MONITORING, COACHING, AND CONSULTING

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INTRODUCTION

The Mentoring, Coaching, and Consulting course prepares entrepreneurs to become business mentors and coaches, and to be able to establish a consultancy within their sector or industry. Entrepreneurs should be willing to coach and mentor their employees and subcontractors. They ought to be able to share their experiences with fellow entrepreneurs and individuals, exploring the potential of establishing their own businesses. Many entrepreneurs will be interested in taking their specific expertise to aspiring business persons, and employees in their organisations to help them succeed in business ventures, and perform entrepreneurial tasks more competently. The course, therefore, systematically exposes students to definitions of key concepts, and how these function in the context of an enterprise; and guides students on the conduct of mentoring, coaching and consulting on the basis of views about learning, as well as on how to evaluate the efficacy of coaching and mentoring interventions.

COURSE GOALS

Upon completion of the Mentoring, Coaching, and Consulting course you will be able to:

1. Define and explore the similarities and differences of mentoring, coaching, and consulting.
2. Conduct coaching sessions.
3. Examine the process of business consulting.
4. Define and explore the similarities and differences of mentoring, coaching, and consulting.
5. Explore the methods and processes of workplace coaching to improve employee performance.
6. Explore the methods and processes of business mentoring to develop employees, peers and other business personnel.
7. Evaluate the success of coaching and mentoring interventions.
8. Identify the structure of a typical consultancy targeted at a specific industry or sector.

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course is divided into four units as follows.

Unit One: The Background

Unit Two: Mentoring In A Business Enterprise
Unit Three: Transfer And Evaluation Of Mentoring/Coaching Interventions

Unit Four: Consulting In Business

Each unit is further broken down into related topics. Each unit and many topics include self-reflection questions to ponder, activities to complete and formal assignments to complete and send to your instructor.

The units contain a number of references that learners are encouraged to review. This may require that you have access to a computer with Internet connection to download the reference. Each unit should take between two and three weeks to complete.

ASSIGNMENTS AND PROJECTS

A series of activities and assignments guide you through concepts in this course and ask you to demonstrate that you can apply the concepts to support the creation of your business idea and business model. A summary of this work is included at the beginning of each unit. The major assignment in this course is found in Unit Four, where you will write a business plan for your new venture. Your institution / tutor will help you through this material and will also assign additional projects.

JOURNALING REQUIREMENTS

To capture the output from the reflective questions and activities you are asked to keep a personal journal. At the end of the course the personal journal will be submitted to your instructor for feedback and grading.

ASSESSMENT PROJECTS

Assessment takes the form of responding to activities, as well as written assignments and examinations as determined from time-to-time by the institution. In cases where coursework assignments, fieldwork projects, and examinations are used in combination, a percentage rating for each component will be communicated to you at the appropriate time.

TIME REQUIRED

This course is worth 16 credits, or a credit value assigned by your institution. Each credit is equivalent to 10 notional hours. You are, therefore advised to spend not less than 160 hours of study on the course. This notional time includes:

- going over activities embedded in the study material;
- peer group interaction (where necessary);
- face-to-face tutorials (where necessary);
- working on tutor-marked assignments; and
- preparation time for and sitting examinations (where that is a requirement.)
COURSE SCHEDULE

A course schedule with due dates and additional readings will be supplied to you by your institution.
STUDENT SUPPORT

Note: This section should be included in self-paced or paper-based courses that provide tutor/facilitator support and/or web and email support for the students.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

<Insert the following information if relevant>

- How to contract a tutor/facilitator (Phone number, email, office hours, etc.).
- Background information about the tutor/facilitator if he/she does not change regularly. Alternatively provide a separate letter with the package describing your tutor/facilitator’s background.
- Description of any resources that they may need to procure to complete the course (e.g. lab kits, etc.).
- How to access the library (either in person, by email or online).

HOW TO SUBMIT ASSIGNMENTS

<If the course requires that assignments be regularly graded, then insert a description of how and where to submit assignments. Also explain how the learners will receive feedback.>

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

<If the students must access content online or use email to submit assignments, then a technical support section is required. You need to include how to complete basic tasks and a phone number that they can call if they are having difficulty getting online>.
UNIT ONE - THE BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION
The unit focuses on the background to mentoring, coaching, and consulting relative to business and entrepreneurship. These three notions constitute the key concepts upon which subsequent discussion is based. The unit, therefore, begins with definition and explanation of these. In view of the fact that Entrepreneurship is a systematic applied and academic preoccupation, the first topic will be devoted to explaining the background. This will give a historical dimension to our discussion.

UNIT OBJECTIVES
After completing this unit you should be able to:

1. Define the three key concepts and related ones.
2. Make a clear distinction between the concepts.
3. Explain how mentoring, coaching, and consulting evolved.
4. Apply knowledge about mentoring, coaching, and consulting to business enterprises.

