to start a business?
How has your education attainment level benefited you? Which refresher courses have been the most useful to you?
Which your character traits have helped you the most, which have disturbed you during your career?
How do you make decisions and how do you deal with “unpopular decisions”?
How do you communicate with employees/colleagues/partners? Have your communication skills changed over time?
PERSONAL TRAITS
Which leadership skills were the most difficult to develop for you?
What character and management features have you inherited from your previous managers?
What would you do differently in terms of management if we could turn back time?
GROWTH
Have you ever confused, failed to do or been unable to do something? How to recover from a failure?
How to energize an exhausted team?
RESOURCES REQUIRED FOR THE BUSINESS/JOB POSITION
What would you do if you are entrusted with responsibilities for which you are not 100% ready? What to do?
What do you value the most in your employees? What are the key employee performance characteristics that you value the most?
What are the daily motivation tools for your team/employees?

DECISION-MAKING
How did you learn to take risks?
What to do if the decision was wrong? Do you want to tell it to your employees, colleagues?
What have been your most painful business/career/team decisions?
CRISES
How to maintain restraint and focus on work in stressful situations?
Does a small business/department need an individually developed and tailored crisis management plan?
MENTEE CHARACTERISTICS
What are my strengths?
What do you consider to be my weaknesses and how can I eliminate them?
What image do I make of myself when communicating?
What skills would I need to develop?
Do you see me in some field/position in 5 years?
How can I become a more convincing negotiator?
Can you recommend a book or resource for complex conversations to me?

Preparing for conversation define success of communication for 90%. It is possible that the mentee will not ask all the questions during the first conversation, yet the questions can help to guide the conversation and get to know the mentor. It is also possible that after the first questions, the mentor starts controlling the conversation and implements their conversation plan, setting goals, starting the search for resources, planning the course of the meeting or identifying the most important issues.

Besides, considering the developments of 2020 when the world was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, it is possible that the first mentor-mentee meeting takes place via electronic media. In this case, it is recommended to agree on the basic questions about the basic principles of mentoring and the expected results.

The mentor's task is also to make an appointment in advance to get acquainted with the information provided by the mentee so that they can lead a well-structured meeting, as well as resolve any issues that the mentee might have before the beginning of the meeting (Table 1.4.).

## Mentor questions for the mentee (MicroMentor)

**Table 1.4.**

<b>ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONS</b>
Tell us about your career. Why did you decide to start a business?
What is your education attainment level and what your academic knowledge has been useful to you so far?
What your character traits have been most useful to you so far, and what your traits hindered you from starting a business?
How do you communicate with employees/colleagues/partners?
<b>PERSONAL TRAITS</b>
Which skills are the most difficult for you to develop?
What would you do differently in terms of management if we could turn back time?
<b>GROWTH</b>
How do you recover from a failure?
Is it necessary to talk about the company's failures with employees, how to change the course of action after the failure?
What are the pros and cons if the employee is able to do more than stipulated in the employment contract?
<b>RESOURCES REQUIRED FOR THE BUSINESS/JOB POSITION</b>
What do you value the most in your employees? What are the key employee performance characteristics that you value the most?
What are the daily motivation tools for your team/employees?
<b>DECISION-MAKING</b>
What to do if the decision was wrong? Do you want to tell it to your employees, colleagues?
What have been your most painful business/career/team decisions?
<b>CRISES</b>
How to maintain restraint and focus on work in stressful situations?
How to plan your work so that crises do not occur?

These questions provide an excellent first step toward building a successful mentoring relationship, helping to assess effectively how and where the mentor can really help the mentee and their business. By going through this exercise together, the mentor and the mentee can better define a mutually productive path forward.

## Assignment for mentor

Imagine that you have become a mentor to someone who is interested in your hobby. Make a negotiation plan for your first meeting, listing the steps of conversation progress. Make a list of potential questions the mentee would like to ask you (use Table 1.4. as an example).

## Assignment for mentee

Rate your compliance with the traits possessed by an excellent mentee on a 5 point scale (0 - lowest rating; 5 - highest rating) (Table 1.5.).

### Self-assessment: Are you an excellent mentee?

(the authors' construction based on the Griffith University website)



**Table 1.5.**

Traits	Characteristics	Rating on 5 point scale	Rating justification
Ability to set goals, self-awareness	Clearly defined goals, flexible plans, employee involvement.		
Responsible for my own growth and development	Long-term focus on education and learning to ensure a high level of competence and development.		
Ability to give feedback and coaching	Ability to improve my own results and adjust my own pace based on feedback.		
Open to new challenges, ideas and creative thinking	Positive approach to creative ideas, challenges, pro-active experimentation, searching for and finding new solutions, communication and sharing experience as well as perception and dissemination of knowledge.		
Available to the public and responsible	Ability to share my own experiences responsibly with the outside world.		
Well organized and conscientious	Ability to set priorities, plan, organize and control and conscientiously implement the activities planned.		
Ability to be positive, learn, be productive, spend my own free time and relax	Learning, self-improvement, the ability to relax productively, a positive attitude promotes effective relationships with people.		
<b>*Total:</b>			

\*The higher total rating, the more excellent the mentee.



## Questions to check yourself

1. What is business mentoring?
2. What are the benefits of mentoring for a company?
3. What are the benefits of mentoring for mentees and mentors?
4. How mentoring can help to enhance the competitiveness of a company?
5. What are the main benefits of mentoring for the mentor?

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# 2. CONTENT CREATION IN BUSINESS MENTORING

## Introduction

This chapter will describe the following major elements, which are integral part of business content creation:

- Business model creation
- Business strategy development
- New project planning and initiation
- Mentoring for innovation

## Key concept

Starting a new business or a new product/ service is not a trivial task. It requires definition of initial elements, as well as identification of interconnections between some elements.

## Business model definition

It is the first step in each product/ service innovation. According the Business Canvas model, it includes nine basic elements describing various aspects. Its purpose is that the mentees can assess themselves their business ideas according the model.

## Business strategy development

Includes some important elements like product/ service technological development, critical technologies, development goals, aggregate plan of projects, etc.

## Project planning activity

Comprises all the activities during the project lifetime, project budget, team, and Gantt chart creation.



## 2.1. BUSINESS MODEL CREATION

The idea of business canvas was initially proposed by Alexander Osterwalder based on his earlier work on Business Model Ontology (Osterwald, Pigneur, 2010). Being a successful business management tool, business canvas contains a business plan template, where its composite elements are nine basic parts, describing the various aspects of the model. Its purpose is for entrepreneurs to question themselves in respect of their business with regard to the topics and to post the answers into the correlating block of the proposed canvas. The basic canvas blocks are as follows :



### The business model canvas

KEY PARTNERS 	KEY ACTIVITIES 	VALUE PROPOSITION 	CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP 	CUSTOMER SEGMENT 
	KEY RESOURCES 		CHANNELS 	
COST STRUCTURE 			REVENUE STREAMS 	

### Key Partners

The purpose of this block is to optimize operations and reduce risks cultivating a partner-network: buyer-supplier relationships, cooperation with competitors, etc. For both SMEs and start-ups it is important to create alliances with partners, for example, when competing in the market and combining knowledge and specialization. You should answer the following basic questions:

- ✓ Who are the key partners/suppliers?
- ✓ What are the motivations for the partnerships?

## Key Activities

This block describes the most important activities in achieving the company's value proposition. By having knowledge of the basic activities of the company, a good understanding of its value proposition will be obtained. These activities are not limited to the production and services, but also related with a problem-solving approach, networking, and the quality of the product and/or service. Moreover, it may be helpful in the targeting of new customers, and making it easier to compete with the rivals. You should answer the following basic questions:

- ✓ What activities are the most important in distribution channels, customer relationships, revenue stream?
- ✓ What are the key activities the value proposition require?

## Value Proposition

The purpose of this block is to describe the range of products and services the business offers to meet the needs of their customers. The value proposition is what distinguishes the company from its competitors. This distinction focuses on issues such as price, service, speed, and delivery conditions on the one hand, and, on the other hand, on quality including design, brand status, and customer experience and satisfaction. You should answer the following basic questions:

- ✓ What is the core value the company delivers to the customer?
- ✓ What are the customer needs the company satisfies?

## Customer Relationship

This block identifies the type of relationship you want to create with your customer segments. The broader the customer base the more important it is to divide your customers into different target groups. Various forms of customer relationships include: personal assistance, dedicated personal assistance, self-service, automated services, communities, co-creation. A quality product or service will ensure good and stable customer relationship in the future. The company should answer the following basic questions:

- ✓ What are relationships the target customer expects the company to establish?
- ✓ What is the way the company can integrate this into business in terms of cost and format?

## Customer Segment

This block identifies what are the customers the company targets considering their different needs. As companies often provide the services to more than one customer group, it is sensible to divide them into the customer segments. This will lead to a greater customer satisfaction, which, in turn, will contribute to a good value proposition. Various segments could fall into the following categories: mass market, niche market, segmented, diversified, multi-sided platform/ market. The company should answer the following basic questions:

- ✓ What are the segments the company creates value for?
- ✓ Who is the company's most important customer?

## Key Resources

The purpose of this block is to describe the resources that are necessary to create a value for the customer. These are means that a company needs to serve its customers. The resources can be broadly categorized as physical (assets such as business equipment), intellectual (knowledge, brands, patents, know-how, etc.), financial (funds flow and sources of income) or human. The financial resources are related to funds flow and sources of income. The company should answer the following basic questions:

- ✓ What are the key resources required for value proposition?
- ✓ What are the most important resources related to distribution channels, customer relationships, revenue stream?

## Distribution Channels

This block identifies the ways the company delivers the value proposition to their targeted customers. Each organization deals with communication, distribution and sales channels identifying the way the company communicates with its customers. The purchase location and the delivery of the product and/or services provided are important elements. There are five stages of moving the product/ service via the channels to the customers: awareness of the product, purchase, delivery, evaluation& satisfaction, and after-sales. In order to make good use of the channels and to reach as many customers as possible, it is advisable to combine off-line (traditional shops) and online (web shops) channels. The company should answer the following basic questions:

- ✓ Through which channels the customers will be reached?
- ✓ Which channels work best? How much do they cost? How can they be integrated into your and your customers' routines?

## Cost Structure

The purpose of this block is to describe the most important monetary consequences while operating under different business models. By exploring the cost structure, you should estimate what is the minimum turnover to be achieved to make a profit. The cost structure considers economies of scale, constant and variable costs, and profit advantages. Often, the organization will choose the trade-off between using and deleting a number of key resources in order to decrease the costs. You should answer the following basic questions:

- ✓ What is the biggest cost in your business?
- ✓ What key resources/ activities are the most expensive?
- ✓ For what value are your customers willing to pay?

## Revenue Streams

This block describes the way the company makes income from each customer segment. In addition to the cost structure, the revenue streams will provide better understanding of the revenue model of a company. For example, how many customers does an organization need on an annual basis to generate a profit? How much revenue does it need to break even? The revenue streams are the most important cost drivers. There are several ways to generate a revenue stream: asset sale, usage fee, subscription fees, lending/leasing/renting, licensing, brokerage fees, advertising. You should answer the following basic questions:

- ✓ For what value are their customers willing to pay?
- ✓ What and how do they recently pay? How would they prefer to pay?
- ✓ How much does every revenue stream contribute to the overall revenues?

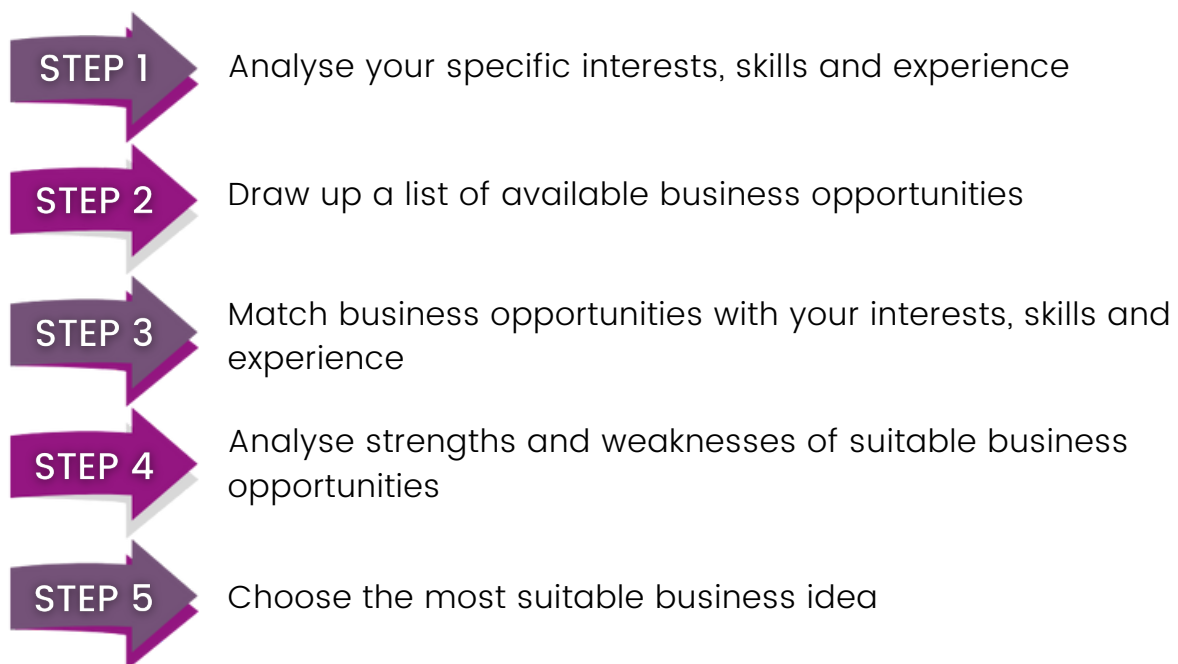
## 2.2. HOW TO START A BUSINESS

Many people get their business ideas just by looking around them and thinking about what types of business are doing well. They simply decide to copy a business that seems to be doing well, and then end up in a situation that is not viable. Copying another business is a possibility but market environment, size and customers' behaviour pattern needs to be examined very well to understand why the other business is doing fine.

Other people get their business ideas just by thinking about what they are good at and deciding that they can use their skills to start a business. They simply decide to start a business assuming that their skills will attract the potential customers. That assumption is based on a gut feeling rather than a sound market survey. Therefore, if you are already committed to a business idea, you will need to ask yourself the following kinds of questions:

- ✓ Is there a market for this type of product or services?
- ✓ How many similar businesses offer this product or service?
- ✓ Is there a market large enough for all of us to make a reasonable living and growth?
- ✓ If there is not a large enough market for all of us, will my business be different enough or efficient enough to attract many customers in the long run?

If your answer to the first three or the last three questions are negative, you should take another look at your business idea before you invest any more time or money in developing it further. Now, that you have understood the ingredients of a good business idea, the way to go on is to build on an available business opportunity that matches your skills and liking. You can do this systematically by following the steps below:



You will be at your best when you are doing what you love to do and have strong feelings (beliefs) about what and how you do it. You will do your best if you have the appropriate skills, and you will have an advantage if you have some hands-on experience.

## Your specific interests

Your specific interests in relation to a business idea are things you love to do or would like to do, i.e. hobbies and creative activities. These could be developing databases, talking to people, etc. You may also have strong feelings about how a business should be run, e.g. how it should treat its employees, customers, environment, etc.

You may be familiar with the types and quality of products and services you would like to provide, about doing your best to make your customers happy, about doing nothing that will damage the environment or cause problems to the community, and so on. Such feelings will also have a bearing on the choice of your business idea. Your business is likely to be more successful if it fits in with your beliefs and value. The best way to analyse your strong likings and beliefs is to make a list of all the things you like doing and you believe in, and weight them on a scale of 1 to 3, 1 being very strong and 3 being not that strong.

## Your skills and experience

Many people get stuck when asked to list their skills. They tend to devalue many of the things they are good at, thinking that everyone can do those things.

The best way to take stock of your skills is to write a list of your skills – the things you know how to do well. You can follow this path:

- ✓ What did I do well at school?
- ✓ What did I do well in my previous jobs/occupations?
- ✓ What do I do well at my current job/occupation?
- ✓ What special skills have I learned in my family?
- ✓ What help do other people ask me for?
- ✓ What have I been good at organising?

## Draw up a list of available business opportunities

Businesses survive by providing products and services which people want and have the purchasing power to acquire. Your success in business depends on providing such products and services as have the possibility to attract customers and secure a niche in the market place.

Market niches are those products and services which many customers want but: (a) do not find in the marketplace or (b) are not satisfied with what is available. There are a number of ways to identify market niches. Here are some suggestions as to how you could go about it: make serious efforts to do all the above for as long as you can afford. That way you will be able to develop an exhaustive list of available business opportunities to choose from.

Once you have developed an exhaustive list of market niches, consider what type of business is most suited to exploit the opportunities these market niches provide, namely:

- ✓ A manufacturing business, i.e. a business which will produce the identified niche product, e.g. manufacture of toys, furniture making, garment making, etc.
- ✓ A service operating business, i.e. a business that will provide the identified niche service, e.g. a laundry service, sandwich delivery, transport provider, etc.
- ✓ A retail/trading business, i.e. a retail shop, cash-and-carry shop, wholesales business, etc.

Depending on the product you choose for your business, establishment of a manufacturing business will generally require larger start-up capital and will take longer to start supporting you and your family financially. Service operating business can be started with less start-up capital and can start supporting you financially faster. Start-up capital requirements for retail/trading business vary depending on the location of business and the range of products to be sold, but they can start supporting you financially much faster.

Review the exhaustive list of market niches you have drawn up, think carefully about the business opportunity each niche opens up and make a preliminary selection of the available business opportunities that appeal to you most for further analysis.

## 2.3. BUSINESS STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Before a business plan development, the mentee should proceed with a new product/service strategy creation. The critical elements of the company's development strategy are the technological plan and the plan for positioning of the new product/service at the markets. The main aim of the business strategy development is to provide a systematic approach towards the development of innovations, creating a good base for every individual innovation project, the SMEs and start-ups plan to undertake. The concept of the development strategy provides two primary mechanisms, which aim at synchronising the business planning and projects.

The first one is the identification of the development goals, or the mentee is translating its business strategy into specific requests for development. These objectives are focused on the development characteristics as timing, productivity and number of new products/services along with development opportunities.

The second mechanism is the aggregate plan of projects in which the mentee decides on the combination of projects, which fit well with the business strategy and the opportunities in the company. The development of both mechanisms depends on a well-grounded analysis of:

- ✓ Markets, key customer segments, projections of needs and wants, along with competition resulting into a Product/market strategy.
- ✓ Technology, key technological developments and projections along with audit of existing technological state, resulting into Technological strategy.

There is no single or best strategy. There is, however, a strategic planning process. This should be followed when determining the strategy to be adopted for the venture. It comprises 4 stages, namely:

- ✓ Premise stage - determine the nature of the venture.
- ✓ Analysis stage - analyse opportunities, the venture's capabilities and identify distinctive competences.
- ✓ Strategy Development stage - develop the Venture strategy and develop supporting strategies.
- ✓ Implementation stage - assemble the necessary resources, establish control and begin action.

There are three main generic strategy types applicable to the new and emerging businesses.

## **Differentiation Strategies**

These create value for the customer beyond that available from competing products. They are useful since they permit a premium price to be charged for the product. The high-profit margins either allow costing errors to be absorbed or permit re-investment in the business, either to refine or exploit further the product.

## **Low Cost Leadership**

Normally, this strategy would not be appropriate for the majority of new ventures, as it requires high relative market share. If, however, the new venture can reduce production costs (through introducing a cheaper, more efficient method of product, for example) or reduce overheads then it is possible, but the entrepreneur must continue to reduce the cost of the product if he/she is to ensure that the venture retains its low-cost leadership position. This must not be at the expense of quality.



## Focus strategies

These combine parts of both the differentiation and low-cost leadership strategies. Focus strategies are not market share oriented. Rather, they are oriented at serving a small target market in the best way possible. Customers willingly pay a premium to the producer for the specialised attention received and the strategy is protectable because the business continues to provide the specialised attention.

## 2.4. THE BUSINESS PLAN: TYPICAL CONTENT

Executive summary. This covers all the main points in the plan and is intended to convince the reader that the plan, itself, is worth reading. Description of the Business: This covers:

- ✓ Proposed legal status of the business
- ✓ Management team and their roles
- ✓ Strategic alliances/partner arrangements with other businesses
- ✓ Mission in addition to the short and long-term objectives
- ✓ Nature of the product (good/ service)

The marketing plan is a crucial part of the business plan. If estimated sales are not achieved, the entire financial viability of the project is affected. Similarly an over-optimistic sales forecast can make the plan appear financially viable. Unfortunately, sales projections are often the most difficult part of the plan to forecast with any accuracy, not least because it is almost impossible to predict either competitor or customer response.

The operation and production one is a section of the plan describes how the goods or services will be manufactured or provided, identifying:

- ✓ Equipment requirements
- ✓ Supply sources for both equipment and raw material
- ✓ Accommodation needs

For the HR requirements: a statement as to the number of staff needed and their roles. And on the financial aspects: the plan needs to include financial forecasts, a cashflow statement and balance sheet. The mission statement serves as a formal declaration of what an organisation is endeavouring to achieve in the medium to long term. A well written corporate mission statement will include the following key elements:

Customer Orientation/Business Definition: One of the most important contributions of the mission statement is that it provides a clear and succinct definition of the business. Essentially this will answer three questions: "What is our business? What will it be? What should it be?"

A statement of the vision: A broad statement of what the organisation is ultimately striving to achieve. For example, Microsoft's vision is "to empower people through great software - any time, any place and on any device". Visions in general may be somewhat ambitious and designed to generate 'strategic intent'. The arguments for doing this are: (1) to communicate direction, (2) to help drive decision making, and (3) to encourage innovation in resource management and force management to look for improvements in the way they run an organisation.

