Mentor Toolkit

This Toolkit is designed to provide a framework of support for mentors. It is not a prescriptive set of directions, but rather a series of useful and practical steps to take, to ensure that PraxisAuril's mentoring –

* aligns with the agreed learning objectives established at the start of the planning process

* makes best use of Mentor and Mentee time

* supports individual career development

Working within this process, you have considerable freedom to build your relationship with the Mentee over the 10-week period. However, all relationships are different and have different shelf-lives, some will naturally run a short course and can be more effective than an over-extended relationship that is no longer beneficial to either party. Provided any changes are driven by the evidence and feedback from your feedback sessions together and the objectives established at the outset. Should you require more than the allotted 10-week period, please inform the PraxisAuril executive team as soon as possible.

How it works

The toolkit starts with an overall picture of what your role as Mentor is designed for. It describes the **key steps** in specifying and then designing a mentoring programme, including some suggested **timelines** for keeping in touch with your Mentee.

Before you start, it's a really good idea to clarify roles and agree on a communication strategy. This should include feedback sessions between you & your Mentee, which will be reviewed (anonymously by PDPM & PDC) to ensure needs and standards are being met.

It is important to remember that you can step away from this process at any time, if you feel this is not working for you. Please contact the PraxisAuril PDPM to complete an early evaluation form.

What is the Mentor's role?

The role of the Mentor is to: to act as a source of technical/professional knowledge, to promote and encourage good behaviours, to provide constructive feedback, to encourage the achievement of goals and boost morale, to challenge assumptions and encourage alternative thinking. A Mentor should NOT provide advice, but give general guidance and relevant examples as your Mentees should come to their own conclusions.

You should: observe, listen and ask questions to understand the Mentee's situation. Facilitate the exploration of needs, motivations, desires, skills and thought processes to assist the individual in making real and lasting changes.

Driven first and foremost by the objectives set out at your first meeting, you need to provide guidance and support for your Mentee with whatever issues are concerning them. Manging the relationship in a professional manner to ensure the Mentee receives the appropriate level of service.

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Five Phase Mentoring Relationship Model©

Phase One: Purpose
Why do I want a mentor?
Why do I want to be a mentor?

Phase Two: Engagement
Finding and Being a Mentor
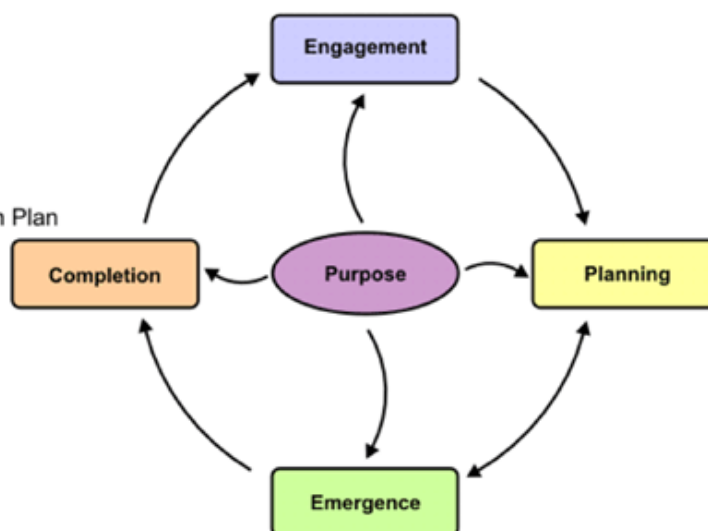*How do I begin?*

Phase Three: Planning
Developing your Mentoring Action Plan
How can I achieve my goals?
How will we work together?

Phase Four: Emergence
Engaging in the Conversation
How am I doing?
What are we learning?

Phase Five: Completion
Celebrating Accomplishments
What are my next steps?

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Phase One & Two are supported through PraxisAuril Professional Development Committee & Executive Team. They will put you in touch with an appropriate Mentee at which point you can begin by

Identifying key markers

- When you are first matched, your scoping/exploration meeting should aim to identify some key areas for you to work on (no more than 3)
- Action plans. Some structure should be agreed upon; how often you will talk, when face-to-face meetings will take place, how/when actions should be completed by.
- Clarify aims and objectives (what you and the Mentee wish to achieve)

Once you've identified specific areas work on, you can establish and

Agree objectives & goals

- This is a vital step, as it gives you both the opportunity to define a primary set of parameters for your relationship
- Discuss how you intend to offer feedback and constructive counsel to ensure your ways of working will be cohesive
- Discuss strategies with options for action and their consequences
- The aim should be to help your Mentee develop (a process, or key skills, or with a project for example). The Mentee sets the agenda based on their own developmental needs and you (as the Mentor) provides insight and guidance helping achieve their desired goals

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Create an outline Programme Plan

Start by creating a Programme Plan (a suggested guideline will be provided by the PraxisAuril team). This will outline all goals already identified, with action plans,

The will be different for all your Mentees (should you decide to have more than one, it is up to you, but remember that being a Mentor will take up your time if you wish to do it properly). It is good practice to focus on one Mentee at a time.

Consider what kind of style you have, what expectations will you set? How will you know when your Mentee has been successful? What are your measurements of success? How will you communicate this to them? How will you structure your one-on-one time?

RTTP (International standard for Professional Competence & Experience of KT/KE/TT practitioners)

The Candidate Pathway recommends that (the Mentee) develops their own career aspirational plan – Mentoring helps achieve this as a framework, effectively planning their development. This will need to be signed off by their line manager.

Listening & how to be a role model

You are embarking upon a fantastic journey, one that is very personal to you and the Mentee. Take time to get to know each other on a personal level but remember at all times to be an active listener. Pay attention to what they are saying instead of worrying what you are going to say next. Ask open questions – dig deeper!

Pausing and giving each other time to reflect is a good thing. This gives you an opportunity to consider what has been said before you rush a reply. Give your Mentee time to think for themselves and give you the time to get more information, talk to your resources and come back with a more valuable response.

Sharing your personal experiences can be valuable, it helps to build trust, gives the Mentee permission to share their own mistakes and can strengthen your relationship.

Have patience, be open-minded and compassionate. Have your own mentor(s) and network (PraxisAuril Executive Team can help you with this if you wish). Remember to set the bar high in your goal to provide guidance and advice. Lead by example and care about your relationship.

Is your Mentee ready?

When the process is at the point where your Mentee owns the process, and is driving their own activity towards results, and is seeking active feedback you can consider your Programme has been a success.

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Devise a feedback strategy

An important part of your role as Mentor is to ensure that feedback is collected which helps to inform the Executive Team of ongoing future improvements for the PraxisAuril Mentoring Programme.

Ideally, every time you and your Mentee meet, you will provide a summary report of discussions, actions and outcomes, recorded on your Programme Plan. This can then be matched against your original goals so that you know when your tasks have all been satisfactorily completed.

Your final report to PDPM & PDC should include:

- An evaluation summary
- Any reflections and observations that may help future Mentors
- Your own candid notes on what went well/not-so-well.

This should be completed as soon as you have completed your journey as Mentor and Mentee.

If you have any suggestions for improvements or examples of good practice that you would like to be considered for inclusion within the Mentoring Programme, please contact the Executive Office.

This Toolkit is 'owned' by the PraxisAuril Professional Development Programme Manager (PDPM), who will review it at regular intervals in consultation with the Professional Development Committee (PDC) to ensure its continued relevance and that the volunteers do not find the process too onerous.