UNIT READINGS
As you complete this unit you are required to read the following chapters/articles:

• <Insert list of required readings>.

ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES
<Insert a description of the unit assignments, activities and discussions to be completed as they progress through the unit. Detailed instructions can be attached as Appendices to the course main body.>
TOPIC 1.1 DEFINING KEY CONCEPTS

INTRODUCTION
In business, you will recognise that to survive and prosper in these tough times, your enterprise has to be performing at the highest level of effectiveness. This has implications for leadership skills, decision-making, staff relations, creativity, stress and time management and handling issues in a sensitive manner. Mentoring and coaching can help you in these vital areas of entrepreneurship because they matter a great deal as an aspect of entrepreneurial training and development. What then is meant by mentoring, coaching and consulting? Presently, a comprehensive answer to the question is attempted.

OBJECTIVES
After working through this topic you should be able to:

1. Distinguish between mentoring and coaching.
2. Explain consulting and what is involved in consulting.
3. Illustrate the link between a business enterprise on the one hand, and mentoring, coaching, and consulting on the other.

CONTENT
- What is the link between entrepreneurship, on the one hand, and mentoring and coaching on the other?
- Rationale for mentoring and coaching
- What is mentoring?
- What is coaching?
- What is consulting?

Warm-up Activity
The terms mentoring, coaching, and consulting are probably not new to you as an entrepreneur. However, even the most experienced entrepreneurs might find it difficult to define them. In the space provided, attempt your own definition of each term.

a. Mentoring
b. Coaching
c. Consulting

Record your response in your course journal.

Your response is the best starting point. Share it with a colleague before reading on.

What is the link between entrepreneurship, on the one hand, and mentoring and coaching on the other?
The first BBE course is titled *Introduction to Entrepreneurship*. In that course, the term *entrepreneurship* has been defined as the practice of starting new organisations, particularly new businesses in response to identified opportunities. The person who owns and operates a business has been defined as an *entrepreneur*. He/she takes all the risks involved in the operation of the enterprise. One such risk is the employment of people to help in running the business. This is considered to be a risk because not all employees will be able to perform as expected, notwithstanding that they may be well qualified. They will require mentoring and coaching, which are aspects of training and development. The terms (training and development) are clearly distinguishable, but closely related to mentoring and coaching. Training, which is the broader term, has been variously defined. Van Dyket *et al.* (1992:148) define training as the systematic process of changing the behaviour, skill and attitudes of people in a certain direction to increase goal achievement within the organization. It is seen as an essential component of the organisation, and is considered an important management tool used to develop the full effectiveness of the organisation’s most vital resource: its employees.

The objective of mentoring and coaching as aspects of training is to ensure that there is some form of learning by the employee, and such learning aims at changing the attitude, skills, and knowledge level towards improved performance. What do we imply when we say that the employee has learned something as a direct result of mentoring/coaching in an enterprise? According to Bigge (1982:1), learning is an enduring change in a living individual that is not brought about by genetic inheritance. It is a change in insights, behaviour, perception and motivation, or a combination of these. Learning always refers to some systematic change in behaviour and performance of entrepreneurial tasks resulting from experience in some specified situation. Thus, as a direct result of learning (through mentoring and coaching), employees of an enterprise acquire a relatively permanent change in performance potential that arises from experience (Stewart, 1999).

It is noteworthy that entrepreneurs are in every field, and not only in profit-making businesses. They work in non-governmental organisations (NGOs); they open private schools and colleges; and they sell services and commodities. Entrepreneurs working in the social spheres are called social entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs can be both small and big. New businesses started by entrepreneurs are referred to as small businesses, but these can develop into big businesses. That is why small and medium businesses are referred to as the seedbed of entrepreneurship. The employee’s knowledge, skills, and attitudes can be enhanced through mentoring and coaching. Now, work on this activity before reading on.
**Activity A**

It has been noted that training through mentoring and coaching enhances the employee's knowledge, skill, and attitudes. Explain your understanding of these concepts in the context of an enterprise.

a. Knowledge  
b. Skill  
c. Attitudes  

Record your response in your course journal.

These are entrepreneurial attributes, and a possible explanation is that knowledge refers to the information required by the employee to function more effectively in the business. An employee who has acquired knowledge is able to recognize things, compare items, correlate events, connect new facts, and extend information within the enterprise to make projections into the future. On the other hand, skill entails the capacity to use knowledge, and involves change of behavioural abilities to perform entrepreneurial tasks more competently. Thirdly, attitudes refer to an employee’s predispositions towards a certain type of behaviour as well as the feelings, emotions, values, interests, or preferences of that individual. According to Collins (2005) mentoring and coaching can lead to positive behaviour modification so that the employee’s performance can be enhanced.