A reflection of the philosophical values that influence management decision making: This basically deals with organisational behaviour and culture: a statement of how the organisation intends to conduct itself and an articulation of a set of values which emphasise a distinctive outlook.

The key goals: Defined milestones which specify what must be done if the mission is to be achieved. To be meaningful, goals should have four characteristics: (1) they should be precise and measurable, (2) they should address important issues, (3) they should be challenging but realistic, and (4) they should specify a time period.

A reflection of the organisation's commitment to its stakeholders: Well constructed mission statements will include a statement of the organisation's commitment to its stakeholders along with a description as to how the organisation intends to incorporate the stakeholders' claims into its strategies.

A description of how the organisation is governed.

An ethical dimension: Every organisation must have an ethical climate and establish a culture that emphasises the importance of ethics. These ethical values must be incorporated into the mission statement.

## Marketing plan and marketing strategy

The marketing plan is the most important part of the business plan insofar as it describes the essence of the developed business and how it will be able to generate sales in the existing market conditions. Every novice entrepreneur should attract a competent marketing specialist to their team. The marketing plan consists of the following areas:

Market Definition and Opportunity - in this part of the marketing plan, the entrepreneur describes what problem he has found, what is its scope and what products or services can solve it, what is the demand for the product or service on the market and what opportunities the market offers for generating revenue. Marketing analysis examines the different types of market segmentation to determine the needs of consumers, what products in the market meet these needs and what behavioral trends of customers are emerging:

- ✓ Geographic segmentation provides information about households in certain geographical areas - size, income, ethnicity, etc. general signs related to consumption.
- ✓ Demographic segmentation examines the market based on the life-stage, age, gender, income, and social class of consumers.
- ✓ Psychographic segmentation - based on lifestyle, personal values and attitudes.
- ✓ Behavioral segmentation - based on customers 'knowledge of the product, point of purchase, intensity of use, benefits, loyalty, etc.

Competition and Other Influences - outlining the conditions in the external business environment: the impact of existing competition and government regulations.

The marketing strategy specifies how the market opportunities and marketing tools, available to the company, will be used to achieve the desired sales levels. The marketing strategy includes distribution, advertising and promotion, pricing, selling incentives, location analysis, etc.

Sales Forecasts: projected sales growth, projected market share, sales by period, sales by product or service, and sales by customer.

Support Material: the goal is to make the business plan more convincing by providing documents such as letters of intent, letters of support, positive reviews in articles, industry studies and visualizations.

## Operational Plan

The operational plan describes how the products or services will be created - raw materials, production processes (machinery and equipment), labor organization, suppliers, time schedule, etc. The operational plan includes (Ford et al., 2007):

- ✓ Product Development: a description of the activities for the development of the products and services that the company has performed or will undertake.
- ✓ Manufacturing: description of the equipment, materials, product manufacturing technologies (assembly lines and robotics), labor requirements; productive capacity, quality assurance programs.
- ✓ Maintenance and Service. The support that the company provides after the sale of the product or service.
- ✓ External Influences such as requirements for labor safety and state control over pollution.

## Management and Organization

This part of the business plan includes the following information (Ford et al., 2007):

- ✓ Management team/ Principals: a description of key individuals who create and develop a functioning enterprise, as well as experts, investors, entrepreneurs, board members with a strong influence on the success or failure of the company.
- ✓ Organizational chart: it demonstrates visually the responsibilities distribution in the organization.
- ✓ Policy and strategy: description of the mechanisms and practices for selection, training and system for remuneration and financial incentives for employees.

## Structure and Capitalization

This section of the business plan specifies what will be the legal form of the new enterprise (sole proprietorship, limited partnership, corporation, etc.) and how it will be capitalized, i.e. what financial resources are needed for the survival of the business after the start-up (available financial resources and those that are expected to be available in the future): term loans, convertible bond, preferred stock, cumulative preferred stock, common stock, etc. (Ford et al., 2007).

## Financial Plan

The financial plan as part of the business plan forecasts the financial results of the company. Well-argued high expected financial results increase the attractiveness of the business. It is good to present them accurately estimates of expected revenues and if there are deviations, they should be well explained. It is advisable to consider several scenarios – more or less optimistic about the expected financial results and the subsequent actions of the entrepreneur. It is important that the forecasts are updated in case of external or internal changes for the enterprise. The financial plan includes the following (Ford et al., 2007):

- ✓ The main arguments and assumptions on which the financial forecasts are based.
- ✓ Projected income statements for a period of at least three years.
- ✓ Detailed cash flow forecasts for the first two years.
- ✓ Balance sheet of the company at the beginning of the new venture and projected year-end balance sheets for at least three years.

## 2.5. MENTORING FOR INNOVATION

Mentoring programs to promote innovation in organizations are successful when they focus on creating a sense of belonging of innovators to the organizational culture and environment through peer mentoring - it encourages cooperation, teamwork and trust as conditions for the development of creative thinking and innovation in the organization. The classic type of mentoring is useful.

The more experienced and wiser members of the company become mentors of younger and inexperienced innovators who need guidance for the development and formation of the soft skills; better integration into the organization by discussing the mission, vision and organizational goals. The third type of mentoring that encourages innovation is reverse mentoring, in which mentors belong to lower organizational levels and protégés are higher in the hierarchy. The relationship between mentor and protégé brings many surprises for both parties, helping protégés to get out of the routine, develop new skills, gain access to new ideas, while mentors begin to feel valued and develop their leadership skills.

This close cooperation encourages the creation of new projects and products (Moon, 2014). Beginner entrepreneurs need a different kind of support at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the relationship with the mentor. In the first phase of relationship development, a match between mentor and protégé is required; as well as meeting the protégé's needs for encouragement, positive support, helpful advice and useful ideas.

When starting a business, the mentor is the one who has experience and can help with their expertise. In the middle of the relationship, the support of the mentor is needed, but not so much on a theoretical as on a practical level. In the last phase, the mentor's main concern is to make sure that his protégé can cash in on the business everything learned in the process of their relationship and can develop their business completely independently and sustainably. The results show that the success of entrepreneurship depends on the reduction of dependence on the mentor, on the empowerment of the protégé and the development of their self-confidence (Cull, 2006).

The successful interaction between the mentors and entrepreneurs depends on three factors: type of entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial decision making, and entrepreneurial phase. Creative entrepreneurs, also called "innovation leaders", create innovative products and present them on the market. These are people who can go beyond the limitations of ordinary thinking, think differently from others, to find solutions to existing customer problems. This type of entrepreneurs develop high-tech industries and have a strong impact on research and development (R&D).

Also Technology-Based Entrepreneurs (Technopreneurs) tend to focus on inventions and innovations, on the development of high-tech products; on investing a lot of money in research and development and attracting scientists and engineers to their business. These two types of entrepreneurs will fit in with mentors who are involved in research and development. In case their decision-making style is of the "Lone Rangers" type, they will not need a mentor when creating the business model of the future enterprise (in the conceptual phase of entrepreneurship), because they think independently and can make decisions on their own.

They may only need psychological support (Memon et al., 2015). However, if the decision-making style is of the "Doubtful Minds" type, then the novice entrepreneurs will need a mentor not only in the initial stages of starting a business due to the high uncertainty in the correctness of their decisions. These are entrepreneurs who are very inexperienced, insecure and less willing to take risks, so they prefer to explore all alternatives, get additional information from a trusted source and the support of an experienced mentor to reach a solution.

Communication strategies serve to achieve the main goals in the mentor-protégé communication. The purpose of communication is (Radu Lefebvre & Redien-Collot, 2013):

- 1.** Adaptation (conformism) to the market - taking into account the rules of the market when creating a business project (the project should be in accordance with existing market practices, expectations, rules and regulations); Mentors encourage the start-up entrepreneur to adapt to the economic, social, cultural, and market conditions of the environment through the Persuasion and Engagement strategies.
- 2.** Differentiation from the market - moving away from the existing products and services on the market by transforming the old ones or creating new ones, which do not exist on the market and have value for the clients. Through the Criticism and Provocation communication strategies, the mentor increases the protégé's motivation to be innovative, to think and act beyond existing norms, beliefs and values in order to offer something new and challenging.

When creating a business plan to achieve the first goal, the novice entrepreneur must have the necessary knowledge and comply with the existing market rules; to achieve the second goal, they need creativity and innovation (Radu Lefebvre & Redien-Collot, 2013). The business plan is a useful tool for developing the business idea, assessing its potential, attracting funding, building a working business enterprise in the appropriate legal form, and defining short-term and medium-term business goals.



## ACTIVITY

Create a business model, strategy, and project for a new service you plan to introduce to the market. Write a detailed and complete business plan based on the business model you have already created. You could use the InnoTools, developed with this purpose: <http://innoplatform.eu/index.php/en/innotoolsselectpath>



## Questions to check yourself

1. What details should the business plan contain in order to attract investors?
2. Is it necessary for the entrepreneur to make a full analysis of the market conditions when creating a business plan and why is this necessary?
3. What should the business strategy of the new business enterprise provide?
4. What communication strategy can the mentor use to encourage the entrepreneur's creative and innovative thinking?
5. What specifics of different types of entrepreneurs (e.g., Innovative leader and Technopreneur) should the mentor have in mind in order to offer adequate assistance to his mentee in the process of creating a new business project?
6. What kind of support the mentors have to provide at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of their relationship with the mentees?
7. What communication strategies can mentors use to help entrepreneurs adapt their business projects to market conditions?

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# 3. EMOTIONAL ASPECTS AND SPECIFICS OF COMMUNICATION

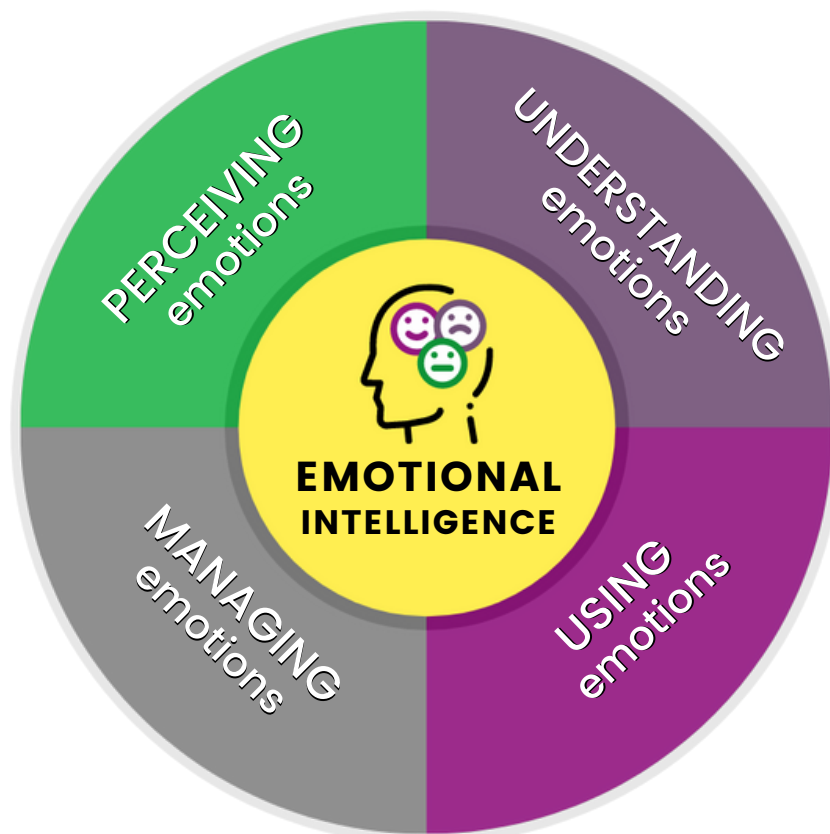
## Introduction

In this chapter we will look at the following topics:

- The role of emotions in communication
- What is Emotional Intelligence?
- How mentors can exercise, use and apply emotional intelligence
- 5 Ways to look for emotional intelligence in a mentor
- Emotional Intelligence Exercises for mentors

## Key concept

Peter Salovey and John Mayer have defined emotional intelligence (EI) as "the ability to monitor one's own and other people's emotions, to distinguish between different emotions and to label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour." This definition was later divided and refined into four offered abilities, which, although different, are also related: emotion perception, emotion use, emotion understanding, and emotion management (Figure 3.1).



**Fig. 3.1. Four abilities of EI**

## Emotionally intelligent mentoring

(EIM) is an intense, mutually beneficial developmental relationship between a mentor and mentee that depends upon and expands emotional and social skills in ways that inform thought and action, benefit the self and others, and result in career learning and advancement.

### 3.1. THE ROLE OF EMOTIONS IN COMMUNICATION

Paul Ekman, who studied human emotions, discovered six facial expressions that almost everyone recognizes world-wide. These are happiness, sadness, anger, fear, disgust, and surprise. These expressions communicate the real inner self of an individual to others. However, there are variety of emotions created by the mixing, blending, and overlapping of these basic ones. During life, we experience various emotions, such as genuine love and empathy, which are most valuable to us as an individual. On the other hand, there are emotions such as anger, pride, and jealousy, which disturb the mental peace and lead us to act in ways that not only hurt others but ourselves as well. Emotions even affect the individual's health. It is rightly said: "A healthy body has a healthy mind". The moment we try to repress our emotions it gets manifested as diseases such as depression, anxieties, panic, and eating disorders to name a few.

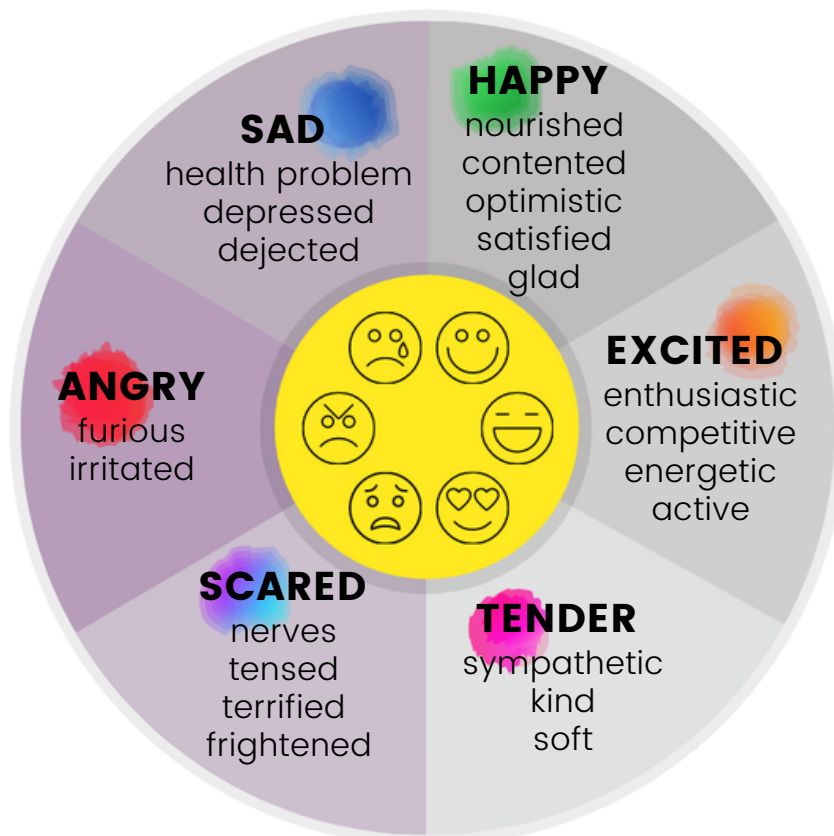


Fig. 3.2. Description of basic emotions

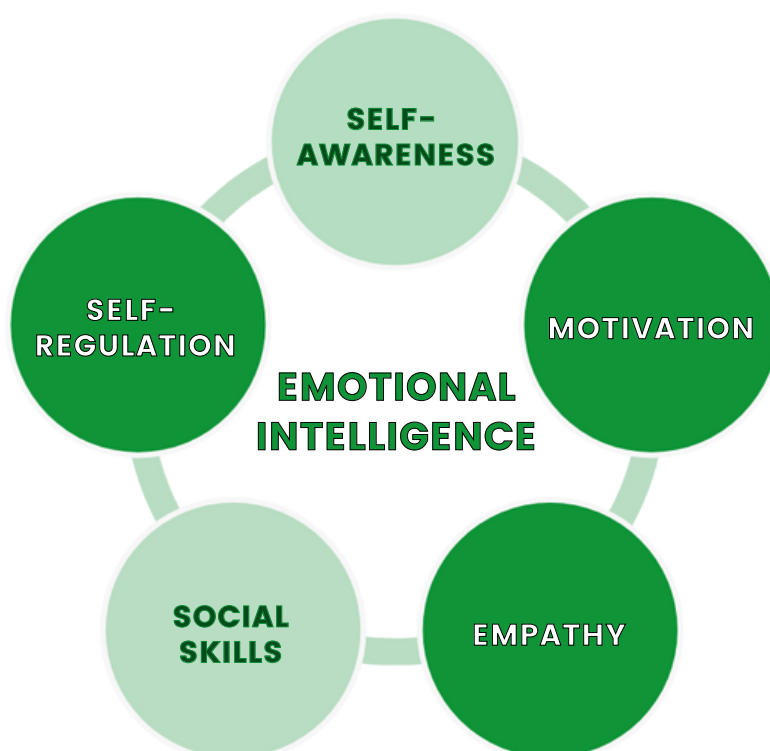
Ability to recognize and share emotions with others is truly an art. Those of us, who are able to master it, learn how to manage and maintain healthy relationships. If we listen to the other's feelings and try to understand the emotion they are experiencing or expressing, our communication becomes a meaningful exchange for both of us. This help us to avoid unnecessary conflicts in our life. We become flexible and can adjust with others easily. However, in order to do so we need to learn and practice on how to recognize and communicate our emotions to others effectively.

### 3.2. WHAT IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

For most people, emotional intelligence (EI) is more important than one's intelligence (IQ) in attaining success in their lives and careers. As for individuals, our success and the success of the profession today depend on our ability to read other people's signals and react appropriately to them.

Therefore, each one of us must develop the mature emotional intelligence skills required to better understand, empathize and negotiate with other people – particularly as the economy has become more global. Otherwise, success will elude us in our lives and careers.

“Your EI is the level of your ability to understand other people, what motivates them and how to work cooperatively with them,” says Howard Gardner, the influential Harvard theorist. Five major categories of emotional intelligence skills are recognized by researchers in this area.



**Fig. 3.3. Five categories of emotional intelligence**

## Understanding the Five Categories of Emotional Intelligence (EI)

**Table 3.1.**

	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>MAJOR ELEMENTS OF CATEGORY</b>
<b>Self-awareness</b>	The ability to recognize an emotion as it “happens” is the key to your EI. Developing self-awareness requires tuning in to your true feelings. If you evaluate your emotions, you can manage them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional awareness. Your ability to recognize your own emotions and their effects</li> <li>• Self-confidence. Sureness about your self-worth and capabilities</li> </ul>
<b>Self-regulation</b>	You often have a little of control when you experience emotions. You can, however, have some say in how long an emotion will last by using a number of techniques to alleviate negative emotions such as anger, anxiety or depression. A few of these techniques include recasting a situation in a more positive light, taking a long walk and meditation or prayer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-control. Managing disruptive impulses</li> <li>• Trustworthiness. Maintaining standards of honesty and integrity</li> <li>• Conscientiousness. Taking responsibility for your own performance</li> <li>• Adaptability. Handling change with flexibility</li> <li>• Innovation. Being open to new ideas</li> </ul>
<b>Motivation</b>	To motivate yourself for any achievement requires clear goals and a positive attitude. Although you may have a predisposition to either a positive or a negative attitude, you can with effort and practice learn to think more positively. If you catch negative thoughts as they occur, you can reframe them in more positive terms – which will help you achieving your goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement drive. Your constant striving to improve or to meet a standard of excellence</li> <li>• Commitment. Aligning with the goals of the group or organization</li> <li>• Initiative. Ready yourself to act on opportunities</li> <li>• Optimism. Pursuing goals persistently despite obstacles and setbacks</li> </ul>
<b>Empathy</b>	The ability to recognize how people feel is important to success in your life and career. The more skillful you are at discerning the feelings behind others’ signals the better you can control the signals you send them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service orientation. Anticipating, recognizing and meeting clients’ needs</li> <li>• Developing others. Sensing what others need to progress and bolstering their abilities</li> <li>• Leveraging diversity. Cultivating opportunities through diverse people</li> <li>• Political awareness. Reading a group’s emotional currents and power relationships</li> <li>• Understanding others. Discerning the feelings behind the needs and wants of others</li> </ul>

	DESCRIPTION	MAJOR ELEMENTS OF CATEGORY
<b>Social skills</b>	The development of good interpersonal skills is tantamount to success in your life and career. In today's always-connected world, everyone has immediate access to technical knowledge. Thus, "people skills" are even more important now because you must possess a high level of EI to better understand, empathize and negotiate with others in a global economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influence. Wielding effective persuasion tactics</li> <li>• Communication. Sending clear messages</li> <li>• Leadership. Inspiring and guiding groups and people</li> <li>• Change catalyst. Initiating or managing change</li> <li>• Conflict management. Understanding, negotiating, and resolving disagreements</li> <li>• Building bonds. Nurturing instrumental relationships</li> <li>• Collaboration and cooperation. Working with others toward shared goals</li> <li>• Team capabilities. Creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals</li> </ul>

### 3.3. HOW MENTORS CAN EXERCISE, USE, AND APPLY EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The theory states that just as people have a wide range of intellectual abilities, they also have a wide range of measurable emotional skills that profoundly affect their thinking and actions.

There is a growing body of evidence around the importance Emotional Intelligence plays in success at work. Individuals can enjoy a successful career and better relationships by relying on their emotional intelligence.