Bearing the foregoing discussion in mind, let us turn focus to mentoring and coaching, which are at the centre of this course.

**RATIONALE FOR MENTORING AND COACHING**

Coaching and mentoring can inspire and empower employees, build commitment, increase productivity, grow talent, and promote success. They are now essential elements of modern managerial practice. However, many companies still have not established related schemes. By not doing so, companies also fail to capitalize on the experience and knowledge seasoned personnel can pass on (Landsberg, 1996).

High-performance, contemporary organizations know that a company is only as good as its employees. They place strong emphasis on personal attributes in selecting and developing staff. However, this does not come without challenges, not least of which may be (significant) gaps in the experience, knowledge, attitudes, skills, aspirations, behaviours, or leadership required to perform demanding jobs. Formal training courses may vaunt wholesale transfer of these; but employees will not likely stretch to their full potential without dedicated guidance that inspires, energizes, and facilitates. In the new millennium, good coaching and mentoring schemes are deemed a highly effective way to help people, through talking and increasing self-direction, self-esteem, efficacy, and accomplishments.
The terms ‘coaching’ and ‘mentoring’ are often used interchangeably. Landsberg (1996) has observed that a good mentor will coach too, as appropriate to the situation and the relationship. Hence, these Knowledge Solutions, which relate to individuals, treat the two terms interchangeably: both are related processes for analysis, reflection, and action, intended to enable employees achieve their full potential with a focus on skills, performance, and “life” (personal) coaching and mentoring. A substantial side effect of investments to bring out potential is that organizations will enable seasoned personnel to delegate more and supervise less. Unlike conventional training, coaching and mentoring concentrate on the person, not the subject; they draw out rather than put in; they develop rather than impose; they reflect rather than direct; they are continuous—not one-time—events. In brief, they are a form of change facilitation. Here is an activity meant to make you reflect on the concepts.

Activity B

By paying special attention to the rationale, explain what you consider to be the difference between classroom teaching, on the one hand, and mentoring and coaching on the other.

To answer this activity, remember the role of a teacher is to teach students in a group, using a textbook. This is usually followed by tests and examinations. Mentoring and coaching, on the other, can deal with a single individual, and this occurs in the workplace. Record your response in your course journal.

WHAT IS MENTORING?

The word ‘mentor’ has its origins in Greek mythology. In his old age, Mentor was a friend of Odysseus. The latter placed Mentor in charge of his son Telemachus when Odysseus left for the Trojan War. The idea was that Mentor should give guidance to Telemachus. Because of Mentor’s near paternal relationship with Telemachus, the name ‘Mentor’ has been adopted in English as a term meaning a father-like teacher (see http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/mentor). Thus, mentor means a trusted friend, counsellor or teacher, usually a more experienced person. Mentoring, therefore, refers to the help that is given and is aimed at shaping an individual’s beliefs and values about entrepreneurship in a positive way. It is often a longer-term career relationship with someone who has mentored before. Clutterbuck (2004) (cited in http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects) defines mentoring as a technique for allowing the transmission of knowledge and experience. The mentor (the person who mentors) is usually more experienced and qualified in business matters than the mentee (the person who receives mentoring). The mentor is often a senior person in the business enterprise who can pass on knowledge and experience and opens doors to otherwise out-of-reach opportunities. A mentor is thus like a sounding board who can give advice and the partner is free to pick and choose what works for them.
Mentoring should not be confused with counselling, as often happens in discussion of these two. Merrick (2008) observes that the goal of counselling is to help entrepreneurs understand the root causes of long-standing performance problems and issues at work. Essentially, therefore, counselling is distinguishable from either mentoring or coaching because it is used to address the individual’s underlying psychological problems. Borrowing from [http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk](http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk), counselling explores personal issues and problems through discussion in order to increase understanding or develop greater self-awareness. The aim is, therefore to lead the client, within the enterprise, towards self-directed actions to rectify any psychological problems.

To reflect on the foregoing, work on this activity.

**Activity C**

With reference to an enterprise you are familiar with,

a. cite one situation where mentoring takes place.

b. cite one situation where counselling takes place.

c. justify your examples.

Record your response in your course journal.

Your response could, be different from that of others, and that does not matter. As an example, a newly hired buyer, who has a good qualification might be experiencing problems dealing with difficult customers. In that case, he will need mentoring from an entrepreneur who has experienced that before. However, if the same employee experiences serious misunderstandings with fellow workers because he has a difficult personality, then this calls for counselling because it is something that is both social and psychological.

**WHAT IS COACHING?**

Coaching is narrower in focus than mentoring, and its goal is to improve an individual’s performance at work, hence it tends to be a short term intervention. As Starcevich (2009:1) puts it, “a coach is trying to direct a person to some end result. The person may choose how to get there, but the coach is strategically assessing and monitoring the progress and giving advice for effectiveness and efficiency”. This view is also supported by CIPD (2004). Thus, when put side-by-side, the mentor has a deep personal interest, is personally involved as a friend who cares about a mentee. On the other hand, the coach develops specific skills for the task, imparts knowledge and challenges performance expectations at work.

The following comprehensive definition by Parsloe (1999:8) sums up the foregoing:
Coaching is a process that enables learning and development to occur and thus performance to improve. To be successful, a coach requires a knowledge and understanding of process as well as the variety of styles, skills and techniques that are appropriate to the context in which the coaching takes place.

Scholars (e.g. Shea, 2002; Starcevich, 2009; Merrick, 2008) often contrast mentoring and coaching in order to bring out the differences. This is mainly because coaching and mentoring share similarities, which, if not distinguished can lead to a lack of objectivity in practical discussion about their role in entrepreneurship. The source www.briefgroup.co.uk/coaching proffers an informative differentiation of the two, and presently we reflect the differences as put forward by Starcevich (2009).

**Table 1: The difference between Mentoring and Coaching**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mentor</th>
<th>Coach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Facilitator with no agenda</td>
<td>Specific agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>Self selecting</td>
<td>Comes with the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of influence</td>
<td>Perceived value</td>
<td>Position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal returns</td>
<td>Affirmation</td>
<td>Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arena</td>
<td>Life</td>
<td>Task</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pause for a while and expand the ideas briefly noted in the second and third columns. Share your understanding with colleagues and your tutor.

The next activity requires you to demonstrate an understanding of coaching in the enterprise you work for.

**Activity D**

Suppose you are a coach. Refer to a typical situation from your enterprise, and complete the second column with relevant information about coaching within the enterprise.

Record your response in your course journal.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core business of the enterprise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The task in which the performance is rated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsatisfactory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill hindering competent performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your position in the business</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The goals you intend to achieve by coaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of the coaching intervention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are no prescribed responses to the items in Column A because your enterprise may not be the same as that of colleagues. The important point is that you should be able to justify your points as you discuss with others. By doing that you will be demonstrating an understanding of what coaching entails vis-à-vis mentoring.

It should be noted, however, that coaching is not the same as training although the two are often used synonymously. Van Dyk et al. (1992:148) define training as the systematic process of changing the behaviour and attitudes of people in a certain direction to increase goal achievement within the organization. It is seen as an essential component of the organisation, and is considered an important management tool used to develop the full effectiveness of the organisation’s most vital resource: its employees. In short, although coaching has similar aims, training is more sustained in terms of time. The idea of taking employees through short courses, workshops, and seminars is probably a good example of training. It usually occurs in groups with the view of systematically developing competencies and skills perceived to be inadequate. As an example, people in the procurement section of an enterprise can be taken for a week-long training workshop on the systems of procurement deemed most relevant. A training intervention can lead to recognition in the form of an attendance certificate.
To conclude, the significance of mentoring and coaching cannot be overemphasized. Both interventions should be based on two considerations. Firstly, the person being coached should know what he/she should learn. Secondly, both parties, that is, the mentor/coach and the benefactor should have a shared understanding of the objectives of the intervention. Cohen (1994) and Tracey (1994) have collectively proposed the following rationale for mentoring and coaching intervention:

- Improves management of human resources
- Individual learning helps organizations to remain competitive
- Promotes efficiency, quality and customer satisfaction
- Helps an organization to adapt to constant change
- Promotes creativity and innovation by the individual
- Integrates the various components of the human resources function
- Improves individual, group and organizational performance

The third aspect of entrepreneurship focused on is business consulting, a concept that has linkages with mentoring and coaching. Our discussion now shifts to that business concept.

**WHAT IS BUSINESS CONSULTING?**

Consulting refers to the practice of helping business enterprises improve their performance primarily through the analysis of existing business problems, and developing plans for improvement. The term *consulting* is a derivative from Latin: *consultare* (to discuss). The person who does consulting is referred to as a *consultant*, while the enterprise or the business of consulting is known as a *consultancy*. Tordoir (1995:140) explains the concept of consultant thus:

> A consultant is usually an expert or professional in a specific field and has a wide knowledge of the subject matter. A consultant usually works for a consultancy firm, or is self-employed, and engages with multiple and changing clients. Thus, clients have access to deeper levels of expertise than would be feasible for them to retain in-house.

Four aspects of the definition have been emphasised, and need to be consciously borne in mind when you engage in consulting.

- Firstly, expertise is required.
- Secondly, as consultant you are expected to be professional.
- Thirdly, consultancy relates to a specific field.
- Fourthly, as consultant, you are not confined to a single client, but to many clients in that particular field.

To sum up, consultancy is the provision of expert advice, analysis and interpretation, which draws upon and applies knowledge, skills, techniques and equipment of the consultant to meet a specific external need. It is noteworthy that consultancy is not synonymous with
research. Pose a while and answer the question: What is research? It is not the objective of the discussion to go into any detail about research since one of the courses for the programme deals in depth with that. For now, suffice it to share a brief definition of research.