Studies have shown that people with high level of emotional intelligence have greater career success, foster stronger personal relations, have effective leadership skills and are healthier than those with low emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence is how well a person understands and manages their emotions and the emotions of others and how they use this knowledge to manage relationships. Developing these skills is critical in the workplace, with strong emotional intelligence being linked to high performance. Emotional Intelligence assessment typically provide answers to the questions such as:

- ✓ How aware is this person of their strengths and limitations?
- ✓ How can this person understand the emotions of others?
- ✓ Does this person excel at developing relationships?
- ✓ How self-motivated and adaptable is this person?
- ✓ How does this person react to pressure?

For a mentor, emotional intelligence is important. It has been found that, in mentorship, there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and the degree of confidence that a mentee has in them. In addition, there are some qualities that are useful for a mentor or coach to develop. For example, high empathy provides better career and psychological support mentoring functions.

Several characteristics, measured by the Emotional Intelligence assessment such as The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue), are positively associated with giving suitable, emotional responses and performing different mentoring functions. Emotional intelligence also appears to be important in serving as a role model for mentoring.

A high EI is also valuable for the mentees. Emotional intelligence is, in fact, positively related to the extent to which a mentee learns. This is then related to the job satisfaction and career attitude.

Rose Opengart and Laura Bierema's article "Emotionally Intelligent Mentoring: Reconceptualizing Effective Mentoring Relationships" (2016) is a systematic review of the existing literature to illustrate how EI affects the mentoring relationship and influences its effectiveness for both the mentor and mentee. They conclude that "it is essential to select a mentor who is high in EI and uses his/her emotional competence to maximize the potential of the mentoring relationship".

Cremona (2010) has studied the emotional responses of coaches, but her recommendations are equally relevant for the mentors. She has suggested that training for coaches should involve empathy, body awareness, and relationship building and connect emotions to engagement, motivation, resilience, leadership, and managing change. She advocates that management types need to "demystify their views about emotions [...] and expand and deepen their approach towards emotion [...] in the workplace".

Opengart and Bierema suggest that to get the most out of a mentor-mentee relationship, EI should be measured, discussed, and both parties should develop self-awareness of their own EI. They argue that this may result in the heightened learning, more successful mentoring relationships, improved retention.

Emotionally intelligent mentors, who know themselves, can control their behaviour effectively, and stretch themselves to reach goals, can understand, motivate, and help mentees achieving their goals by creating an effective mentor-mentee relationship.

### 3.4. FIVE WAYS TO LOOK FOR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN A MENTOR

Research on emotional intelligence and mentoring has found that the greater the emotional intelligence of the mentor, the higher the trust the mentee has in them. While 76% of people believe that mentoring is important, only a small percentage have a mentor. The qualities that we look for in an emotionally intelligent mentor are self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. There is a number of ways that we can determine if a potential mentor is high in these areas.

#### 1. High Degree of Self-awareness

When talking to a potential mentor, ask them not only about their successes, but their failures, struggles, and what they have learned from them. Mentors with a high degree of EI will openly share their feelings, fears, and doubts and tell how they have overcome them. They will share their vulnerabilities and be able to share with us both their strengths and the areas they are still working to succeed. Beware of someone who appears to have all the answers and is not open to sharing their vulnerabilities.

#### 2. Put their egos aside and focus on the needs of the mentee

A high degree of self-confidence and a healthy ego are necessary for success, but when it comes to mentoring, the mentor's ego must be left in a backstage in favour of the needs of the person being mentored. An emotionally intelligent mentor is secure in their own abilities and doesn't need their ego to be stroked. They will steer away from taking credit for success themselves and instead heap praise upon others, their teams or their partners. By listening to them you will get the feeling that they receive satisfaction from seeing others succeed.

#### 3. Manage their emotions and keep a degree of detachment

Mentorship that has depth and quality can become emotionally charged sometimes. The mentee may be making crucial decisions that will impact the rest of their lives and be looking to their mentor for guidance. This is the time when the mentee needs someone who is able to manage their emotions and remain objective.

When looking for a mentor, find out how they have handled emotionally charged situations in their past and what they have learned about themselves in the process. A positive sign is someone who relates a story of how they were able to control themselves during an emotionally charged situation. That could mean they decided to take a break until they were able to cool off.

#### **4. Provides guidance to help the mentee to come to their own decisions**

Good mentors offer guidance, support, different perspectives, but recognize that it is up to the mentee to ultimately make their own decisions. They realize that it is not them that has to live with the consequences of that decision and are careful not to tell the mentee what they should do.

“An emotionally intelligent mentor allows the mentee to lead the conversation and is perceptive to what’s being said and not being said. A good mentor will ask thought-provoking questions based on observation and active listening to help the mentee explore different possibilities, to uncover blind spots, and help the mentee to move from the problem to solution,” says Foram Sheth, Chief Coaching Officer & Co-Founder, Ama La Vida.

As well, the mentors have to realize that what they would do in a certain situation is not necessarily the best for the person they are mentoring. When choosing a mentor, ask them what you should do in a situation. If they help you to explore deeper and further, consider them as a potential candidate. If they tell you directly what you should do, move on and look for someone else.

#### **5. A history of service, success in overcoming barriers, a positive attitude and sense of gratitude**

Since mentorship is often a free service provided by the mentor, look for someone who genuinely enjoys helping others. The best mentors have a history of providing to their families, others, and their community. This type of people have the ability to look beyond their own needs and feel a sense of responsibility. If not sure of the candidate's history in this regard, bring up the volunteer activities that you have or are planning to carry out and see how they react. Highly emotionally intelligent mentors will be able to share how it makes them feel to help others. While they may not be incredibly wealthy or successful in all areas of life, the good mentors have had success in overcoming barriers in life. They openly express gratitude and have a positive, optimistic outlook towards the future.



They take responsibility for their mistakes and shortcomings and feel proud of what they have accomplished to this point. You get the feeling that they are able to relate to your struggles as they have been there themselves. Be careful of anyone who is still going through a difficult situation as they may be looking for someone to commiserate with rather than help to. You need someone who can offer you guidance in support because they have experienced similar struggles, not someone who has stuck themselves.

The next, there are some useful steps for the mentors who are interested in learning more about emotional intelligence but do not have a plan for improving their own EI yet.

These exercises will not only enhance the mentors' ability to understand and work with their emotions but will also provide them with the tools to foster the emotional intelligence of their clients, students, or mentees.

## 3.5. ACTIVITIES TO TRAIN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



### ACTIVITY

### Building emotional awareness

The goal of this tool is to help the mentors to develop their emotional awareness through mindfulness meditation. This exercise invites you to become aware of your emotions. It's your chance to really get to know your emotions. By practicing emotional awareness in this way, you can build your emotional intelligence. For the first time you can ask a trusted person to read the text to you, then you will be able to complete the task more accurately.



### Emotional awareness meditation script

1. Find a comfortable seated position either sitting on a cushion on the floor, or in a chair. Allow your spine to be straight and long, and let your shoulders drop. Gently close your eyes, or, if you'd prefer, simply gaze down in front of you with a soft focus.
2. As you sit here, notice where your body is making contact: your feet touching the floor, perhaps your back on the ground or in a chair...

3. Notice your breath. For the next five or so breaths, follow each inhale and exhale, feeling or imagining the breath flowing into and out of the body.
4. Now, shift your awareness from your breath to your body, and begin to scan through the body slowly from head to toe, observing any feelings or emotions that are present.
5. You might detect numerous feelings or emotions throughout the body. For the purpose of this exercise, choose one feeling or emotion to focus on for now.
6. Notice where in your body this emotion is located... so what part of the body is holding this feeling?
7. How big or small is the feeling?
8. Where are its edges? Are these edges sharp or soft?
9. Does the feeling have a colour? And if so, is the colour changing or remaining the same?
10. Is the feeling heavy or light?
11. Is the feeling moving or still?
12. Is the feeling hard or soft? Is it rough or smooth? If I could touch this feeling with my hand, what would its texture be like?
13. Now, if you were to give a name to this feeling or emotion, what would it be? Can you identify it? Can you give it a label?
14. If a name for this feeling doesn't come to mind, that's OK. Be kind to yourself, and continue to observe the feeling in the body with curiosity and without judgment, until the nature of this emotion becomes clearer to you.
15. Continue to get to know this emotion for another five or so minutes. When you feel that you have reached a level of comfort with and understanding of this feeling, gently open your eyes and bring your attention back to the room you are in.

## STEP 2

### Reflection

Take a sheet of white paper and write about your experience in Step 1 in as much detail as possible. Writing about your experience of this emotion will enhance your understanding and familiarity with it.



## ACTIVITY

### Decoding emotions by analysing speech, body, and face

The goal of this tool is to increase the mentor's ability to accurately perceive and understand the emotions of others.

The experience of an emotion is reflected by changes in speech, body, and face. For example, a person who experiences joy may speak loudly, make a lot of gestures, and use positive words like “beautiful” and “exciting”. An overview of the aspects of our speech, body, and face that are commonly influenced by our emotions:

1: FACIAL EXPRESSIONS	2: BODILY EXPRESSIONS	3: SPEECH
<p>Face is a dynamic canvas on which people display their emotional states, and from which they decode the emotional states of others. For instance, a person who is surprised may raise eyebrows, open eyes wide, and drop the jaw. When a single emotion emerges and the individual does not attempt to modify or conceal it, the facial expression typically last between 0.5 to 4 seconds and involve the entire face. The ability to correctly perceive and understand other people's emotions through facial expressions is associated with better personal and social effectiveness, and as such is a key aspect of optimal human functioning.</p>	<p>There are evidences suggesting that numerous emotions, including pride, shame, anger, fear, and disgust can be accurately deciphered from nonverbal bodily displays. Pride, for instance, is typically signalled by an expanded chest, upward head tilt, and arms akimbo—either spread out from the body with hands on hips or raised above the head with hands in fists. Bodily expressions of emotions are universal, generalizing across race and disparate cultures, being reliably recognized by young children, and being spontaneously displayed by the blind.</p>	<p>People use hundreds, if not thousands, of terms to express emotional states. In some cases, the words are used to point directly to the emotion one is experiencing. For instance, the experience of fear may be expressed by saying “I am afraid”. In other cases, figurative expressions are used naming the emotional state, relying on metaphors or analogies to express individual's subjective experience. In the English language, there are hundreds of linguistic expressions commonly used to talk about emotions. For example, “trembling like a leaf”, “feeling trapped”, and “hitting rock bottom”. Obviously, in order to accurately decode the emotion from language, one must know the meaning of the words or expressions used to communicate an emotion. Indeed, deciphering emotions in a non-native language is harder than doing so in one's own language. In addition to the verbal information in speech, emotions are also expressed by the non-verbal qualities of speech, such as pitch, volume, and rate of speech.</p>

## These three characteristics of emotional expression (facial, bodily, and verbal)

operate together rather than in isolation. For instance, focusing only on words to decode the emotion of another person is unlikely to be accurate, considering that the nonverbal cues modify, augment, illustrate, accentuate, and contradict the words they accompany. The integration of facial and bodily expressions is required to capture the full essence of an emotion.



### EXERCISE: reading other people's emotions

In this exercise, you are going to practice “reading” other people’s emotions. Reading others’ emotions involves analysing their facial expressions, as well as the way in which they are talking and moving. (See Appendix A for an overview of these three characteristics of emotional expression)

THE FACE DECODER	THE BODY DECODER	THE SPEECH DECODER
While the speaker shares his/her story, it is your job to carefully observe his/her facial expressions. For example, you may notice that the speaker’s eyes are wide open, lips are tensed, and cheeks are flushed. Write down every facial sign of the emotion that you notice during the speaker’s story in the scoring area below, and then make an informed guess as to what emotion the speaker chose to talk about.	While the speaker shares his/her story, it is your job to carefully observe his or her bodily expressions. For example, you may notice that the speaker has a slumped posture, downward gaze, and closed chest. Write down every bodily sign of the emotion that you notice during the speaker’s story in the scoring area below, and then make an informed guess as to what emotion the speaker chose to talk about.	While the speaker shares his/her story, it is your job to carefully observe his/her speech, including both what is being said (e.g., you may notice that the speaker is using signalling words and terms like “I felt trapped” or “I was on a high”) and how it is being said (i.e., is the speaker talking quickly, loudly or softly, and with a high or low pitch?).



### INVITE SOMEONE

(friend or mentee) to share his/her emotional story for five minutes. You should simply observe without responding to the speaker and write down the observations in the space provided in scorings.

To increase the difficulty of the exercise, you may also ask the speaker to select more specific description of emotions.

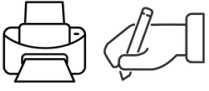
## List of Emotions

<b>Anger</b>	fury, outrage, wrath, irritability, hostility, resentment, violence
<b>Sadness</b>	grief, sorrow, gloom, melancholy, despair, loneliness, depression
<b>Fear</b>	anxiety, apprehension, nervousness, dread, fright, panic
<b>Joy</b>	enjoyment, happiness, relief, bliss, delight, pride, thrill, ecstasy
<b>Interest</b>	acceptance, friendliness, trust, kindness, affection, love, devotion
<b>Surprise</b>	shock, astonishment, amazement, astound, wonder
<b>Disgust</b>	contempt, disdain, scorn, aversion, distaste, revulsion
<b>Shame</b>	guilt, embarrassment, chagrin, remorse, regret, contrition



### WRITE DOWN

every verbal sign of the emotion that you notice during the speaker's story in the scoring area below, and then make an informed guess as to what emotion the speaker chose to talk about.



SCORING							
THE FACE DECODER		THE BODY DECODER			THE SPEECH DECODER		
Eyes		Head		Words			
Eyelids		Shoulders		Pitch			
Eyebrows		Chest		Volume			
Nostrils		Arms		Rate of speech			
Mouth		Hands		Voice timbre			
Lips		Legs		Other			
Other		Other		The speaker's emotion is:			
The speaker's emotion is:		The speaker's emotion is:					



## ACTIVITY

### Self-Awareness – Strength Worksheet

This worksheet of enhancing your self-awareness comes from Florida State University.

It starts with an amazing point that states: It's hard to make changes to yourself when you aren't sure where to start! Enhancing your self-awareness will help you figure out what your strengths are, where your EQ competency levels lie, and where you should focus your self-improvement efforts.

The worksheet lists 30 strengths or character traits that you might feel are strengths or areas for you to improve.

On one side, there is space to identify three strengths you have and, on the other, there is space to identify three traits you would like to work on.

If you think of any strength or an area you'd like to improve that is not included on the list, add it in any way. Your list should be personalized to you, so add and edit what you need!

### Self-awareness activity

Before you can make changes in yourself, you have to know what there is to work with. Becoming self-aware is about the process of understanding yourself. We all have strengths and limitations. Self-awareness can be developed, and identifying your strengths and weaknesses can help with this development. Spend some time recognizing areas you need to develop and intentionally make an effort to develop or strengthen than aspects of yourself.

Choose three strengths for yourself, and three you would like to improve on. If you don't see a trait listed here, feel free to write your own! Once you've chosen traits that need improving, think and describe how to attempt improving these traits.



creative, confident, focused, caring, goal-oriented, happy, honest, sensitive, doesn't give up, eager to learn, open-minded, imaginative, hopeful, calm, striving, fair, loyal, forgiving, passionate, positive, kind, funny, leader, patient, curious, spiritual, humble, supportive, dependable, hard-working

## STRENGTHS

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_



## WOULD LIKE TO IMPROVE

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Learning and practicing EI can be done effectively in a group setting or in individual coaching. Exercises may begin with self-assessment, and then cover four key emotional skills:

- ✓ Self-awareness
- ✓ Self-management
- ✓ Social awareness
- ✓ Relationship management

As individuals explore their own EI capabilities, they can work on specific ways to apply EI skills in the mentoring. After learning EI skills, practice them. When you begin developing new emotional intelligence skills, you need to practice new behaviours long enough to make them habitual. The brain loves efficiency, and it will only provide the neuronal plasticity needed to support new behaviour when you repeat that behaviour over and over again. Any situation in which you have a human contact is a practice zone for EI.



## Questions to check yourself

1. Why emotional intelligence is so important in communication between the mentor and the mentee?
2. How everyone can exercise, use, and apply emotional intelligence?
3. How was it to do the mentioned activities? Which aspects were challenging?
4. What is your take-home message?



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# 4. MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

## Introduction

In this chapter we:

- Analyse the mentoring relationship from the mentor's and the mentee's perspective
- Illustrate the opportunities that digital technology can offer in business mentoring (e-mentoring)
- Argue the mind-set of a mentor

## Key concept

- Coaching
- Digital technology: e-mentoring, online mentoring
- Soft-skills
- Developers: in organisational socialisation, the developers are the agents who provide career-related and/or psychological support to a protégé

## 4.1. THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP FROM THE MENTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

This section illustrates the various aspects of mentoring relationship from the mentor's viewpoint highlighting the main mentor skills, characteristics, and models.

### The business mentoring relationship

The topic of business mentoring has received much research attention in recent years.

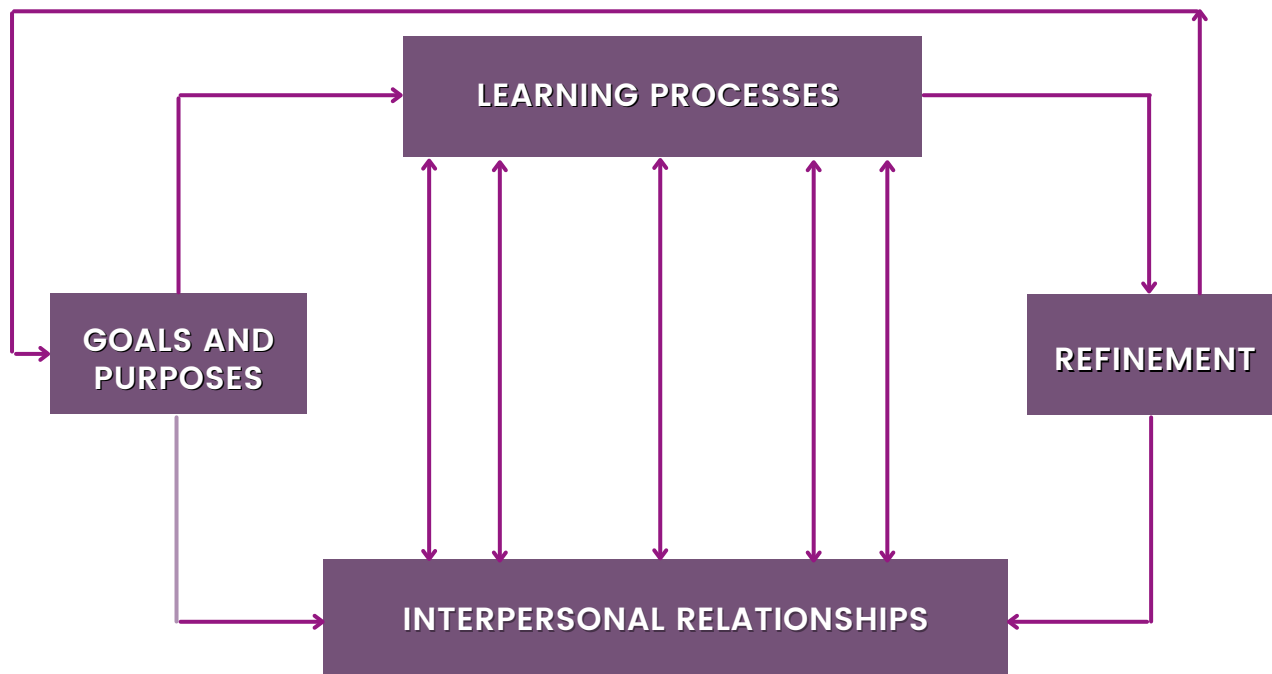
Mentoring reflects the relationship between two subjects, usually a senior person and a younger one.

The mentoring relationship is distinguished from other organizational relationships, such as supervising, and involves individuals that may or may not work together.

## Mentoring skills

Usually, mentoring aims at helping someone to devise suitable solutions or suggest proven methodology to tackle and overcome something.

Figure 4.1. spotlights the mentoring process.



**Fig. 4.1. The mentoring process**  
(own source)

The mentors share their experience, ideas, and knowledge with the mentees advising them on how to get clear on the actions they would like to take.

An important mentor's skill is active listening. It is the ability to listen to the mentee not for socializing but understand their story and the issues they want to address.

The mentor should give their attention in order to:

- ✓ Bring out the mentee's issue.
- ✓ Listen to and understand the opinions, assumptions, and facts reported by the mentee.
- ✓ ensure that the mentee feels heard and their issue is looked at.

Moreover, the mentor should know the business context of the mentee and business terms used by them. Showing the mastery of the business context is useful and gives credibility to the mentor.

To this end, an overview of the business context is a prerequisite of mentoring. Finally, the mentor should adopt a mentoring type and model adapting them to the operative context.

## Mentoring types and models

The literature indicates two main types of mentoring (Mijares, Baxley & Bond, 2013):

- ✓ **Formal mentoring:** this type of mentoring is characterized by clear guidelines and well defined objectives, and usually take place on a one-to-one basis.
- ✓ **Informal mentoring:** this type of mentoring is characterized by individuals (either the mentor or mentee) making the selection on their own. It much depends on the mentors discretion and interest in the mentee.

The most common mentoring models are:

- ✓ **One-on-one mentoring.** Probably, it is the most popular mentoring model and is based on a relationship between one mentor and one mentee.
- ✓ **Group mentoring.** A mentor works with 4-6 mentees at one time. The group can meet once or twice a month to discuss various topics. Group mentoring is limited by the difficulty of scheduling meetings for the entire group and the lack of personal relationship that most people prefer, but has the advantage of providing an opportunity for individuals to discuss situations with people that have similar problems.
- ✓ **Training-based mentoring.** It is directly tied to a training program. A mentor is assigned to a mentee to help that person develop the specific skills being taught in the program. This type of mentoring is limited because it only focuses on the subject at hand and does not seek to help the mentee develop a broader set of skills.
- ✓ **E-mentoring.** It is the merger of mentoring with electronic communications and links mentors with mentees independent of geography or scheduling constraints.
- ✓ **Resource-Based Mentoring.** It is fairly similar to one-on-one mentoring. The most important difference is that the mentors and mentees are not interviewed and matched by the person in charge of the program. The mentors agree to have their names added to a list that the mentees are able to choose from.