Tuckman (1972:1) defines research as follows:

*Research is a systematic attempt to provide answers to questions. Such answers may be abstract, and general. In research, the investigator uncovers facts, and then formulates a generalization.*

Now, work on this activity.

**Activity E**

Looking at the definitions of consulting and research,

1. What do you notice to be the difference between the two concepts?
2. What area do you think requires consultancy in your enterprise?
3. Justify why you think it is necessary to consult in that area.

Record your response in your course journal.

Contrasting the definitions, consultancy is differs from research in that its prime purpose is to use and apply existing expertise, rather than to generate knowledge. Responses to the questions depend entirely on the situation you find yourself in as an entrepreneur. That means even the justification hinges on that situation. To reinforce your response, the following can be said about research. Research:

- attempts to find out answers in a systematic and scientific manner;
- systematically investigates a phenomenon to establish facts; and
- inquires into a problem by searching and searching again.

**SUMMARY**

The first topic set the tone and prepared ground for further discussion by defining and explaining key concepts. These are critical in any progressive business enterprise, and without an understanding of them attainment of entrepreneurial goals is likely to be compromised. The areas covered included:

- definition of mentoring and related terms;
- distinction between mentoring and counselling;
- definition of coaching;
- distinction between coaching and training;
- definition of consulting and related concepts; and
- distinction between consulting and research.
**SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

Entrepreneurs tend to be confused about the distinction between mentoring and coaching.

a. Cite any four similarities and four differences between mentoring and coaching.

b. How does possession of knowledge about similarities and differences of coaching and mentoring help you mentor and coach those in need of that service?

c. Explain to aspiring entrepreneurs why it is necessary to refer to counselling and training in the discussion of mentoring and coaching.
TOPIC 1.2 LEARNING THROUGH MENTORING AND COACHING

INTRODUCTION
Having defined what mentoring and coaching entail, and having explained their differences from related concepts such as counselling and training, the entrepreneur should have a sound understanding of how learning takes place. It has been pointed out that the objective of mentoring and coaching is to modify skill, knowledge and attitudes, an achievement that does not occur at random. Mentoring or coaching people to adjust to work-related tasks is as old as mankind. Traditionally, people who wanted to learn a trade were attached to somebody who gave such guidance. In today’s changing world, mentoring/coaching is expected to be more systematic, and guided by ideas that are tried and tested so as to ensure effective learning. The ideas are referred to as theories. In this topic, you will be introduced to the concept of learning and the learning theories buttressing it. There are many theories that have come to light, and we shall select those considered to be more applicable to the way adults in an enterprise learn. It is by the application of theories that the mentor/coach is able to bring the best out of those he/she interacts with. Out of several theories, these three shall be discussed in some depth: behaviourism, cognitivism, and constructivism. These theoretical views constitute the background for subsequent discussion because they are foundational to the objectives of mentoring and coaching, namely, to facilitate learning of requisite behaviours within an enterprise.

OBJECTIVES
After completing this topic you should be able to:

1. Explain the concept of learning.
2. Distinguish one learning theory from another.
3. Identify the distinguishing characteristics of each theory.
4. Apply the positive aspects of a learning theory to mentoring and coaching interventions.

CONTENT
- What Is Learning?
- Learning Theories.
- Pedagogy.
- Behaviourism.
- Cognitivism.
- Sociocultural Theory.
WARM UP ACTIVITY
1. Briefly explain what you understand by learning. You may use the brief explanation of learning in Topic 1.
2. Why is it important for an entrepreneur to have a sound knowledge of learning theories?
3. Bear in mind your responses as you read on.

Record your response in your course journal.

WHAT IS LEARNING?
Probably one of the commonest questions you need to answer is: What is learning? As coach/mentor, when can you say somebody has learnt something? There is a variety of definitions of learning in Education, and these can also be used to shed light on mentoring and coaching interventions.

According to Bigge (1982:1), learning is an enduring change in a living individual that is not brought about by genetic inheritance. It is a change in insights, behaviour, perception and motivation, or a combination of these. Learning always refers to some systematic change in behaviour or behavioural disposition resulting from experience in some specified situation (Rhodes and Hampton, 2004; Shea, 2002).

Seifert (cited in Van Dyket al., 1992:128) states that learning refers to a relatively permanent or lasting change in a behavioural tendency, which is a result of specific experiences or repetitions of an experience.

From this we can see that intervention in the learning situation is considered the cause of learning, and that learning occurs at some point between the cause and the result. We, therefore, infer that learning has taken place when a person demonstrates certain outcomes spelt out in the objectives, and that person can do something which either he/she could not do before, or can now do it better than before. Learning is thus measurable, and according to Pendaeli (2000), is based on objectives as shown below.

Learning Objectives

- Coaching Outcomes
- Selection of Content
- Evaluation of Learning
The mentor/coach should of necessity have objectives to achieve outcomes, select content, and evaluate learning.

Mercer (1995:4) defines learning as the guided construction of knowledge, a collaborative activity in which the coach/mentor provides support to the learners so that they can eventually stand on their own. Learning, therefore, involves change and is concerned with the acquisition of habits, skills, knowledge and attitudes, enabling the individual to make personal, professional and social adjustments in the workplace.

Burton (cited in Knowles 1990:5) states that learning is a change in the individual due to the interaction between that individual and his/her environment, which fulfils a need and makes him/her more capable of dealing adequately with that environment.

From the definitions, we come up with four central aspects relating to learning, which are worth remembering:

- Learning is a relatively permanent change in behaviour.
- Learning is the result of experience and practice.
- Learning enables the individual to cope with the business environment.
- Learning is not inherited.

Research has shown that in order for learning to take place, there must be some intervention. As a pre-condition for learning, mentoring/coaching refers to the process of guiding the learner through the changes that are implied by learning. According to Rothwell and Sredl (1992:326), coaching/mentoring is planned for, and though it is intended to promote learning, it may in some cases also stifle it. It is the mentor’s/coach’s responsibility to avoid stifling learning (Feger, Woleck, and Hickman, 2004), and that is why there is need to have a clear understanding of learning theories.

LEARNING THEORIES

A learning theory is a systematic, integrated outlook concerning the process in which an individual relates to the environment in a way that improves his/her ability to use the environment more effectively (Bigge, 1982:3).

According to Rothwell and Sredl (1992:326), writers on learning have proposed different approaches to classifying learning theories, while Gordon (2010) has debated the issue of learning in business at some length.

Pedagogy

Pedagogy views learning as a process of giving information, and mainly focuses on instruction than on learning. This approach is what is commonly found in conventional classrooms. In pedagogy, it is assumed that people learn by being exposed to subject matter. Pedagogical learning consists of mastering increasingly sophisticated knowledge,
and the purpose of learning is to absorb information, which is the exact opposite of objectives of mentoring and coaching.

**Behaviourism**

Behaviourism views learning as an association of a series of stimuli engineered by the mentor/coach, and the accompanying responses by learners. Psychologists like B.F. Skinner and J. B. Watson, working in the 1920s (cited in Child, 1981) have formulated principles that explain and predict relationships between stimuli (the means to induce behaviour), the behaviour (observable actions in response to stimuli), and the consequent conditions (rewards or punishment), for example:

*Coach: What do you understand by conflict in the work place? (stimulus)*

*Learner: Conflict is the misunderstanding between two people (response)*

*Coach: That’s good (feedback)*

The coach’s stimulus anticipates certain behaviour. The learner’s response fulfils the anticipation. The coach’s positive feedback confirms that the learner’s behaviour is appropriate, so the learner associates his/her behaviour with success so that he/she is likely to react more favourably to stimuli in the future.

Behaviourism stresses the importance of external environmental influences (stimuli) on human behaviour. Those who belong to the behaviourist school share three primary assumptions:

- **Firstly**, attention is focused on present behaviour, and not what happened in the past.
- **Secondly**, only external phenomena that can be observed are important.
- **Thirdly**, the desired results of learning are specified in measurable terms.

Behaviourism is associated with the objectives model of learning, that is, the mentor/coach specifies objectives at the outset, and intervention is meant to help achieve the stated objectives. That is why we say the learner’s achievements can be measured. For example, the coach may want employees to be able to identify the main points in an argument, or interpret given materials such as graphs. Both of these are examples of the coach’s intentions to bring about change in the learners’ skills or knowledge. Coaches who use objectives-centred interventions tend to:

- reward learners for correct performance, and correct them promptly when performance is incorrect;
- encourage repetition of acts performed correctly;
- frequently ask questions to gather feedback on learning progress; and
- state objectives clearly in advance.
What aspects of training in your department, render themselves more amenable to the use of behaviourism? Reflect on this question before moving on to the next learning theory, cognitivism.

**Cognitivism**

Cognitivists (proponents of cognitivism) view learning as a result of insight and perception. Unlike behaviourism, cognitive learning theory is concerned with insight into and understanding of a task or problem in an enterprise. It focuses on the internal and the personal, not the external influences of stimuli and responses as what happens with behaviourism. In other words, there must be willingness to learn from within the learner (innate tendencies) supported by motivation. To simplify, cognitivism comes as a reaction to behaviourism, arguing that compelling an employee to learn a skill, when he/she is not willing to do so, does not lead to learning. This recalls the adage that you can take a horse to the river, but you cannot force it to drink. The major proponent of cognitivism is Piaget (1983). His ideas are that:

- The human mind is throughout life preoccupied with cognitive processes of adaptation to circumstances.
- Cognition is one form of adaptation between the organism and the environment.
- The learner is trying to make sense of the enterprise, just as any organism must try to adapt to its environment.
- Adaptation in cognition is preceded by assimilation and accommodation.
- Assimilation involves relating new information to what an employee may already know though not fully (pre-existing structures of knowledge).
- Accommodation involves developing totally new concepts altogether under pressure from problems and information available for solving such problems.
- Assimilation leads to accommodation.