## Needs assessment and needs analysis

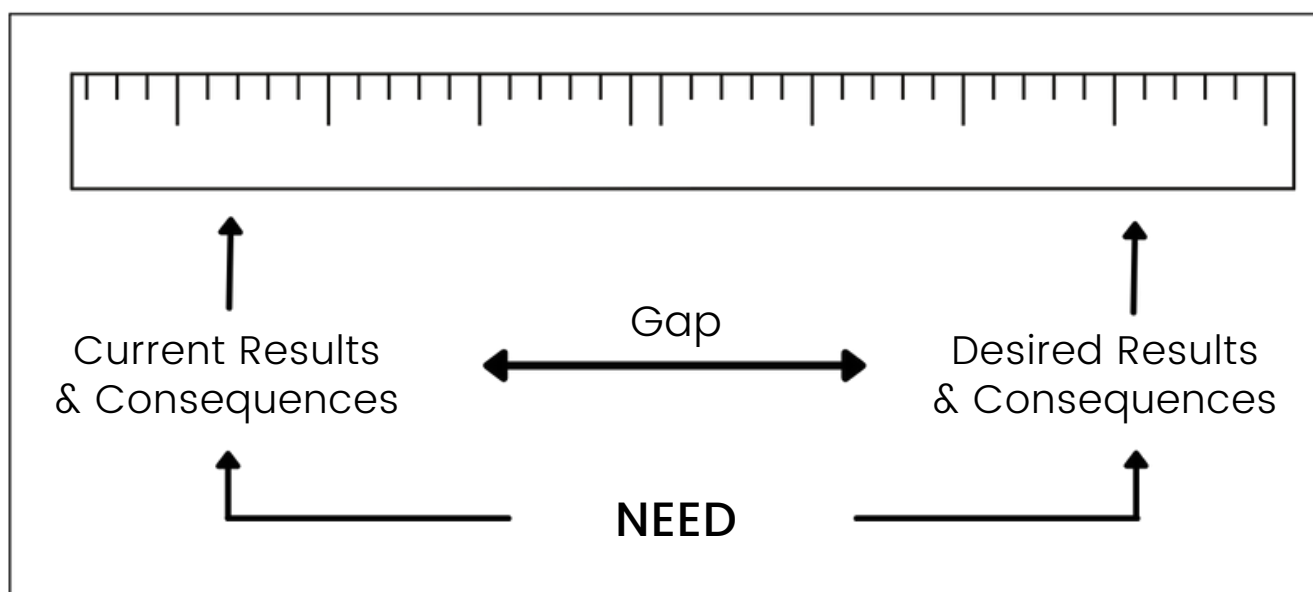
To give their support, a mentor has to know the mentee's context and needs. Needs assessment and needs analysis are the first steps of a mentoring action.

They consist of identifying the issues to be solved. According to Kaufman, needs assessment should ensure that the intervention, once selected, is "related to basic gaps and problems, not just to the obvious symptoms or to problems poorly defined" (Kaufman, 1979).

Kaufman indicates three main steps in the needs analysis:

- ✓ Identify gaps between current results and desired ones.
- ✓ Place the gaps in results (needs) in priority order.
- ✓ Select the most importance ones to be addressed.

Figure 4.2. synthetizes the concept of the needs analysis.



**Fig. 4.2. The needs analysis concept**

(source: Kaufman, Rojas & Mayer, 1993)

## Characteristics of a mentor

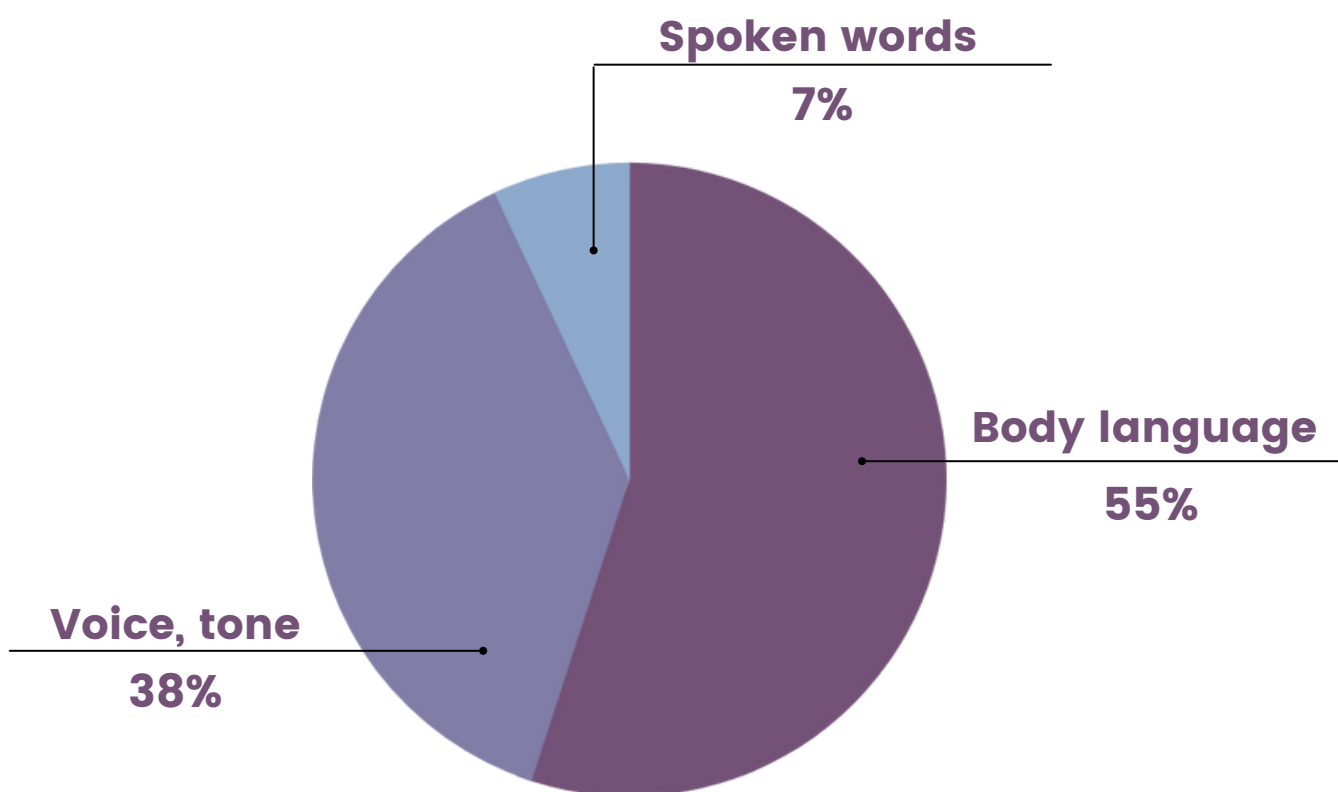
Some of the most common attributes of a mentor are (Allen, 2007)

- ✓ Communication skills
- ✓ Patience
- ✓ Knowledge of the organizational context
- ✓ Ability to understand others

It has been observed that the formal mentors need sharper abilities than the mentors in informal mentoring since they have to rapidly diagnose the mentee's strengths and weaknesses (Allen, 2007).

An effective mentor should take into account that communication is verbal and nonverbal.

The study by Albert Mehrabian (1981) is famous for the rule of 7%-38%-55%. Mehrabian finds that, in any communication scenario, 7% of information is received through the words spoken, 38% - through the tone of voice, and 55% - through bodily movements (Figure 4.3.). According to his study, 93% of what is communicated is done through nonverbal communication.



**Fig. 4.3. Elements of communication**  
(source: Mehrabian, 1981)

## 4.2. THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP FROM THE MENTEE'S PERSPECTIVE

In this paragraph, the mentees expectations and preferences are highlighted. Indeed, the personality characteristics of the mentees can influence the mentoring relationships.

### The mentee characteristics

The success of a mentoring intervention can be highly tied to the mentee characteristics.

It has been observed that stronger evidence exists that matching mentors and mentees based on their interests and values contributes positively to the effectiveness of a mentoring relationship (Armitage, Heyes, O'Leary, Tarrega & Taylor-Collins, 2020).

The research has identified a set of personality characteristics that outline a mentee (Bakar, 2016; Bozionelos, 2004; Day & Allen, 2004; DeWit, DuBois, Erdem, Larose & Lipman, 2016):

- ✓ Extraversion
- ✓ Agreeableness
- ✓ Openness to experience
- ✓ Career motivation
- ✓ Self-monitoring
- ✓ Self-esteem
- ✓ Work locus of control

Work locus of control is considered a personality variable that reflects the person's beliefs about whether they or external forces are in control in a more general sense (Spector, Sanchez, Siu, Salgado, & Ma, 2004). Individuals who believe they are in control are called internals, and people who believe that external forces (luck, fate, or powerful others) are in control are called externals.

### The mentee expectations

The primary expectation of a mentee is that the mentor will provide the mentee with opportunities that will help their professional development.

However, to meet the expectations of the mentees is a difficult goal to achieve.

It can occur that the program may not address programmatic expectations of the mentees prior to the mentoring relationship. As a consequence, if the program doesn't address the mentee's predispositions and expectations, the compatibility between the mentees and the mentors may not be ensured, potentially leading to unproductive mentoring relationships (Taylor & Black, 2018).

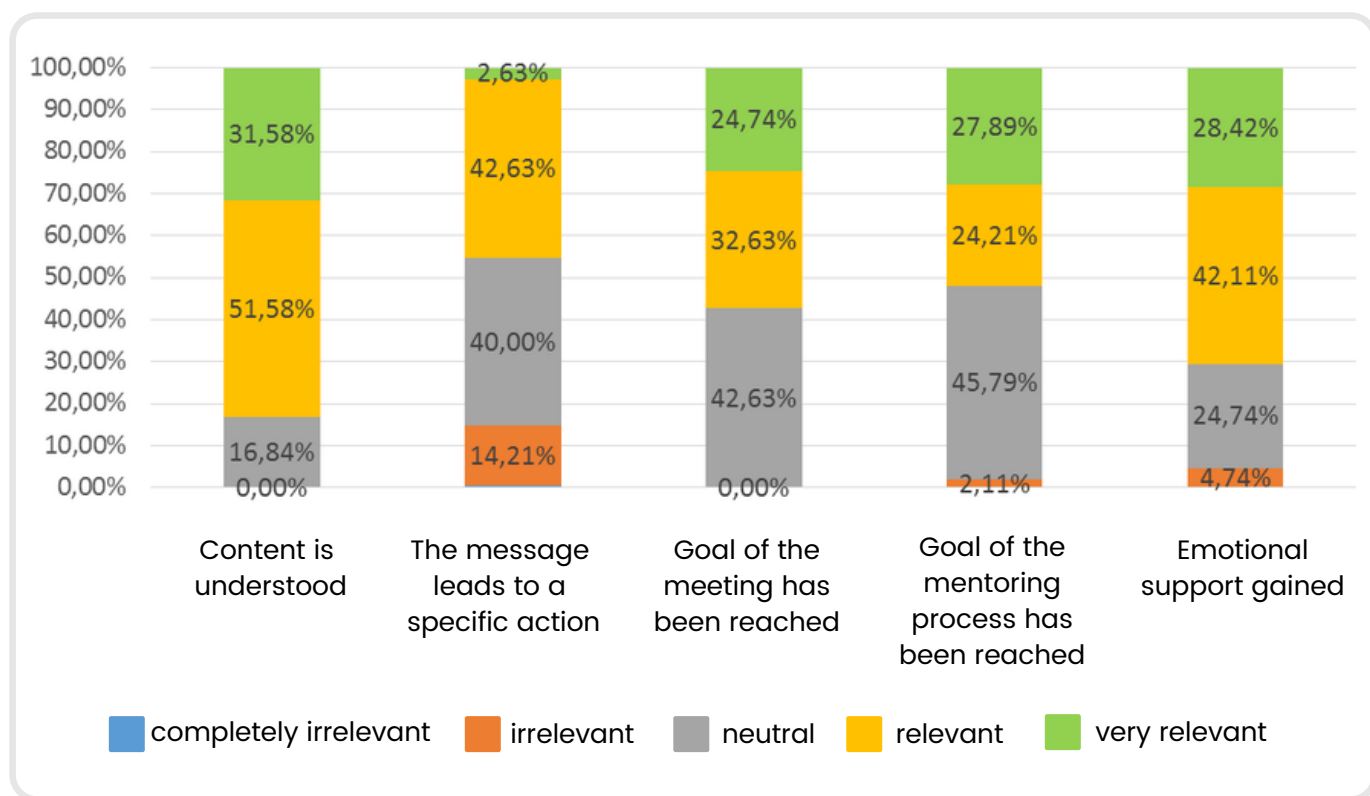
### Some findings from a survey

In the following paragraphs, some findings related to the mentees are presented. These findings are the results of the survey based on the structured interviews of a sample of Italian mentors and mentees in March-April 2020.

The respondents - 22 male and 26 female, 20 - 30 years old - with various work experience, including 74% of two years work experience and 16% of three-five years work experience. All the mentees surveyed have a professional position - 74% in social enterprises, and 26% in insurance companies.

### Importance of communication effectiveness

The mentees' evaluation of communication effectiveness is shown in Graph 1. "Contents understanding" (83.16%) and "Emotional support gained" (60,53%) have been considered as the most crucial aspects.



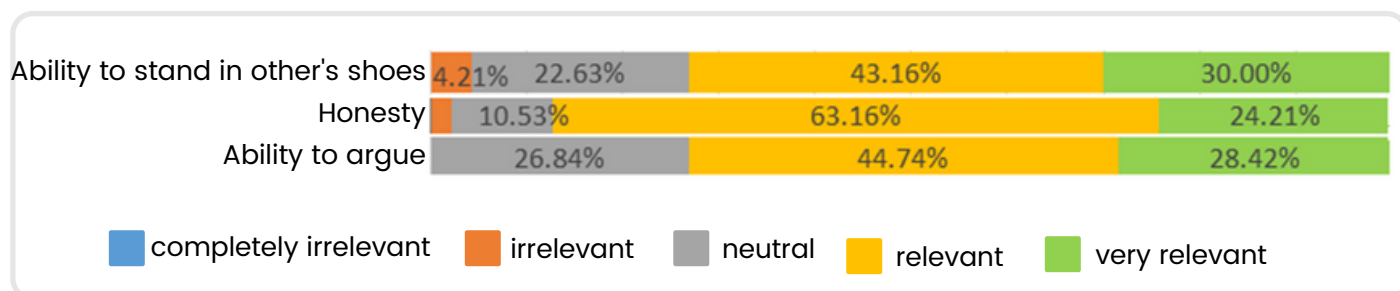
**Graph 1. The mentees' view on communication effectiveness**  
(own source)



## Importance of emotional-relational aspects

The level of importance of emotional-rational aspects assessed by the mentees show that the highest percentages of relevant and very relevant factors are:

- “Ability to stand in other's shoes” (73.16%)
- “Honesty” (87.37%)
- “Ability to argue” (73.16%)



**Graph 2. The most important emotional-relational aspects**  
(own source)

## 4.3. E-MENTORING

The advances in digital technology (DT) that have occurred over the past 20 years have resulted in the development of electronic relationship management through internet (Stone & Dulebohn, 2013). Computer-mediated relationships and social media have broken down geographical barriers, allowing communication and interpersonal relationships in real time regardless of distance. These advances have also positively impacted the mentoring process through a DT-mediated form of mentoring named e-mentoring.

In fact, e-mentoring has emerged as a solution of some challenges that very often occur during the traditional mentoring such as lack of time, geographical distance, professional and occupational complexity that make face-to-face interaction between the mentor and the mentee difficult to manage.

### E-mentoring definition

E-mentoring - also known as telementoring, cybermentoring, virtual mentoring, online mentoring, internet mentoring, computer-mediated mentoring, and email mentoring (Adams & Crews, 2004) - first appeared at the end of the 1990s and was referred to as the use of both digital asynchronous and synchronous means to communicate and support a mentoring relationship.

E-mentoring is a process during which the mentors help their protégés via electronic communication channels, such as email, text, social media, messaging applications, or computer platforms in several areas such as management support, leadership, communication, training, etc.

Traditional mentoring and e-mentoring primarily differ in respect to the mode of communication: traditional face-to-face mentoring occurs in relationships where the mentors and protégés are physically present and interact synchronously; e-mentoring involves the mentors and protégés communicating electronically rather than in person (Neely, Cotton, & Neely, 2017; Punyanunt-Carter & Hernandez, 2011).

In a short time, the e-mentoring was considered even more effective than traditional mentoring by integrating email and DT tools into face-to-face communication to make the relationships more successful (Purcell, 2004).

Already in 2007, Ensher and Murphy showed that the computer-mediated communication involved all the areas of mentoring programs in business and education fields (i.e. the corporate-sponsored programs for the employees and students, entrepreneurs, health care, education, public relations professionals in fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics).

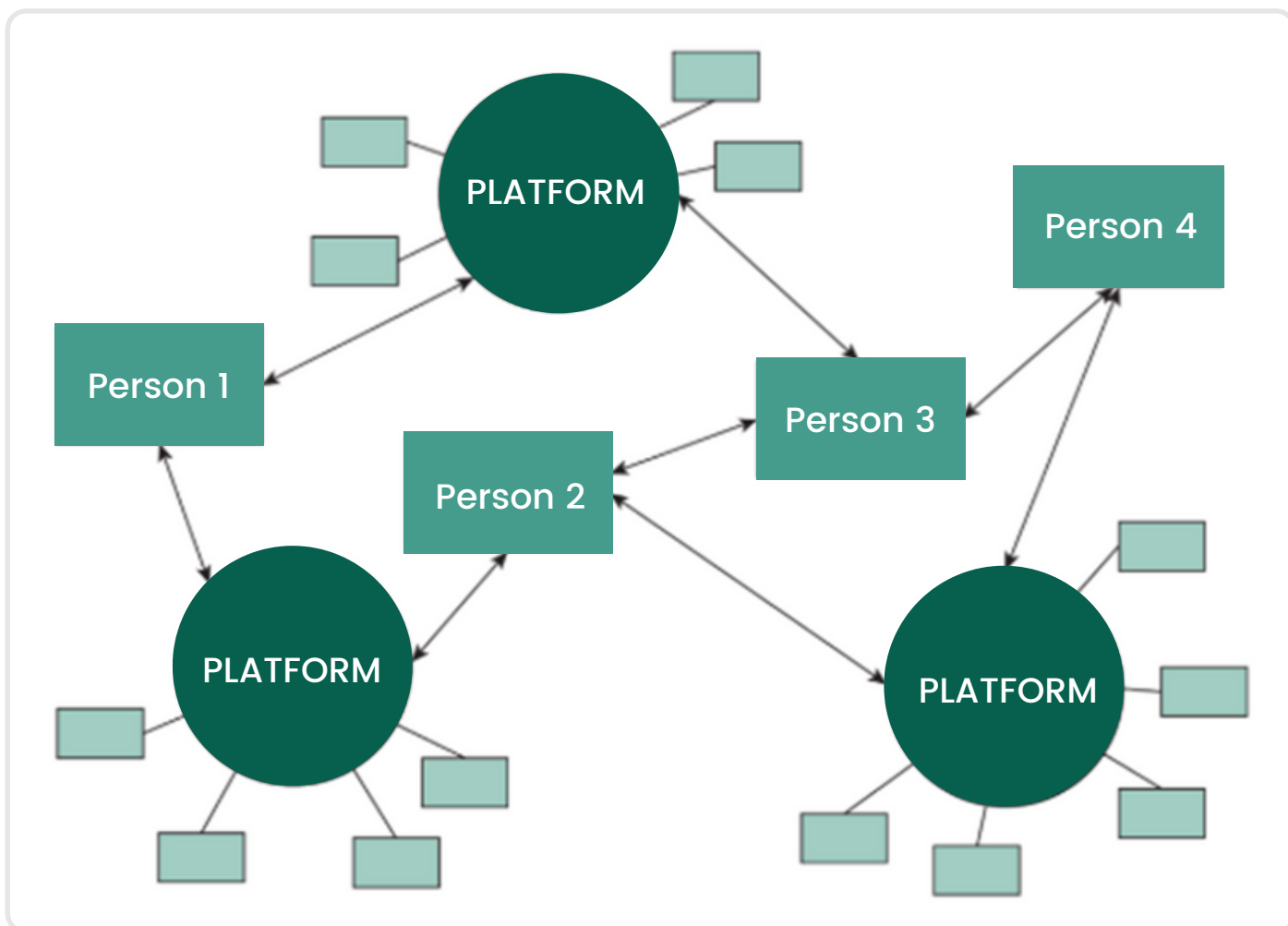
Currently, the further evolution in DT are opening up new perspectives for the application of the e-mentoring in social media through smartphones such as mentoring based on mobile peer groups (Klier, Klier, Thiel and Agarwal, 2019).

Moreover, in the recent period, the e-mentoring has become not only the tool to provide the mentoring support activity at distance, but it is extended to the use of AI to implement virtual assistants or consultants that provide the advice in an online environment: online mentoring (Klamma et al., 2020; Toala, Durães and Novais, 2019). This online learning environment includes the features based on artificial intelligence algorithms designed on the mentor-like-features to support the students in their professional careers (Kravčík, Schmid & Igel, 2019).