An example of assimilation is a person who all along has known that a car has one fuel tank and that the engine of car is in front. During a discussion, he is informed that cars traveling long distances can have what are known as reserve tanks, so that such a car will have two tanks. Similarly, he is informed that some cars e.g. Volkswagen have their engine at the back. To the extent that the person has added new knowledge about car tanks and location of car engines, we can say the person has assimilated new knowledge resulting in insight and understanding. However, because his perception about fuel tanks and car engines shall henceforth be different from what it was before, we can conclude that accommodation has taken place in the cognitive structure. According to Meadows (cited in Daniels and Edwards, 2004:136) these two cognitive processes or twin functional invariants work together throughout the whole of cognitive life. Assimilation and accommodation lead to thoroughly developed knowledge.
This is an oversimplification of the cognitive theory aimed at helping the entrepreneur relate it to mentoring/coaching circumstances. The next activity encourages you to apply cognitive theory to a typical situation in the enterprise.

**Activity A**

Illustrate your understanding of assimilation and accommodation with reference to an aspect of mentoring or coaching in your organization. Support your response with typical entrepreneurial examples.

The idea of doing this activity is to strengthen your understanding of the two concepts (and probably also assimilate and accommodate). After coming up with an illustration, it is best to discuss it with colleagues, and also listen to their own examples.

Record your response in your course journal.

At this juncture, it is worth acknowledging that cognitive learning theorists see human nature as being more complex than behaviourists do. In their view, human beings are easily able to adapt to their environment and are also capable of changing it. Mentoring/coaching intervention, following cognitive theory, is experience-centred. In this case the mentor/coach tends to:

- Stress learning of new concepts and knowledge.
- Relate parts of a given challenge in the enterprise to the whole.
- Help learners solve work related problems.
- Provide employees opportunities to make decisions and provide solutions to problems.
- Expose mentees to various interpretations and viewpoints.
- Encourage restructuring of views so that those being coached are more open to new experiences.
- Structure information so that those being coached can assimilate it.
- Arrange instruction according to level of difficulty.

**Socio-Cultural Theory (Constructivism)**

This is a developmental theory that views learning from the point of view of social and cultural context. According to this theory, knowledge is acquired through the processes referred to as socialization. The term socialization refers to the incorporation of the individual being coached or mentored as a member of the enterprise. According to this theory, more knowledgeable and experienced individuals contribute to the mentee’s socialization by arranging the environment and the tasks encountered in it, and guiding the learner’s participation in the enterprise’s valued practices. The theory aims at developing the skills, knowledge and performance of the employee through conscious support.
The fundamental assumption of the developmental perspective on co-operative learning is that interaction between mentors/coaches and employees, while performing appropriate tasks, facilitates learning of critical knowledge and work habits. Developmental learning theorists (e.g. Bruner, 1986; Mercer, 1995) have argued that construction of knowledge is a guided affair in which interaction and talk between the learner and the mentor/coach is used to shape representations of reality and interpretations of experience. Learning is, therefore, an element of the guided construction of knowledge. Some of the main ideas about the socio-cultural theory arise from a re-interpretation of Vygotsky’s (1978) ideas, and include the following:

- People use language as a social mode of thinking to construct knowledge.
- Language, in the construction of knowledge, is used to share experience, and so to collectively, and jointly make sense of it.
- Some of the most creative thinking takes place when people are talking together.
- One way that mentors/coaches can help learners make sense of knowledge and business experiences is by introducing them to dialogues in situations where the context helps make meanings clearer.
- The limits of a person’s learning or problem-solving ability can be expanded if another person provides the right kind of cognitive support.
- The mentee’s actual achievement is a measure of the effectiveness of the communication between the mentor and the learner.
- The conversations, which take place in and around entrepreneurial activities constrain or extend the potential of individual learners to acquire knowledge and skills.

Bruner (1986) refers to the support given the mentee as scaffolding to highlight the way that the mentor/mentee can become productively involved in the learning process.

### Activity B

With reference to the Socio-cultural approach, briefly explain:

a. what you understand by learning as a joint collaborative activity.

b. the importance of interaction in the attainment of mentoring/coaching goals.

Record your response in your course journal.