## **E-mentoring communications**

In the last decades, the developments of DT have transformed the way people communicate. Any sort of daily communication now takes place not only as face-to-face interactions, but as well involves smart devices, and virtual agents. These transformations are changing the traditional mass communication model (Shannon and Weaver, 1948) where the source (sender) produces a message that is encoded in media, transmitted through a channel, decoded and received by a receiver providing feedback.

Since online communication involves a network of platforms and users, it may not be explained by a single-channel linear process (Humphreys, 2016). In fact, as shown in Figure 4, the users can communicate both directly and through platforms. Therefore, the content of communication doesn't flow from the sender to the receiver following one linear direction - any user in the network can be sender and receiver, since the users are essentially nodes in a network and can interact to build, comment, interpret, or modify every unit of communication content in the network (Figure 4.4.).



**Fig. 4.4. The social media communication model**  
(source: Humphreys, 2016)

### E-mentoring benefits

Today, face-to-face meetings cannot always be easily conducted as the time and costs of communication can be too high, since the companies are often located in different countries that physically can be reached only through lengthy and expensive journeys. Consequently, more and more frequently, the company mentoring relationship takes place through online communication (Nigri, Michelini, & Grieco, 2017).

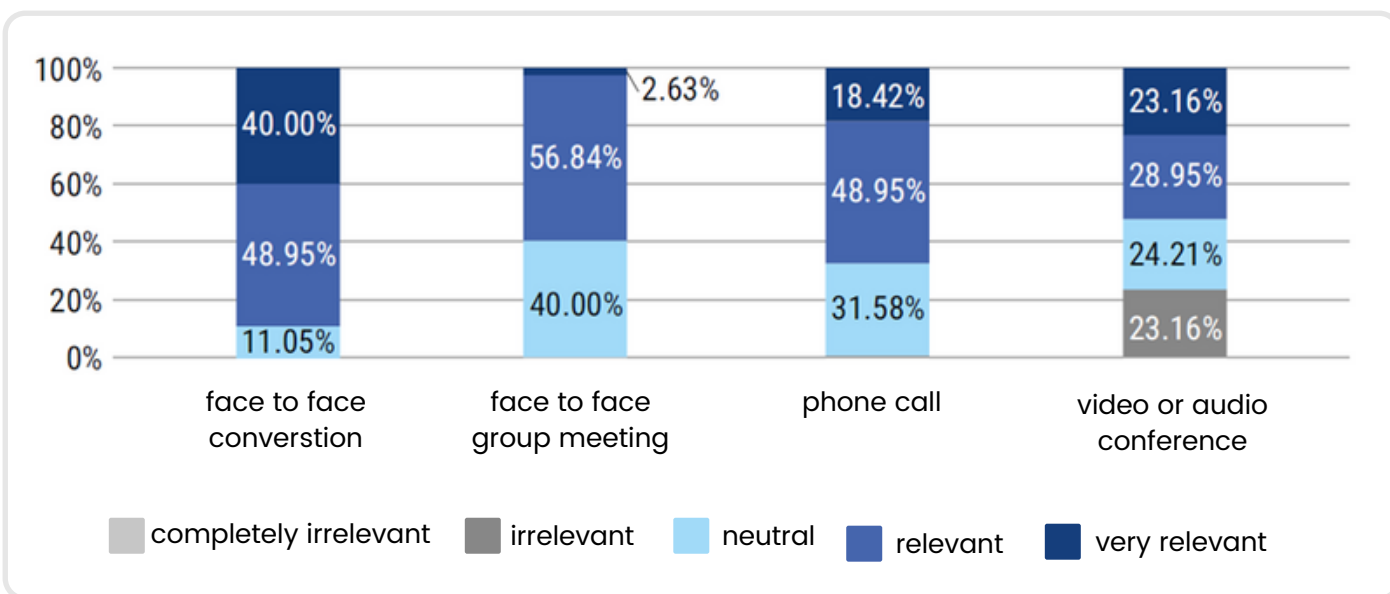
Virtual relationships and multi-participant interactions have specific advantages. For example, e-mentoring has the advantage since the relationship can be maintained regardless of people movements, it can involve simultaneously several subjects, it allows to share data, documents, and multimedia contents in real-time.

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic crisis in 2020 has also increased the need to reduce face-to-face meetings privileging online and remote communications. Hence, the popularity of online mentoring might increase in the near future.

Simultaneously, the literature analyses many advantages of mentoring in the virtual environment, including development of trust, self-motivation, flexibility, communication skills, and technological skills (Colky and Young, 2006). At the same time, it is noted that the straightforward communication methods should be defined to avoid adverse effects of e-mentoring relationship (Scigliano, 2015).

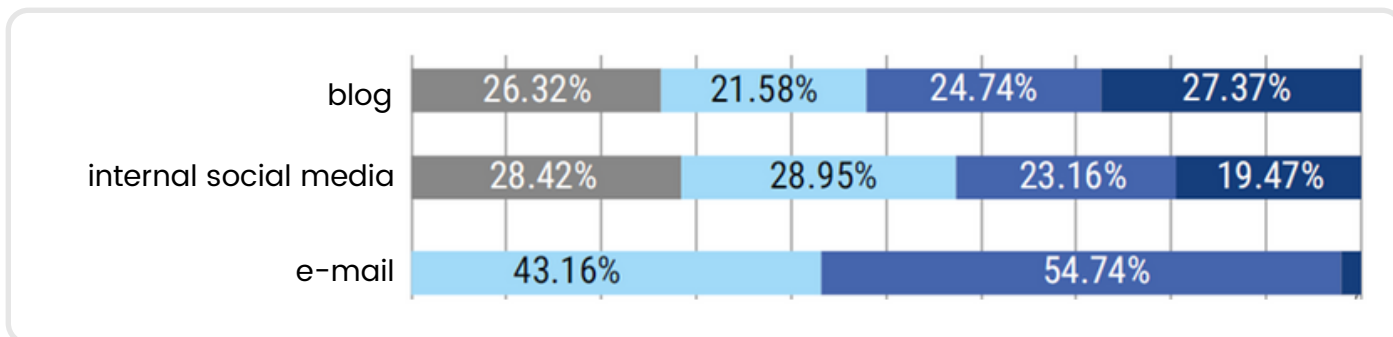
### Relevance of communication channels and tools

Some findings on the relevance of the channels and tools of mentoring communication are reported in the survey mentioned in Section 4.2. Although the mentees consider "face-to-face conversation" (88.95%) and "phone call" (67.37%) to be the most important channels in mentoring communication, still, "video or audio conference" is considered relevant and very relevant as well (52.11%).



**Graph 3. Relevance of communication tools in the mentoring activity**  
(own source)

Furthermore, Graph 4 shows that online written mentoring communication tools such “email” (54,74%), “blog” (52.11%), and “internal social media” (42.63%) are considered relevant or very relevant by about a half of the respondents involved in the survey.



**Graph 4. Relevance of written mentoring communication tools**  
(own source)

## 4.4. MENTORING MINDSET

Preparing young people for effective access to work requires the development of appropriate "mindset" for facing and coping with the current social challenges and evolution (technological, organizational, political, and cultural changes), and developing personal characteristics such as adaptability, flexibility, and above all - availability for continuous learning (Savickas, 1997; Savickas et al. 2012; Hartung & Cadaret 2017)

Mindsets are series of self-perceptions or beliefs that people have about themselves (Dweck, 2006). They are a crucial part of the personality. Believing to be either "intelligent" or "unintelligent", to be "a good teacher", "a good friend," or "a bad parent" are examples of mindsets.

These beliefs influence the individual's way of thinking and behaviour, impacting the person's mental attitude, mood, and self-esteem (Waldroo & Butlerp 2000; Dweck 2006; Ricci 2013). People can be aware or unaware of their mindsets. Nevertheless, they may have profound effects on several areas of individual life such as relationships, business, sports, and, in general, on whole personal development and wellbeing.

This Section deepens the conceptualization of mindset and its importance in mentoring practices.

## Mindset definition and model

Being smart and talented does not necessarily lead to success. For example, brilliant students may avoid things that appear to be difficult, dislike effort, and be discouraged in coping difficulties. Conversely, less brilliant students could be very tenacious, resilient, persistent when tasks get tough, and they may achieve more than the society expects from them. This shows that mentality matters more than intelligence. Being mastery-oriented is about having "the right mindset" (Goleman 1996; McGrath & MacMillan, 2000; Dweck, 2006).

The mindset concept has been developed by Dweck (2006). It centres on the distinction between "fixed" and "growth" mindsets.

**FIXED MINDSET.** People with the fixed mindset tend to believe in the concept of innate talent, something that can be inherited only at birth or once and for all in the very first years of childhood. People who have this belief tend to experience any difficulty or situation that requires performance as a hard competition in which they must demonstrate that they have talent. Every situation is experienced as exposure to the others' judgment: Will I be successful or will I fail? Will I look like a fool or will I be able to look smart? Will I be accepted or rejected? Will I win or lose?

If talent is innate and every performance is a test of talent, the failure is the worst scenario that individuals with a fixed mindset can imagine. Failing a task proves that they have no talent. If one has no talent, they cannot do anything about it. This belief generates two main types of consequences:

- ✓ The tendency to avoid challenges - faced with obstacles, people with a "static mentality" tend to flee, to get defensive, to give up easily in order to avoid the risk to prove that they are not talented.
- ✓ The negative evaluation of the effort to achieve a goal - if one has to make an effort to perform something, they have no talent.

Therefore, it is not surprising that people with a fixed mindset tend to stabilize early and take no risk to realize their full potential.

Paradoxically, the more person tries to do well, the more they considers themselves incapable.

**GROWTH MINDSET.** People with the growth mindset are oriented towards improvement and personal development. An individual who believes that the personal qualities can be cultivated through experience believes that each individual's human potential cannot be known a priori but only through practice and learning. According to the growth mindset, we all can change and improve if we want to.

This type of individuals does not include "talents", but profiles strongly oriented towards learning:

- ✓ The desire to learn is the most evident characteristic of the growth mindset – challenges are not seen as risky tests that can reveal one's inadequacy, but as the learning opportunities.
- ✓ Making mistakes means discovering something new, which was previously unknown; fatigue and effort are necessary for the continuous striving for improvement; criticism is valuable advice; the success of others is an example to follow.

Failure is always a harsh reality to deal with. However, while people with the fixed mindset accept that failure definitively defines them as failures, people with the growth mindset consider failure as an episode to be managed in that situation. Failure is an event to overcome and to learn from; it is not an event that labels the person forever, it is situation to manage.

Usually, people do not possess exclusively one of the two types of mindsets, but they have both. The context of the individual's everyday life, such as family and work, are decisive in forming a prevalent mindset type.

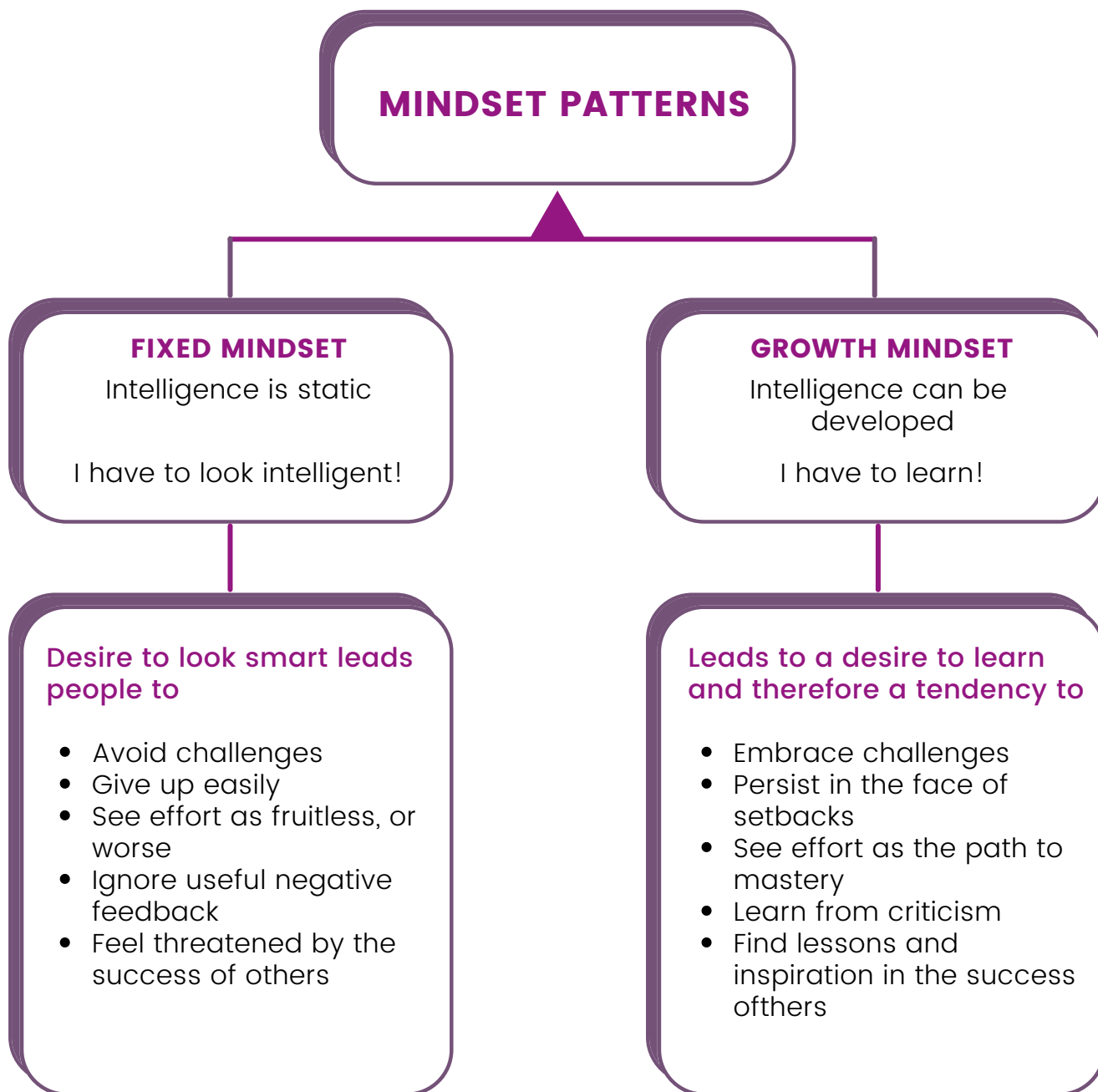
Figure 4.5. illustrates Dweck's mindset model with two mindset patterns and their main characteristics (Stoycheva and Ruskov, 2015).

## Importance of mindset in mentoring

Individual mindset is therefore a crucial variable in mentoring practices. On the one hand, the development or enhancement of the growth mindset in the mentees should be a fundamental objective of any mentoring activity, on the other hand, the development of a "mentoring mindset" is an indispensable requirement for the mentors to become masterful in their task. The mentor mindset could be characterized by the following primary attitudes:

- ✓ **Curiosity:** the mentor believes that the mentee is an expert of their own life, and they expect to learn about them what makes them become better. The mentor does not make assumptions, but they ask questions.
- ✓ **Humility:** the mentor assumes that they still have a lot to learn and do not place themselves in a position of superiority.
- ✓ **Respect and value of differences:** the mentor believes that they can have a perfectly functional relationship with someone who is quite different in many ways, and that these differences could become an opportunity of cultural enrichment and learning.

At the same time, the mentoring practice should be based on the use of the strategies aimed at the growth mindset development in the mentee. These can help them in making creative changes in their life in order to achieve success and personal satisfaction.



**Fig. 4.5. Mindset patterns: main characteristics of the fixed and the growth mindset**

(source: Stoycheva and Ruskov, 2015)



## Developing the growth mindset

Changing one's mindset from the fixed perspective to the growth mindset may seem daunting, however, by taking little steps any person (at any age) can develop the growth mindset.

Stoycheva and Ruskov (2015) identify the following actions that the mentor or the mentee themselves should implement in order to develop the growth mindset:

- ✓ **Focus on efforts** and not on the abilities.
- ✓ **Value effort:** effort over time is the key to outstanding achievement.
- ✓ **Relish a challenge:** the mentor should transmit the joy of confronting a challenge and of struggling to find strategies that work.
- ✓ **Focus on and value learning:** sustained effort over time is the key to achieve important outcomes.
- ✓ **Use a best mix combination** of profit and loss, considering them a mere performance index, not a sign of intelligence or worth.
- ✓ **Make clear that the performance reflects the current skills and efforts**, not their intelligence or worth.
- ✓ **Teaching them how to cope with disappointing performance** by planning for new strategies and more effort, providing them with suitable learning support.

## Tips for the mentor and the mentee

Below, some strategies the mentors can use with their mentee to encourage the growth mindset are indicated:

- Try to rephrase the fixed mindset statements into the growth mindset statements, encourage the mentee not to get hung up on the outcome.
- Encourage the mentee to create opportunities to have an abundance of various experiences and opportunities to choose:
  - ✓ Using the word "yet" can be a simple way to encourage the growth mindset.
- Model strategies referring to the Social Theory Model (Bandura 1977, 1986):
  - ✓ Using yourself the growth mindset.

- ✓ Share personal experiences as a way to show how you personally overcame a challenge.
- ✓ Model problem-solving strategies.

- Gradually expose practices to the new experiences agreed with the mentee.
- Use cognitive restructuring of dysfunctional thoughts (Beck, 1996, 2011; Mills, Reiss, & Dombeck, 2008) as shown in Table 4.1.

## Examples of cognitive restructuring of dysfunctional thoughts

(own source)

**Table 4.1.**

FROM	TO
I don't be able to do this	I can't do this yet, but I'm working on it
I got it all wrong	I'm going to learn what it's necessary and I will try it
I can't work in that sector	How can I approach differently this issue
I failed! Everyone will think that I'm a dumb	Mistakes help me to grow up



### ACTIVITY

1. What is your personal definition of success? Write it down in two or three sentences.
2. What is for you the best way to communicate with others? Write it down explaining the reasons of your opinion.



### Questions to check yourself

1. What communication skills are important for the mentor?
2. What is the difference between mentoring and coaching?
3. What are the advantages of online environment and DT in mentoring activities?
4. How can one become a business mentor?

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# 5. EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AND TOOLS OF MENTORING IN BUSINESS

## Introduction

In this chapter we will:

- Discuss what are communication channels and tools
- Identify what are the channels and means of verbal communication
- Discuss how to choose effective communication channels and tools
- explore what makes body language important in the mentoring process

## Key concept

**Communication channel** - type of media that is used to transfer a message from one person to another.

**Communication tool** - a mean that supports a community/communicators in discussing topics of common interest.

**Verbal communication** - the use of sounds and words to express yourself, especially in contrast to using gestures or mannerisms (non-verbal communication).

**Written communication** - any type of interaction that makes use of the written word.

**Electronic communication** - a general term that embraces all kinds of computer or technology-mediated communication in which individuals exchange messages with others, either individually or in groups.

**Non-verbal communication** - the transfer of information through the use of body language, including eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, and more.

## 5.1. COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AND TOOLS

Communication between the business mentor and the mentee is technically the same as any other communication between two interlocutors, i.e. any communication involves a call for communication and a response through a particular communication channel (Sanina et al., 2017).

According to the classical definition, a communication channel is a technical (or formal) side of a communication process that allows information to be transmitted from the sender to the receiver and vice versa. Fiske (2002) defines a channel even more simply: as the physical means by which a signal (i.e., information) is transmitted.

Fiske (2002) argues that means are based on the technical and physical ways in which a message is converted into a signal suitable for transmission through a channel. The human voice is an instrument; broadcasting technology makes radio and television means. The technological or physical characteristics of the means depend on the nature of the channels suitable for their use. And these features of the tools determine the range of codes they can transmit. Fiske (2002) suggests to divide the tools into three main categories (see Table 5.1.).

## Categories of communication tools (own source)

**Table 5.1.**

CATEGORIES	TOOL	DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE
I. Presentation tools - presentation	Voice (intonation, pauses, logical accents) Face Body	Uses spoken words, expressions, gestures or similar languages. The involvement of a communicator is required as they are a tool. Limited by time and place
II. Representative - representative, depicting	Books Pictures Photos Writing Architecture Interior, etc.	Uses cultural and aesthetic conventions to create certain "texts". They are depicting, creative, create the text that can capture Category I tools. Exists independently of the communicator. They "produce" communication products.
III. Mechanical	Phone Radio Television Internet	Transferors of Category I and Category II tools. Uses engineered channels, making them more technologically constrained.

The information summarized in Table 1 shows that:

- ✓ The main mean of communication is the speaker – a person.
- ✓ The main channels are the human voice and body, and mechanical means.

Based on these observations, oral and written communication, non-verbal communication, and their channels and tools are discussed further.

## 5.2. VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Verbal communication (oral communication) can be private or public. Depending on how many people communicate and how they communicate, verbal communication is divided into 5 types (Bradley, 1991): mass, organized, group, interpersonal, and personal. Table 5.2. shows that public speaking is used in mass, organized, partly in group communication, and private speaking is used in interpersonal and personal communication. Personal communication is most often used for counselling.

### The nature of speech in different types of communication

(Compiled by the authors, based on Bradley, 1991)

**Table 5.2.**

Type of communication	Purpose of the communication process	Number of people	Nature of speech
<b>Mass</b>	A random event TV, Radio The Internet	Unlimited or a crowd	Public monologue speaking
<b>Organized</b>	A lesson A lecture A meeting	Preset for a specific group of participants (from 8-10 to 150)	Public monologue speaking Sometimes simulated discussion
<b>Group</b>	Aims to resolve a problem	5-8 people	Public monologue speaking The debate prevails
<b>Interpersonal</b>	Sharing experience	2-3 people	Private speaking
<b>Personal</b>	Aims are varied	2 people	Private speaking

After having reviewed the categories of means of communication and the nature of speaking in them, the following channels of oral communication, most commonly used in consultations, can be distinguished: **personal conversation, video conferencing, telephone conversation.**

## **Personal conversation**

A manager working in the business sector has a lot of experience to speak in public at various meetings, preparing and giving public speeches, presentations of innovations, ideas, products, reports. Such a business representative has a lot of private speaking experience when communicating orally over the phone, in person, but has little or no consulting experience. It is important for a business mentor to make effective use of the available public and private speaking experience in advising a start-up entrepreneur who intends to start or has just started a business.

Although the private speech on which the consultation is based has three elements - clear structure, correct language and presentation of the content - counselling is not just a simple private conversation, it has very clear content, the language must be correct and the structure may change during the conversation. Such a conversation reminds more of a dialogue. It can be called a public conversation or an interview.

**Interview.** The purpose of such a conversation is different than in a private conversation, its aim is to reveal the personality of the communication partner or to show the attitude of that personality towards the problem. Sometimes both of these goals are combined during interviews.

An interview is a very suitable form for counselling, as it can be prepared in advance, one can formulate questions, and provide a time and place acceptable to both parties. An important element of the interview is the emphasis on the safety and respect of the communication partner. Partner-like communication during the interview seems to emphasize the personality of the listener.

The forms of an interview: standardized (pre-considered wording of questions and their order), free (only the survey plan is created in advance and specific questions are formulated according to the situation), partially standardized (partly foreseeable methods and possible questions).

## **THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF A CONSULTATION**

- 1. Preparation for a consultation:**
  - ✓ Selection of questions. Open-ended questions are prepared based on the content of the conversation. They encourage the expression of more thoughts, ideas. Closed questions (answered "yes" or "no") are better to be avoided - they do not develop a conversation.



- ✓ Coordination of the time and duration of the consultation, place, technologies with the person being consulted.

**2.**

### **Preparation for a consultation:**

- ✓ Greetings and introduction.
- ✓ Adjustment of emotional tension with the communicator.
- ✓ Consultation process: naming the goal, asking questions and listening to answers, hearing questions and providing answers, generalization, anticipation of further actions.
- ✓ Farewell and wishes.

In the hope that a consultation will be effective and useful, it is important to keep in mind the importance of listening. Listening is one of the essential elements of effective communication. It is an active process.

If the importance of the individual components of communication were to be assessed on the basis of the time allotted to them, listening would take the priority. As many studies have shown, listening accounts for about 50% of the total communication time. Speaking is in the second place and takes up about 20–30% of the time; of course, reading and writing is also an integral part of communication.

Listening alone is a complex process in which we receive audio signals from the environment. Our brain has to decipher those signals, store them in memory for a while, interpret them, and respond to them. The key is not just to understand what one is talking about; we should also pay attention to the timbre of the voice and the emotions that are expressed along with the words. When we listen to another person, we also pay attention to nonverbal behaviour (see more in Section 5.3).

For many people, effective and active listening means the ability not to disturb the speaker too often. The following bad habits are possible: setting out own thoughts without fully understanding the information provided to us; intervention during short pauses as the speaker thinks what to say next. We need to have enough strength to allow someone else to have their say and not to be afraid of losing control of the conversation.

Active listening requires the following: eye contact, being at the same eye level, open standing, bending, voice consent, harmonization of feelings, paraphrasing, open-ended questions, summarization, recognition, and trust.

## Video conferencing

Video conferencing is a technology that allows people or groups of people in different places to communicate. It is a two-way video and audio communication, a convenient way to organize consultations, conferences, data exchange. For example, currently, the following video conferencing tools are most often used (in Lithuania): Zoom, Microsoft Teams, BigBlueButton, Google Meet, HANGOUT, ADOBE CONNECT, etc.

Modern video conferencing technologies not only transmit high-quality video and audio, but at the same time allow you to display and share the information on a computer screen, videos, transfer a real hard-copy document, drawings, products, project layouts or materials' images. The following communication channels are increasingly being used for video conferencing: computer networks and the Internet, but interconnection via digital telephone networks (ISDN) may also be ideal.

### VIDEO CONFERENCING ORGANIZATION CHECKLIST

1.

#### Before the video conference:

- ✓ If you are still considering the pros and cons of regular meetings and video conferencing, evaluate how much it costs to host them.
- ✓ Find out how much time you spend traveling, also take into account that you are traveling wasting your time, and think about the well-being of the person being counseled.
- ✓ Assess in detail how much time is needed and set clear goals for the meeting.
- ✓ Order a video conference through the conference and meeting platform, if necessary.
- ✓ Remember to prepare a glass of water if your mouth becomes dry.
- ✓ Take some time to think about what content you want to share in the video call. If necessary, ask the mentee to read that material before the meeting. Read more in the topic "Presentations".
- ✓ Remember to keep the font size large enough and not overload the slide with text.
- ✓ Ask the mentee to connect a little before the meeting.
- ✓ If necessary, the connection can be tested before the meeting, at least the evening in advance.

## 2. During the video conference:

- ✓ Rotate the camera so that you are clearly visible.
- ✓ Test the microphone: make sure you can hear well and that you can be heard well.
- ✓ Look the mentee in the eye. This effect is achieved when we look at the video camera instead of the person on the screen.
- ✓ Video conferencing is like any other “live” meeting where all the rules of public and private speaking are applied. The most important thing is to speak clearly, fluently.
- ✓ Avoid making noise or wiping paper. Microphones capture even the quietest sounds. You can mute the microphone when you are not speaking.
- ✓ Follow the schedule. All parties will be satisfied if the agenda is completed within the agreed time.

## 3. After the video conference:

- ✓ Turn off the video call after the meeting. The host disconnects the last one and makes sure the mentee disconnects.
- ✓ Suggest feedback on the meeting.

## Phone conversation

Everyone really can talk on the phone. This invention was used for the first time not so long ago - in the 19th century, we cannot imagine our lives without it. The phone also occupies an important place in business, especially with the expansion of its technical capabilities, the emergence of the Internet and mobile devices, headsets, etc. No one denies that telephone counselling is not possible, but considering the benefits of a personal conversation or video conferencing, or a conversation, it is clear that they are more effective due to greater feedback: we see the mentee, their body language, reactions. Body language determines up to 65 percent of our impression of the mentee. When talking on the phone, this load falls on the voice, it substitutes eye contact, manners, clothing.

The mentor can use the telephone conversation only to coordinate the time of the meeting, and other details. The etiquette of a telephone conversation should not be forgotten: it is rude to disturb a person before 8 a.m. and later than 9 p.m. (except in the event of an accident). You can call later if you have agreed. We call with business questions during office hours. When calling a cell phone, it would be polite to ask if the mentee can talk.

## Useful tips

- ✓ Do not interrupt the mentee.
- ✓ Don't end the sentence for them.
- ✓ After asking a question, wait for an answer.
- ✓ Keep eye contact, communicate face-to-face, nodding in agreement.
- ✓ Ask clarifying questions.
- ✓ Don't use the phrase, "And I..."
- ✓ Mark important places in the conversation.

## Written communication: channels and tools

Unlike oral communication, where the main mean is spoken, written communication consists of written or printed messages. Examples of written communication include letters, e-mails, suggestions, various manuals of procedures or users, blogs, etc. They can be handwritten, printed on paper or displayed on a screen (monitor). In other words, the sender can write a message that the recipient can read at any time, unlike verbal communication that takes place in real time. The sender can produce a written message taking a long time, thinking over it well, choosing the right words, and thus composing its content, can change it before sending it to the recipient.

Written communication can be described as a connection that is established between an older and/or more experienced person (the mentor) and a younger person with less skills and experience in business (the mentee). Thompson et al. (2010) believe that such communication aims to develop and train the mentee's skills, knowledge and confidence, thus helping them to become a successful entrepreneur.

Due to the rapid pace of life, current written communication mostly takes place in cyberspace by using technologies. Electronic communication between a mentor and a mentee can be one of the forms of e-mentoring. The main electronic/virtual communication channels are e-mail and social networks. In addition, a very important written information tool used in both live and virtual counselling is a presentation. Next, we will discuss the requirements for an e-mail, communication on social networks, and a presentation.

## Electronic correspondence

E-mails have features that allow to create an open and supportive connection. They help to reduce barriers to communication between individuals belonging to different backgrounds (Thompson et al., 2010). We see in Table 5.3. what ethical and business-like communication is possible for the mentor and the mentee.

### Ethical and business-like electronic correspondence (Compiled by the authors, 2020)

**Table 5.3.**

What?	How? Why?
<b>E-mail address</b>	Formal, clear and business-like. You can use a company e-mail address. If you use a personal e-mail (e. g. you are a freelancer), make sure that the e-mail address would sound business-like. It will be best if you include your name: then the contact will know immediately from whom s/he received the letter.
<b>Time</b>	We also like e-mails because, unlike phone calls, we do not have to answer them right away. According to the etiquette, this should be done within 24 hours, preferably within 12 hours. If the letter requires a more detailed reply and you do not have time now, let the sender know: "I have received your letter, I will reply in a couple of days as soon as I have the necessary information." It is best to send the letters during business hours.
<b>The subject</b>	Informative, concise and clear. The content of the letter should be clear from the subject line. For example: "Thursday consultation", "Writing a business plan", "The date of the meeting is changed". This way, the addressee will understand the importance and essence of the letter, the letter will not remain unread. You cannot leave a blank subject line because there is a chance that it will not get attention.
<b>Addressee</b>	It is advisable to write to each contact individually or to write the contacts in the Bcc (Blind Carbon Copy) field so that the right to personal information is not infringed. It is also convenient to list separately the recipients who have to reply to the letter or take action (line "To") and who only need to read the letter (line Cc, Carbon Copy). For the letter do not accidentally reach the mailbox of the untargeted person, e-mail should include the e-mail address only after you have finished writing and verified the text.
<b>Text</b>	Easy to read when its parts are separated by at least one line. The text must be free of spelling and punctuation errors - a letter with errors is unreliable.

What?	How? Why?
<b>Greeting</b>	The most common greeting is "Good morning/afternoon". You can add a referral with or without "Dear". Greeting is highly dependent on the relationship of the mentor and mentee, their age, etc. The most important thing is to remain respectful in all cases.
<b>The point</b>	Concise and clear. Bigger information, photos, etc. should follow in attachment/s (this must be mentioned in the letter). If only an attachment is sent, this should be mentioned, for example: "I am sending the learning material". The use of emoticons is incompatible with the business style. Also, avoid writing in capital letters that make the tone of the letter look commanding.
<b>Farewell</b>	The first line usually says "Sincerely yours". In others - name, surname, position, name of the institution, work and/or personal telephone number, other data may be indicated.

You can find more about the e-mails at the following link:

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/how-to-write-a-professional-email>

## Communication in social networks

Today, technological capabilities allow to exchange information very quickly. As a result, the choice of e-mail and telephone as a communication channel is rapidly declining. Moore (2013) says that today's business communication is very fast as much of the communication has moved to social networking space such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Discord, etc. Some people have their own personal blogs, which also offer exchange of experiences and information. Social networks and/or blogs can be an effective platform for mentor and mentee communication.

However, communication on social networks will not replace live consultation. When communicating in them, it is very easy to get confused in conversations and not understand them so much just because we do not see other people and their emotions in them (emoticons may not always help solve this problem). There is also the unreliability of information, the complexity of its presentation. With this in mind, mentoring on social networks should be used only as one of the ways to diversify the teaching/ learning process.

## Effective presentation

One of the most commonly used presentation programs is PowerPoint. It emphasizes the role of presentations in the delivery of educational material. They reinforce and substantiate what you say, help maintain the structure of your speech, and remind you of what to say. Written and visual material helps the mentee to better memorize and understand oral information. The presentation is also of a permanent nature and can be used by the mentee, if necessary, later to reproduce the information obtained during the consultation.

### Principles of a successful presentation

(Source: <http://www.skaitmeninisiq.lt/Pamokos/strada/prezentacijos-rengimo-principai-ir-kurimo-priemones/>, 2020)

**Table 5.4.**

What?	How? Why?
<b>Simple design and consistent colours</b>	To avoid confusion and incompatible colours, use the combinations provided by the program. However, if you want to create the combination yourself, or if you need to use a specific colour and match the rest to it, check out the online tools: "Colors" <a href="https://colors.co/">https://colors.co/</a> , "Colorexplorer" <a href="http://www.colorexplorer.com/">http://www.colorexplorer.com/</a> or "Paletton" <a href="https://paletton.com">https://paletton.com</a> .
<b>Easy to read font</b>	The text must be easy to read and understand. The font size must be at least 30 pt, in a colour that does not interfere with reading the text. If one had to consult a group of mentees, the text should be read by the ones sitting next to each other.
<b>The 5x5 rule</b>	The optimal amount of text in a presentation is no more than five lines of text and no more than five words per line. Do not write everything you say, but only keywords or phrases that will allow the listener to understand the structure of the speech or emphasize the most important statements. Avoid long quotes, long texts of academic publications.
<b>Pictures, photos, graphics</b>	One picture expresses 1000 words, so use good quality photos, graphs, charts, infographics, pictures, and other visual aids whenever possible.

What?	How? Why?
<b>References to the material used</b>	<p>If your presentation uses information created by others, photos, videos, it is mandatory to provide links from where they were taken. Source references may be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• at the bottom of the presentation,</li> <li>• in presentation notes (will not be visible during delivery, but will be visible if you forward the presentation to others),</li> <li>• in the last slide.</li> </ul>

## How to choose the most effective communication channel

Both oral and written communication have advantages and disadvantages. Choosing the right communication channel in business, especially when consulting mentees, can be a very significant step.

Today, any single channel is rarely used in business communication. Experience shows that several different channels are chosen for communication and used one after the other or at the same time, or different combinations of them are employed. The key characteristics that determine the choice of one or another communication channel are reliability, speed, and efficiency (Sanina et al., 2017). Also, significant factors that determine the choice of a channel are the availability of the communication channel, the ability of communicators to use it, social competence (in the case of technology-based communication channels).

Before choosing one or another communication channel, the mentor should ask themselves a question: What do I want to convey in my message – feelings or facts? Verbal communication is more suitable for conveying feelings. Written communication is more suitable for conveying facts.

The selection of a communication channel (or media) makes an impact on how exactly the message itself will be transmitted, so it is very important to assess the purpose of the transmitted message. For example, when the sender of a message wants to capture content as accurately as possible, when they do not need a very quick response, when they are physically distant from the recipient, when they do not need much feedback from the recipient, when the message itself is complex and may take longer to understand, it would be very effective to choose written communication channels. Oral communication, meanwhile, is more appropriate when the sender wants to convey a sensitive or emotional message, when they need a response immediately, or when they do not need to capture the content of the message (conversation).



## In summary

The use of information technologies often blurs the line between oral and written communication and makes it integrated in this respect. For example, on social networks, e-mail can be used to communicate messages (in writing), as well as live broadcasts (orally), presentations using verbal, non-verbal (photos, pictures) information, and links to audio or video material are possible.

## 5.3. NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Nonverbal communication includes body language (i.e. distance, posture, gestures, facial expression, clothing, voice, silence, and pauses) and signs (Morse code, road signs, mathematical symbols, musical notes, etc.). The harmony of the oral and body language of the mentor and mentee is especially important during the mentoring process, therefore in this section we will discuss the main signs of the body language as a channel of non-verbal communication - the expression of the face and the meaning of gestures in particular.

### Our body is a nonverbal channel

In the process of communication, we not only listen to the content of verbal language, but also observe and respond to the speaker's body language. Try inserting a sheet of paper between the faces of two talking people and see how it disrupts the conversation.

Our body is the main channel of nonverbal communication. A person can send up to 700,000 different body signals (according to a communication expert Mario Pei). Even during the first meeting between the mentor and mentee, their body language helps to build social contact, build trust (or vice versa), which is the basis for further successful communication and inclusive learning.

One of the main principles of effective communication is the harmony of verbal and non-verbal communication. We have probably all heard the so-called "7, 38, 55 percent rule", according to which 7 per cent of people's communication is determined by words, 38 per cent by voice intonation, and 55 per cent by the body language.

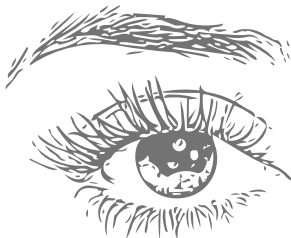
This rule occurred when an American psychologist Albert Mehrabian from the University of California in 1967 published his study on interpersonal communication. The researcher examined cases where the words spoken by the participants in the experiment meant one, and their intonation and body language spoke quite differently. Professor A. Mehrabian was concerned with the extent to which feelings confirm or deny the spoken text.

This rule does not mean (as is often interpreted) that when conveying information in words, the content of the speech is the least important - otherwise mentor would be able to speak anything, with only the voice and body reaching the interpretation. It only proves that if we are not ready to teach one topic or another, the voice and body will betray our lack of competence. If the speaker is very familiar with the content being conveyed, then their body language will not speak the opposite. Thus, the visible properties only confirm the content.

It is equally important for the mentor not only to send the correct body language signals themselves, but also to understand the body language of the mentee. In the mentoring process, the mentor, observing the mentee, understands whether the material being delivered is interesting, clear, understandable. By positive language of their body, they can motivate the mentee, reinforce, illustrate the information conveyed orally. This makes the mentoring process more efficient.

We receive most of the information and transmit it ourselves through facial expressions, gestures and body posture. We will discuss each of these nonverbal means of communication separately.

## What our face says



### EYES

The face is the most expressive part of the human body, and the eyes are the most important sensory organ, through which we receive as much as 80 per cent of information. The importance of the gaze in creating a learning-friendly atmosphere is also very significant. We have probably all noticed that communicating with someone who hides their eyes is a little uncomfortable, and an open, straight gaze invites you to communicate and collaborate.

The main rule to follow in order to have a successful communication is to keep eye contact with the mentee. If we look at the ceiling, floor, through the window, i.e. we avoid eye contact, we can cause thoughts that we want to hide something or we do not trust either ourselves or what we say. Looking into the eyes of the mentee shows our inner peace and professionalism, we confirm that everything is good and acceptable.

A running gaze reveals doubts, anxieties, or other things that prevent the mentor and mentee from achieving shared results. (However, the culture of the country must also be taken into account - perhaps, a straight look means aggression, disrespect, etc.). However, a too long glance, "scanning" through the eyes of the mentee is also not good - it can disturb the mentee. In order to "talk" with your eyes and at the same time to avoid an aggressive look during the consultation, it is better to sit not in front of each other, not next to each other, but sideways.

Recently, both personal and business communication is increasingly moving to the virtual space. If you have to talk to the mentee by video means, you have to follow the same rules for eye contact - look openly at the camera, do not stray your eyes, do not turn, so as not to distract the mentee, build their confidence (trust).



## MOUTH

The other very expressive part of the face is the mouth, and the most versatile facial expression can be considered a smile. It is understood equally in all countries, in all cultures. A smile is one of the strongest signals of body language, the most effective form of communication that helps to make and maintain a connection.

How do you know if a smile is genuine, sincere? This is shown not only by the mouth, but also by the eyes - we have probably all heard the saying "smiling eyes". A genuine smile is symmetrical and is accompanied by small wrinkles in the corners of the lips and around the eyes. If the eyes do not smile, it is assumed that the smile is artificial, as if "glued", usually hiding tension and discomfort.

You should not touch your lips or cover your mouth during the consultation. Touching the lips signals confusion, hesitation, and covering the mouth with the palm of the hand - doubting the correctness of the words being said.



Left: genuine. Right: fake. Source: <https://www.eiagroup.com/identifying-genuine-smile/>



## GESTURES

### Head position and movements

The position and movements of the head are very eloquent and help to reinforce the words spoken, show active listening and attention. Here are some examples:

- ✓ Leaning to the side, forward, backward, bending, distorting can enhance eloquence.
- ✓ A high chin can be perceived as arrogance, a demonstration of superiority.
- ✓ Slow, rhythmic bending along with the upper part of the body can accompany accentuated thoughts.
- ✓ Tilting the head to the side - attentive concentration, favor, reflection.
- ✓ Tilting the head forward, lowering the chin - critical listening, perhaps disapproval of the thought expressed.
- ✓ Severe numbness of the head, leaning forward - distancing or unwillingness to show emotions such as shame.
- ✓ Shaking the head - denial, doubt, rejection of opinion.
- ✓ Bending back and forth - confirmation, approval of the speaker.



## HAND GESTURES

The most famous, unfortunately, and the most sad gesture in human history is the hand gesture - when the Roman governor of the province of Judea, Pontius Pilate, washed his hands before pronouncing the death sentence on Christ. Thus, without words, he demonstratively manifested that he was not responsible for the future crucifixion of Jesus.

### Commonly used hand gestures showing openness and trust:

- ✓ Wide, expressive hand gestures (but not too intense and sudden) - confidence, certainty.
- ✓ Open palms, hand showing - a sign of openness, sincerity, trust.

- ✓ Hands in the shape of a roof – approval, a person agrees with the idea in question, or avoids contradictions.
- ✓ The spike of the roofed hands is pointing upwards – a person is giving their opinion or is ready to lay it out.
- ✓ The spike of the roofed hands is pointing downwards – a person listens intently and, at the same time, analyses what they hear. These gestures are used by confident, complacent and proud people.

#### TO SUMMURISE THIS SECTION, HERE ARE SOME USEFUL TIPS:

- ✓ Follow your own and the mentee's gestures and behaviour.
- ✓ Do not hide or cross your arms.
- ✓ Do not sit straight opposite, but more sideways.
- ✓ Try to behave like a mentee, but do not imitate him, but adapt.
- ✓ Look into the eyes, but avoid long glances.
- ✓ Do not "jump" to the sides when talking to the mentee.
- ✓ Be an active and attentive listener.
- ✓ Do not touch your face, hair, head.
- ✓ When assessing body language, consider the totality of body signals, the current situation, the environment, and other factors.

These tips also apply to the mentor communicating with the mentee virtually.

#### HERE ARE SOME ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR VIRTUAL COMMUNICATION:

- ✓ Sit comfortably so that the body does not feel tension.
- ✓ The best distance to a computer screen – within an outstretched hand.
- ✓ Make sure that no unauthorized persons and/or irritants, such as switched on video or audio devices are present in the room during the consultation.
- ✓ The background behind you should be neutral, your outfit should stand out. Avoid black.
- ✓ When mentoring from home, do not relax – take care of your business-like appearance.



## ACTIVITY

With regard to the situation, create feedback, specify the information or get new one by formulating appropriate questions, and select the most appropriate communication channel.



SITUATION	POSSIBLE QUESTIONS
<b>Mentee used some unknown term or a vague phrase.</b>	
Mentee deviated from the topic and did not provide the information you requested.	
<b>Mentee seems to be "hooked" on something and does not stop talking about it, and you need to move on.</b>	
Mentee said something what contradicted the idea/information/approach they had previously expressed. You want to clarify.	
<b>You want to hear the mentee's opinion on what you said.</b>	
The body language of the mentee indicates that they are concerned about some of the words you have spoken. You want to find out and dispel their anxiety.	
<b>Mentee does not agree with the statements you made and you want to hear the arguments why.</b>	
After general considerations on a particular topic, you want to move on to discussing specific things.	
<b>You have provided some ideas and are waiting for the mentee's feedback.</b>	



## ACTIVITY

### Perform a little experiment with your friends

Try to make an unreadable face during the conversation and not react in any way to the words of the communication partner. During the next conversation, try to nod by accepting and responding to your partner's emotions and words. During the third conversation, repeat the partner's body posture imperceptibly. Throughout the experiments, closely monitor the partners and discuss with them the outcome, answering the question: what creates a comfortable environment for conversation and helps the communication partner to open up.



### Questions to check yourself

1. Which communication channels and tools are applied in mentorship?
2. What influences the choice of the channels of oral and written communication?
3. Why is it so important to understand the body language?

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# 6. SOLVING PROBLEMS OF COMMUNICATION IN MENTORING NETWORKS

## Introduction

Nowadays, communication is more of sharing ideas and feelings and the willingness to participate (Petersons, Khalimzoda 2016). It serves two essential functions in every organization – disseminates the information needed by employees to get things done and builds relationships of trust and commitment (Mutuku, Mathooko, 2014).

The communication process is successful when the receiver understands the message as intended by the sender. It sounds simple but it is not always achieved in business because of various reasons like, for example, incorrect encoding and decoding of the message, interfering messages and incorrect choice of communication channel (Scheming, Mason, 2013).

In order to overcome these barriers, it is worth using creative thinking techniques popular in business. Creative thinking techniques could be original ways to improve the quality of communication in teams or networks. If you design your communication activities – such as speeches, meetings, dialogues, posters and advertisements – according to these models, you will increase your chances of getting your message delivered in an original, clear and more effective way.

The purpose of this chapter is to present three creative thinking techniques: Six Hats Thinking, Force Field Analysis and SCAMPER technique for solving communication problems in the mentoring process. Each of the indicated techniques is described as follows: general description, assumptions and stages of implementation, benefits of using the technique, its application to improve communication, activities for self-solution and self-assignment questions.

## Key concept

Six Hats Method, creativity, ways of thinking in communication problems solving, Force Field Analysis, field theory, change management, SCAMPER technique, brainstorming.



## 6.1. SIX HATS METHOD

The **Six Thinking Hats** method was developed by **Edward de Bono** in the early 1980s. It is now used by businesses all over the world. They involve putting on a selection of metaphorical hats when it comes to making a decision. Each hat represents a different direction of thinking. You and your team members can learn how to separate thinking into six clear functions and roles. Each thinking role is identified with a coloured symbolic “thinking hat.” By mentally wearing and switching hats, you can easily focus or redirect thoughts, the conversation, or the meeting. Using this method, it is very important to ask the right questions for each thinking role. Each of the six hats has its own type of inquiry process (Table 6.1.).

### Description of the Six Thinking Hats method

**Table 6.1.**

No.	Colour of the hat	Description of thinking	The questions that each of the six hats should ask	Key words
<b>1</b>	<b>White</b>	The White Hat calls for information known or needed. The facts, just the facts.	What information do I have? What information do I need to proceed?	Facts Naturality Objectivism
<b>2</b>	<b>Yellow</b>	The Yellow Hat symbolizes brightness and optimism. Here, you explore the positive aspects and probe for value and benefit.	What are the benefits and advantages to this solution? What value will these outcomes have?	Optimism Benefits Feasibility
<b>3</b>	<b>Black</b>	The Black Hat means judgment – “the devil’s advocate”, or why something may not work. Spot the difficulties and dangers; where things might go wrong. Probably the most powerful and useful of the Hats but it becomes a problem if overused.	What are the drawbacks to this process? What are the risks? What are the barriers to completion?	Judgement Caution Evaluation

<b>4</b>	<b>Red</b>	The Red Hat signifies feelings, hunches and intuition. When using this hat, you can express emotions and feelings and share fears, likes, dislikes, loves, and hates.	Which outcomes feel appropriate? What strategies feel right for this project?	Intuition Feelings Emotions
<b>5</b>	<b>Green</b>	The Green Hat focuses on creativity; the possibilities, alternatives, and new ideas. It's an opportunity to express new concepts and new perceptions.	What kind of solutions haven't I thought of yet? What other connections are there?	Innovation Creativity New things
<b>6</b>	<b>Blue</b>	The Blue Hat is used to manage the thinking process. It's the control mechanism that ensures the Six Thinking Hats guidelines are observed.	What is the best way to organize this project? Who will be responsible for each task?	Control Overview Organization

Source: <http://www.debonogroup.com/services/core-programs/six-thinking-hats/> [13.12.20]: Definitive Guide..., 2020; S. Shestopalov, 3 Proven Methods to Organize a Brainstorming Session (2019), <https://uxdesign.cc/brainstorm-79e51f20f313>.

The Six Thinking Hats method can help the team members to concentrate and change the thinking angle, keep the conversation focused and constructive, thus significantly improving communication efficiency (De Bono, 1992). A key factor in using the Six Thinking Hats effectively and applying them to practical situations depend on a better understanding of the order in which the individual hats are used. When considering a specific problem, it is best to start with the white hat as this allows all background information to be presented and documented. Once the problem is fully defined, the red hat can be used to ask participants what they feel about the problem. The participants' feelings are documented. The general tendency of many people at this stage is to present the negative aspects of the problem, but in this process the next step is to use the yellow hat. It allows to capture the positive aspects of the problem from all participants. This step is followed by the black hat to fix the negative aspects of the problem. The black hat is followed by the green where everyone is encouraged to think creatively to overcome negative problems, but also develop new alternatives for solving the problem. The red hat is reused at this stage to assess the feelings of the students.

Overall, most of the participants who were previously concerned about the problem are now more positive after going through the process of using different hats. Finally, it is always a good idea to use the blue hat as it allows participants to judge whether the process offers solutions or conclusions (Aithal, Suresh Kuma, 2016). The Six Thinking Hats is an important and powerful technique. It is used to look at the decisions from a number of different perspectives. This method forces people to move outside their habitual thinking style and helps them to get a more rounded view of situation. Some people think from a very rational, positive viewpoint, which is part of the reason they are successful. This can also mean that they underestimate resistance to plan, fail to make creative leaps, and do not have essential contingency plan. Similarly, more emotional people may fail to look at decisions calmly and rationally (Voehl, 2016).

This technique provides a common language that works in different cultures. It promotes collaborative thinking, sharpens focus, facilitates communication, reduces conflict, enables thorough evaluations, improves exploration, fosters creativity and innovation, saves time, and boosts productivity (Serrat, 2017). The existing studies prove the Six Thinking Hats technique has significant effects on improving creativity (Göçmen, Coşkun, 2019) and team communication (Geissler et al., 2012).

## Why use the Six Hats method for creative communication?

By using this model, you can easily find several ways to send your message. Another advantage of using the Six Hats model for creative communication is that different people are influenced by different types of communication. Some are strongly influenced by emotions, while others are more amenable to logical reasoning, and a third group may need a fair amount of objective information to make their own judgment. If you come up with creative communication ideas that cover all types of thinking, you will be able to choose the one that best suits your target audience and even to apply all types of thinking so that everyone can find what they are looking for in the message they convey (Elion, 2007).



## ACTIVITIES

1. Imagine a situation when your goal is to communicate your mentee the idea that increase of their intrinsic motivation will contribute to more effective performance of their professional duties. Your task will be to develop several ways to communicate this message to them (use Form 1). These have to be based on the six types of thinking, consistent with the de Bono Hats Method. Write down these ways and determine which of these descriptions was the most difficult for you. Justify - why so.

2. Ask your mentee to address the issue of future changes in the organization related to the development of the Covid19 pandemic, using six perspectives that follow the six-hat approach. In addition, another mentee may listen to the presentation of these perspectives and see if they are, indeed, in line with Bono's method.

White hat	Yellow hat	Black hat	Red hat	Green hat	Blue hat
Facts	Benefits	Cautions	Feelings	Creativity	Process
What is the current information on the issue or problem?	What are the positive aspects of the current situation, issue or problem?	What are the negative aspects of the current situation, issue or problem?	How does everyone feel about the current situation, issue or problem?	Can we do this a different way? How can we think outside the box about this issue?	What conclusions or summaries can we make in moving forward on the issue or problem?



## Questions to check yourself

1. What is the Six Thinking Hats method of Edward de Bono?
2. Can you give examples of questions that could be asked in any of the six ways of thinking?
3. How this method can be used in creative communication in mentoring process?

## 6.2. FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS

**Force Field Analysis (FTA)** is a technique to visually identify and analyse forces affecting a problem situation so as to plan a positive change. It has been used in diverse fields ranging from organisational change to self-development. It has visual character, simplicity, suitability for group work and applicability in planning for change (Kumar, 1999).

The field theory developed by psychologist Kurt Lewin (Cartwright, 1951) explains that any situation is a result of all different interacting and interdependent elements/actors concerned. The theory allows the change agents to go beyond obvious and get a macro-level perspective in order to understand and predict how change can happen and if it is possible. The macro-level perspective involving all the concerned elements/actors, their positions, interactions, and interrelations is the field Lewin (1944) talks about. The field is an entire picture of a situation. All the involved elements/actors that can influence it or be influenced directly or indirectly are present in the field. The ability, intention or tendency of an element/actor to influence the situation is called its force (Lewin, 1944). The forces of different elements/actors may vary in intensity and direction. Thus, the force field is relative distribution of forces of the concerned elements/actors which determine a situation at any given point (Lewin, 1944).

Therefore, the Lewin's force field is dynamic, vulnerable to change with any shift in the distribution of forces. His field theory does the groundwork for building an understanding of the three-step model of planned change (Burnes & Cooke, 2013). The utility of the field theory for change agents is in explaining the role of all the concerned elements/actors and their forces in determining a situation.

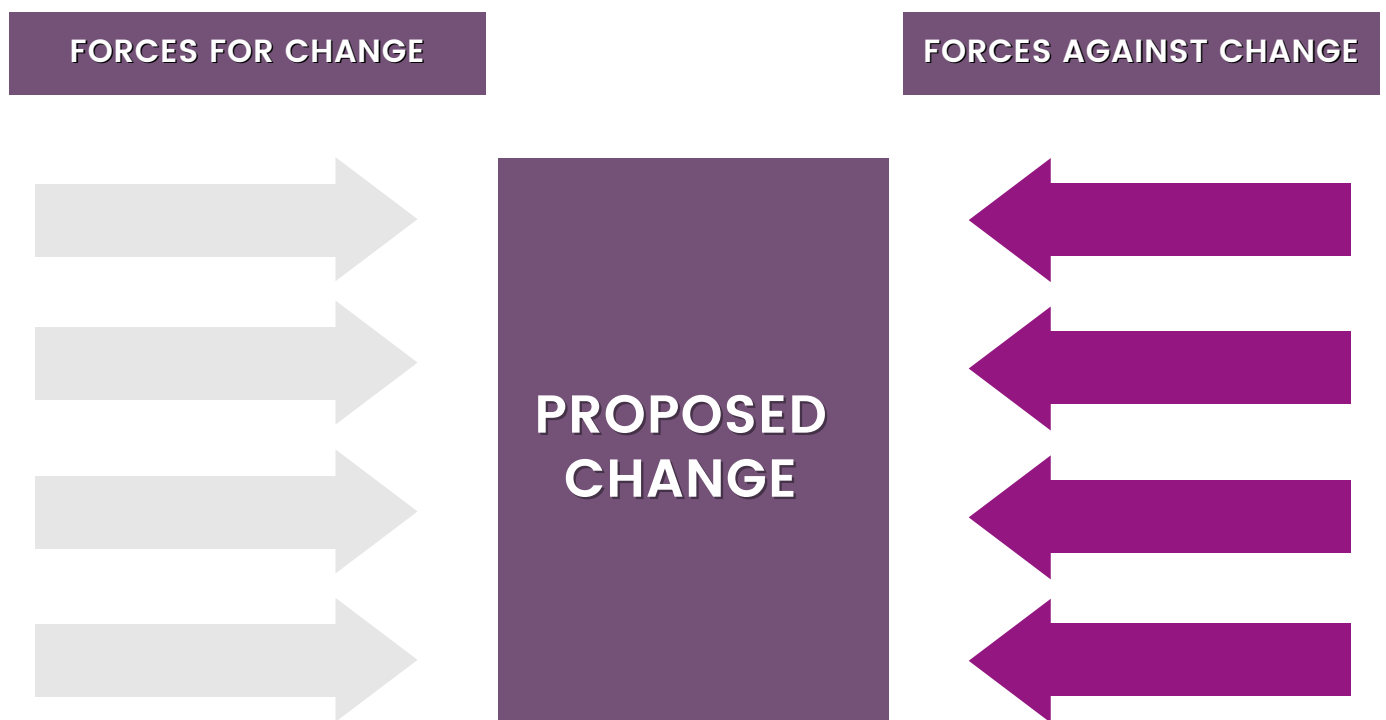
The assumption of the Lewin's model is to manage the process of change in such a way that its result is not only superficial behaviour, but also a permanent change of attitudes (internalization). The model includes 3 phases:

- 1.** Defrosting: leading to the need to change the current state in the consciousness of individuals and groups.
- 2.** Changing attitudes/ behaviours: the stage of shaping - applying various techniques - new patterns of behaviour, beliefs, procedures, structures, etc.
- 3.** Freezing: consolidation of the introduced patterns of behaviour and attitudes through their positive reinforcement (rewarding, praising, showing benefits) and the negative extinction of undesirable behaviour.

In the analysis of the force field, opposing forces are confronted: favourable (driving) and limiting (inhibiting) the achievement of the intended goal. It can be assumed that even the most static system is the effect of a certain balance of favourable and disturbing factors. The principle of equilibrium also works in the Lewin's model, where the greater the pressure, the stronger the resistance (Biernacka, 2016).

In order to use the force field analysis, one should look at a given problem as a system of two groups of forces. If we are trying to change the current state of affairs, we must upset the existing balance. The first, you need to identify the stimulus and inhibitory forces, and then decide which ones need to be changed. It will depend on many conditions. However, it is usually assumed that it is easier to change the limiting forces. The best method of overcoming resistance is to eliminate the accompanying fears and anxieties (Biernacka, 2016).

Since it is based on the visual depiction, the Force Field Analysis provides people with opportunities to think of forces that are affecting the problem in question. Even problems that look quite vague start becoming clear. The forces are quantified and their strength represented visually. This makes it easier for the participants to think of how to grapple them in order to bring the change. It becomes obvious that the magnitude of the driving forces has to be increased and that of restraining forces has to be decreased. These decisions are taken jointly depending on the resources available, other constraints, etc. Often, the solutions start to emerge to seemingly insurmountable problems (Kumar, 1999).

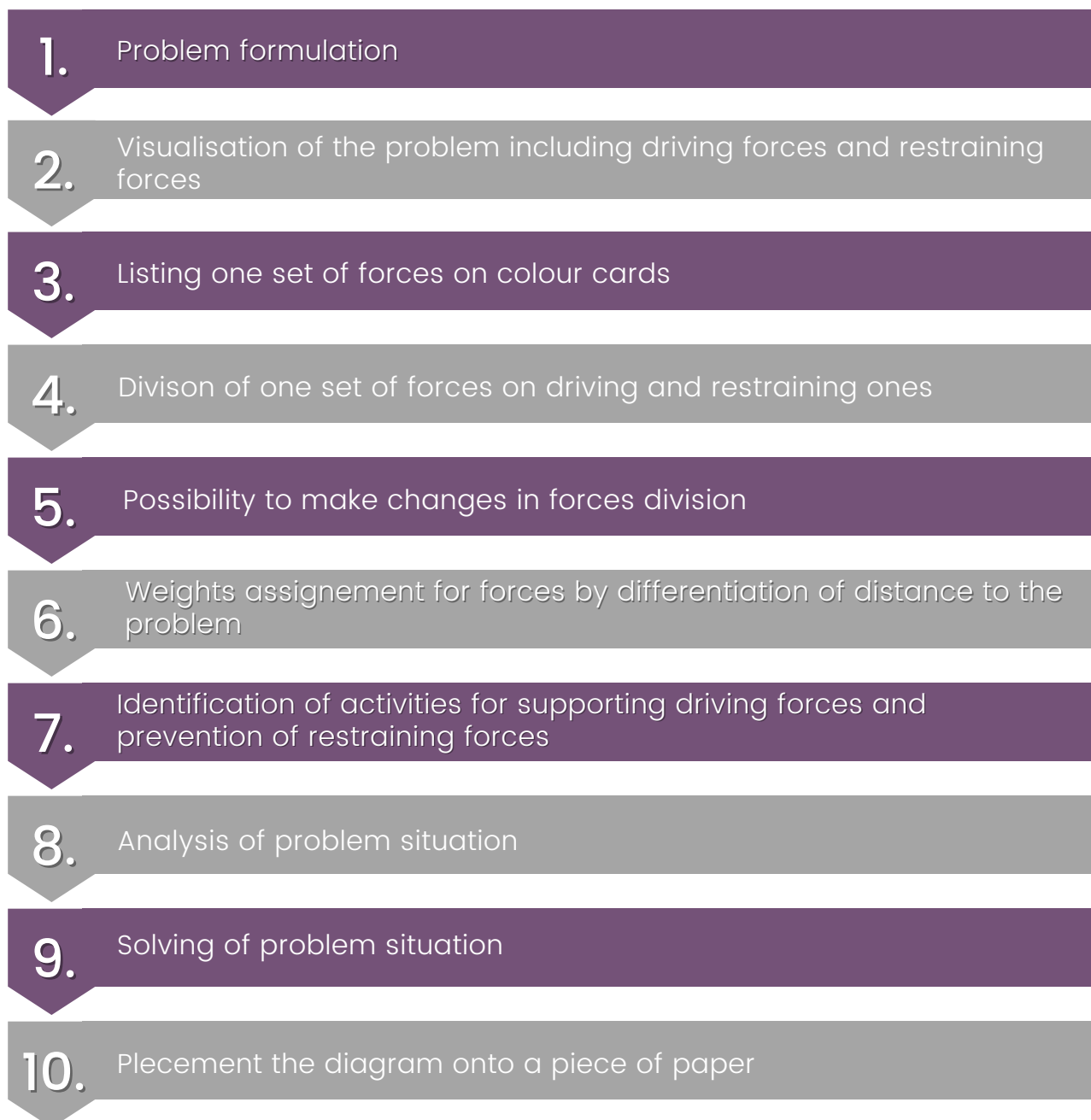


**Fig. 6.1. Force Field Analysis Concept**

In the mentoring process, the problematic situation occurrence is very popular and there is a need of changes implementation.

The mentor cooperating with the mentee to implement changes also meet restraining forces. The Force Field Analysis can be effective way to overcome resistance to focus on eliminating or at least alleviating the fears and concerns of the mentee. Instead of asking yourself "How to strengthen my argument?", ask "How to get to know and dispel or reduce their fears or concerns?"

The force field analysis can be conducted pursuing the following ten steps (Kumar, 1999) (Figure 6.2.).



**Fig. 6.2. Stages of Force Field Analysis**

The first stage of the Force Field Analysis is writing down or drawing the problem the mentor and the mentees want to discuss on a sheet of paper. We should try to make the problem as quantifiable as possible.

At the second stage, we should keep the sheet of paper with the problem written/depicted on it in front of the participants and ask them to concentrate on the problem. We should ask them to visualise the problem situation in a state of temporary equilibrium maintained by two sets of the opposing forces – one favouring change (driving forces) and the other opposing them (restraining forces). Using the diagram shown in Figure 1 can be helpful.

At the third stage, we should ask participants to list one set of forces first followed by the other. Each of these can be written/depicted on small cards. Different colour cards can be used for driving and restraining forces. Clarify that if a force seems to be made of multiple elements, each component should be listed separately as a force. The use of cards is more flexible than simply listing forces on a sheet of paper. They can also create a more participatory discussion, as writing/drawing cards involves all participants, and control is not in the hands of one person writing a list.

The fourth stage is to keep the sheet of paper with the problem written on it in the centre and draw a line across it. Spread the cards with restraining forces below the line and those with driving forces above the line.

At the fifth stage, ask the participants to look at the cards and see if they would like to make any changes.

At the sixth stage, ask the participants to assign weights to each of the forces. They should position each force card at varying distances from the problem-line/present status line in such a way that the distance denotes the strength of the force. The greater the distance, the greater the perceived effect of the force on the problem.

The seventh stage is identification of the activities for supporting the driving forces and prevention of the restraining forces. The participants should list the activities under each force.

In the eighth stage, it is verified if the participants are satisfied with the diagram. At this stage, we should ask participants to discuss how they can change the situation. Which of the driving forces can be reinforced and which restraining forces can be diminished?



At the ninth stage, the problem situation should be solved. Brainstorming techniques can be used here. Smaller cards, preferably of different colours, can be used to write down possible interventions for each of the driving/restricting force so as to increase/reduce its magnitude. Each of the possible interventions can be further weighed in light of various factors. At the end, we should copy the diagram onto a piece of paper.

If the number of participants is large, a common way is to divide them into smaller groups and then ask them to work on the FFA separately. The findings are later shared amongst different groups.

The presented method is very useful in analysing advantages and disadvantages of the changes implemented in the mentoring process.

### Advantages of Force Field Analysis

- ✓ It allows you to see the broad determinants of changes.
- ✓ It shows obstacles.
- ✓ It allows you to predict the factors that should be considered in the implementation phase.
- ✓ It can point out helpful measures to solve the problem.



### ACTIVITY

**Please, read the case study below concerning the change to be implemented during the mentoring process. Analyse the proposed change applying the Force Field Analysis.**

Mr. Tom is a production manager with 30 years of experience working in a large company producing components for the automotive industry. For five years, his company participates in a mentoring program as part of cooperation with technical universities in the region. The program employs the last-year students and graduates.

Mr. Tom has well developed method of cooperation based on the regular meetings, direct contact and communication with the mentees discussing the course of the production process, explaining the functioning of machines and devices. The mentees have the opportunity to learn about the principles of operation of the production infrastructure. They have to do home assignments consisting of preparing reports and solving problem situations, which they report during meetings with the mentor.

However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the principles of the company's operations have completely changed, caused by the sanitary regime. Mr Tom has to consider a new form of communication with the mentees in the mentoring process, which would be based on the remote contacts in order to minimize the direct participation of the mentees in the meetings in the enterprise. On the one hand, such a change is suggested by the company's management who offers a series of courses in the use of the communication platforms. On the other hand, such model of communication is preferred by the young mentees already getting used to the remote communication at the university and being familiar with the distance communication technologies.

Mr. Tom is very sceptical about this proposal. On the one hand, he is not aware of the possibilities of the remote communication, on the other hand, the projection mechanism is very strong for him. He assumes that if the young students and graduates will not come to the enterprise, they will not observe the production process directly, and, if not under the direct control of Mr Tom, they will learn nothing.



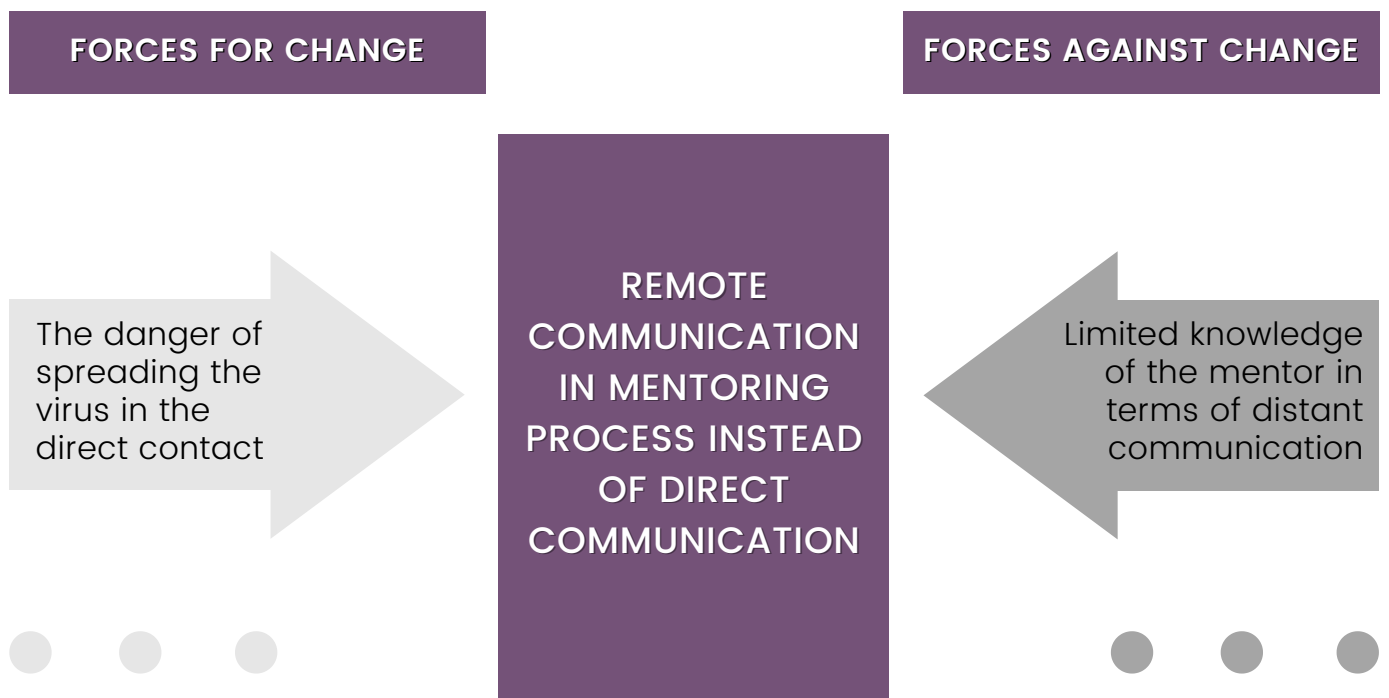
### **Identify the change needed to be implemented in the mentoring process**

Next, go through all the steps of the Force Field Analysis. Use the Figure 1 and determine the forces which are for the change and the ones which are against the change.

In addition, identify the weights of the impact of forces and the actions that can be taken to support the drivers of change, and the actions that will reduce the impact of the restraining forces.

For example, the change can be called "Implementation of remote communication in mentoring process instead of direct communication" (Figure 6.3.). The strong driving force of this change is the danger of spreading the virus in direct contact, which will be maintained during the pandemic development.

On the other hand, crucial restraining force can be limited knowledge of the mentor in terms of distant communication. The desirable action to decrease the impact of this force may be participation of Mr. Tom in training offered by the enterprise. Determine other forces and think about the problem solution to implement the proposed change.



**Fig. 6.3. Example of the Force Field Analysis for the activity**



## Questions to check yourself

1. What is the Force Field Analysis method?
2. How the Force Field Analysis can be used in the mentoring process?
3. What are the stages of the Force Field Analysis?

## 6.3. SCAMPER TECHNIQUE

SCAMPER technique is brainstorming technique that uses a set of directed questions to resolve a problem or turn a tired idea into something new and different. The SCAMPER uses a set of directed questions that help to change or modify something. SCAMPER is an acronym for Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Put to other use, Eliminate, and Reverse.

### Brainstorming

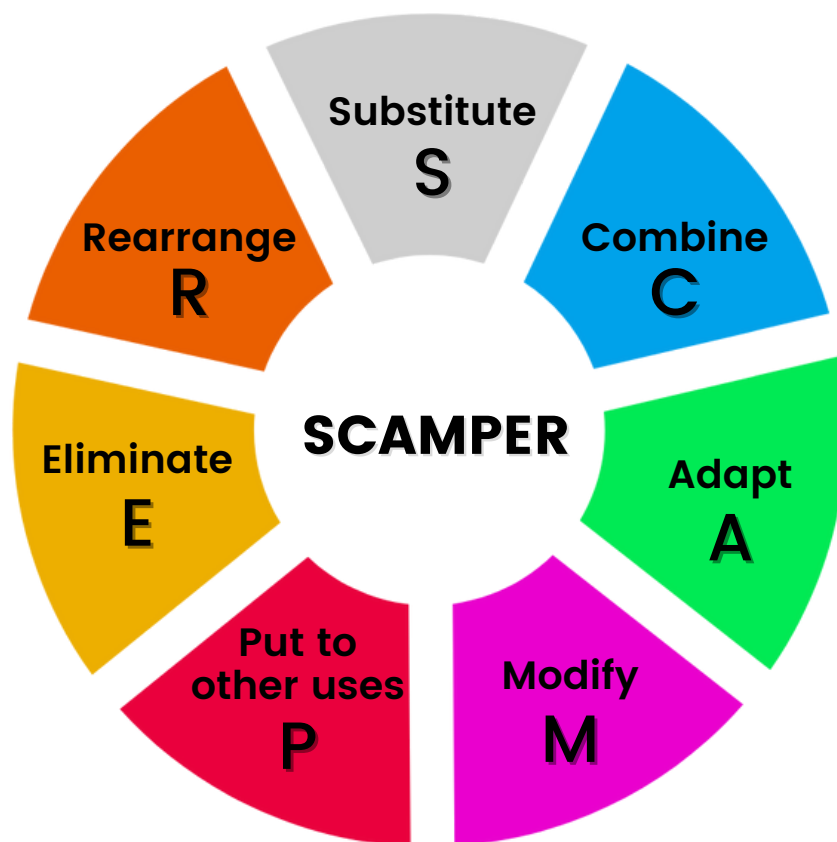
Technique of finding a conclusion for a specific problem by a group of people by gathering a list of ideas spontaneously contributed by its members.

## A guide to SCAMPER technique

The SCAMPER is a brainstorming technique that uses a set of directed questions to resolve a problem or turn a tired idea into something new and different. A technique is based on a very simple assumption that what is new is actually a modification of existing old things.

The SCAMPER help to find a novel idea, change or modify something. It is proofed as a technique known to be effective in generating a large number of novel ideas. The method is a lateral thinking technique promoting generation of ideas based on a list of questions during brainstorming session. It is forcing emergence of innovative ideas that will not be possible to find during traditional thinking.

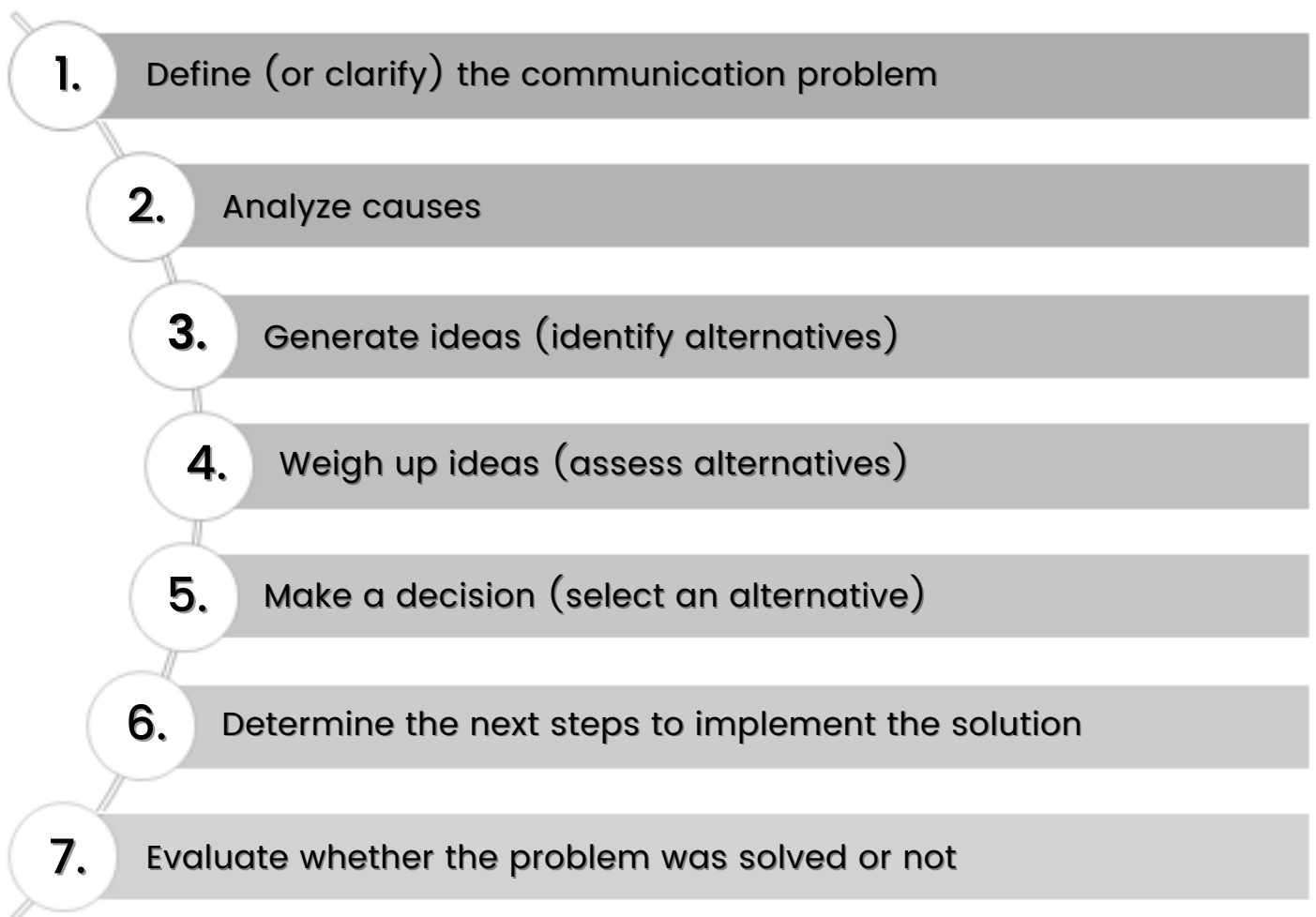
SCAMPER is an abbreviation of seven-steps idea creation – seven different thinking approaches. It is an acronym for Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Magnify or Minify, Put to other use, Eliminate and Reverse or Rearrange (see Figure 6.4.). Using SCAMPER technique does not mean to necessary use of all seven steps – one could decide which approach to use and in what order.



**Fig. 6.4. Seven-step idea of the SCAMPER technique**

To use the SCAMPER technique, the first, the problem to solve or the idea to develop should be stated. It can be anything: a challenge in personal life or business; a product, service or process to improve, or problem to solve. After pinpointing the challenge, it is then a matter of asking questions about it using the SCAMPER checklist as a guidance. The technique force to think differently about the problem and eventually come up with the innovative solutions.

The SCAMPER might be a structured way to assist the mentor and mentees in creative thinking and solving problems of communication in the mentoring networks. The problem is perceived when the mentor and mentees become aware of a significant difference between what is desired in communication and how actually is. Problem solving is the process where the situation is analysed, a workable solution is determined, and corrective action is taken. The steps to solve the problem are presented on Figure 6.5. The procedure could be applied to any communication problem.



**Fig. 6.5. Procedure of solving communication problems in mentoring networks**

(Source: based on O. Serrat, The SCAMPER Technique. In: Knowledge Solutions. Springer, Singapore 2017)

## Using the SCAMPER technique might be significant in

1. Providing the mentors and mentees with an effective, valuable, and creative method of communication strategy building.
2. Involving both the mentor and mentees in creation and improvement of communication in the mentoring process.
3. Providing the mentors and mentees with an effective, valuable, and creative method of communication problem solving.
4. Helping the mentors and mentees to find new ideas and stimulate new ways of thinking about communication process.
5. Encouraging active participation of the mentor and mentees in communication process.
6. Giving the mentors and mentees the opportunity to provide an alternative, different approaches to communication in the mentoring process.
7. Helping the mentors and mentees to develop their communication skills especially when they want to:
  - ✓ Find new oral and/or written, verbal and non-verbal channels and tools of communication.
  - ✓ Improve existing oral and/or written, verbal and non-verbal channels and tools of communication.
  - ✓ Improve effectiveness of communication.
  - ✓ Increase social engagement in the mentoring process.



## Seven-step SCAMPER procedure

**Table 6.2.**

SCAMPER technique	Description	Questions
<b>Substitute</b>  <b>S</b>	<p>Take away a part of the selected thing, concept, situation or process and replace it with something else. Anything can be substituted – steps in process, parts of the product, people and places. It is a technique of trial and error till the idea is correct.</p>	<p>Who or what can be substituted without affecting the process?            What might you do instead?            Who else instead?            Is there a person or thing that may act as or take the place of another?            Can you replace someone involved?            How part of the process could be substituted for something else?            Can the rules be changed?            Can the other processes or procedures be used?            Can you change your feelings or attitude towards the problem?            What part of process can be replaced with better alternatives?</p>
<b>Combine</b>  <b>C</b>	<p>Think about combining elements of the situation or problem to think up something new or enhance their synergy. This is technique of creative combining already existing things in a fresh way.</p>	<p>What could be added to the product, process, etc.?            What or who might work well together?            What could be added together?            Could you combine two or more parts of the process to make something new or to enhance synergy?            What ideas, purposes, units or problems might you combine?            Could you merge two steps of the process?</p>
<b>Adapt</b>  <b>A</b>	<p>Think if there is a solution of another problem that may be adapted to current problem solving. Which parts of the process could be adapted or how you might change the nature of the process.</p>	<p>What could be adjusted to suit a purpose or condition?            How can you adapt the thing to make it better?            What other idea does you suggest?            Who might you emulate?            What processes could be adapted?            How can you adjust process to situation</p>

<p><b>Modify Magnify Minify</b></p> <p><b>M</b></p>	<p>Take the original thing, processes and change it. What ideas you can think if you modify, magnify or minify your problem. Think about changing part or all of the process or distorting it in an unusual way.</p>	<p>What would happen if you change the form or quality? How can you make it minified, weaker, magnified, greater, stronger etc.? Can the thing be modified to make it better? What could you add to the process? What can be duplicated? Can you change the process to work more efficiently</p>
<p><b>Put to other use</b></p> <p><b>P</b></p>	<p>Think how you can put your current idea to different uses or what could be reused from elsewhere to fix the problem. Sometimes idea turns out to be great when applied in different manner than first imagined. Plan for using something for purpose beyond those originally intended.</p>	<p>How could you use it for a different purposes? What are some new ways to apply it? How other people use/organize it? What are the new ways to use it? What else can be used for?</p>
<p><b>Eliminate</b></p> <p><b>E</b></p>	<p>Think that would happen if some parts of your idea will be eliminated or some aspects of it reduced or simplified. Repeated elimination or trimming of ideas, processes or products could lead to constricting the calling to that function or part that is the most significant.</p>	<p>What could you subtract or take away? What could you do without? What happens if you remove this from the entire process? What could be done to make the process better? What might you understate? Can it be simplified? Are there unnecessary activities in the process? What is non-essential or unnecessary? What in the process could be omitted? What would you do if you have half of resources?</p>
<p><b>Reverse/ Rearrange</b></p> <p><b>R</b></p>	<p>Think what would happen if some parts of your idea would be eliminated or some aspects of it reduced or simplified. Repeated elimination or trimming of ideas, processes or products could lead to constricting the calling to that function or part that is the most significant.</p>	<p>What would you have if you reversed it? Could you change the parts or order? What would happen if the order were reversed? What might be rearranged? Should the pace or schedule be changed? Could roles be reversed? Can cause and effect be transposed? What if try doing the exact opposite of what was originally intended?</p>





## ACTIVITY

How could you use the SCAMPER technique in solving problems of communication in the mentoring networks? At first stage, the instructor or mentor organize traditional brainstorming to identify ideas – solutions to the problem. Then the instructor or mentor presents the letters SCAMPER and explain each letter – what it stands for (S-Substitute, C-Combine, A-Adapt, M-Modify, Magnify or Minify, P-Put to other use, E- Eliminate, and R-Reverse or Rearrange). Meeting the members or mentees discuss the issue helping by the additional example questions. There may be selected only one or two letters instead of all. SCAMPER could be a creative thinking strategy used to solving communication problems and considering how to organize communication process in different ways. The method can be used by asking questions until you have exhausted ideas at each step, specifying the response time at each stage or going through each stage in turn, thinking up one question each round.

### Simple SCAMPER chart

**Table 6.3.**

SCAMPER OPERATION		Idea of problem solving – an example
<b>Substitute</b>  <b>S</b>	Try to think what could be replaced in communication process – a channel and tool of communication, term, frequency, a way of information exchange, part of information flow.	Use new channel or tool of communication. Change written tool of communication to an oral one.
<b>Combine</b>  <b>C</b>	Think about combining elements of communication problem solutions to think up something new. Find new way of engaging the mentors and mentees in information exchange.	To combine different sources of information, organize internal communication platform integrating various sources of information exchange (manuals, reports, news) in your mentoring network. Combine verbal and non-verbal channels or tools of communication.
<b>Adapt</b>  <b>A</b>	Think about previous problems in communication process and possibility to adapt them to current problem.	Implement past solutions in communication problem solving to current situation. Adapt or copy solution from another mentoring network.

SCAMPER OPERATION		Idea of problem solving – an example
<b>Modify Magnify Minify</b>  <b>M</b>	Pose a question – what ideas you can think of if you modify, minify or magnify your problem. Could you put more emphasis on communication process?	Magnify the engagement of the mentor or mentees in communication process. Increase the level of mentees engagement in the mentoring process, eg. from information to consulting.
<b>Put to other use</b>  <b>P</b>	Think about applying techniques or concept to another problem solution.	Apply procedure of exchanging information to another channel of communication.
<b>Eliminate</b>  <b>E</b>	How can the communication process could be simplified? Could communication barriers be eliminated?	Highlight one – the most important channel of communication. Eliminate factors not providing to increase in the effectiveness of communication in mentoring process.
<b>Reverse/ Rearrange</b>  <b>R</b>	How can you change, reorder or reverse the way you communicate?	Reorder the way of exchanging information. Use the non-obvious flow of information. Instead of weekly, two-hour meetings with the team, organize meetings for several minutes every morning.



## Questions to check yourself

1. Explain what is the SCAMPER technique.
2. Name the seven steps of the SCAMPER technique. Do you need to use all procedure?
3. Which step of the seven-step SCAMPER process do you find the most appropriate for solving communication problems in the mentoring networks?

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