In brief terms, collaborative activity means that for the adult to learn any work-related competencies there is need for someone to provide guidance so that the learner goes beyond his/her present level of knowledge to higher levels. Interaction, on the other hand, is the exchange of views about a given issue using language for mediation purposes. If mentor and mentee do not interact, and communicate purposefully, efforts to develop the learner will be in vain. As a cultural tool, language is of primary importance in the interaction.
It is, however, noted that there is no single theory that is best. An enterprising mentor/coach will combine the benefits of individual theories by getting the best from each. This is normally referred to as the eclectic approach.

**Summary**

In this topic we examined learning theories, and covered the following key points.

1. Definition of learning and highlighting the key ideas associated with it.
2. Explanation of the importance of objectives in the learning process.
3. Examination of three learning theories (behaviourism, cognitivism, and constructivism).
4. Outlining the distinguishing characteristics of individual theories.
5. Demonstration of the link between learning theories and mentoring/coaching.

**Self-reflection questions**

1. Why do you think the mentor or coach needs grounding in theories of learning?
2. Outline the characteristic features of behaviourism, cognitivism, and constructivism, and write a brief case study from your enterprise demonstrating how each theory can be applied to successful mentoring and coaching.
3. It has been said that although mentors and coaches continue to use behaviourism, which has led to the importance of specifying learning objectives, this theory has some weaknesses. Suggest some of its weaknesses and justify your view.

**Additional references**

If you wish to learn more about this topic it is recommended you review one or more of the following books, articles or web sites.

15. www.briefgroup.co.uk/coaching (Retrieved 18/03/2011)
UNIT ONE – SUMMARY

<Insert unit summary>

ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

<Insert instructions for completion of unit assignment>
UNIT TWO – MENTORING/COACHING IN A BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

INTRODUCTION

The unit takes our discussion further to include competencies that the mentor or tutor should possess in order to carry out interventions. Not everyone in an enterprise is capable of offering the service required. The second topic adds on to the competencies by examining some of the methods mentors and coaches ought to be familiar with. Without a sound grasp of appropriate methods, mentoring and coaching become a matter of guesswork and a hit or miss affair.

OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit you should be able to:

1. Identify competencies needed by the mentor/coach to offer the service more efficiently.
2. Explain what each competency involves.
3. Outline some of the methods that can be used to carry out mentoring and coaching.
4. Apply methods to mentoring sessions.

UNIT READINGS

As you complete this unit you are required to read the following chapters/articles:

- <Insert list of required readings>.

ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

<Insert a description of the unit assignments, activities and discussions to be completed as they progress through the unit. Detailed instructions can be attached as Appendices to the course main body.>
**TOPIC 2.1 - MENTOR/COACH COMPETENCIES**

**INTRODUCTION**
What competencies do you think you as a mentor/coach should possess in order to make a difference on those you train? The role of the mentor/coach in a business enterprise is crucial, and those who carry it out should have what it takes to do so. Competencies can be divided into categories and applied to situations, as discussed subsequently.

**OBJECTIVES**
After working through this topic you should be able to:

1. Explain the term ‘competencies’.
2. Categorise competencies.
3. Explain the significance of different competencies.
4. List and explain the roles of the mentor/mentee.
5. Integrate the mentor/coach roles with the competencies.

**CONTENT**
- The Key Competencies.
- Technical Competencies.
- Business Competencies.
- Interpersonal Competencies.
- Intellectual Competencies.
- The Roles of The Mentor.

**WARM UP ACTIVITY**
What competencies do you think you need as a mentor or coach? List as many as you can in the space below, then read what follows.

Record your response in your course journal.

**THE KEY COMPETENCIES**
According to McLagan (1989:43) competencies refer to the behavioural catalogue of the mentor/coach. Competencies are the knowledge and skills that will enable the mentor/coach to mentor or coach. Competencies fall into four categories:

- Technical Competencies.
- Business Competencies.
- Interpersonal Competencies.
- Intellectual Competencies.

Each one is explained below.
Technical Competencies

Technical competencies refer to the functional knowledge and skills that a trainer has, and include the following:

1. **Understanding adult learning**: The mentor/coach should understand how adults acquire and use knowledge, skills and attitudes with specific reference to the business enterprise. Employees will have individual differences, and an appreciation of their significance in the manner of approaching mentoring and coaching is necessary.

2. **Facilities skills**: This skill requires the mentor/coach to plan and co-ordinate the training programme in a cost effective manner, utilizing resources efficiently and effectively.

3. **Research skills**: The mentor/coach should proceed on the basis of facts obtained from the enterprise and entrepreneurial challenges faced. Research skills and methodologies should be used to establish mentoring/coaching needs, collecting data, and interpreting the situation more objectively. One of the modules in the BBE programme is all about research, and should provide the necessary guidance.

4. **Career development theories**: The mentor/coach should have a sound knowledge of techniques and methods used in career development, and understand their appropriate uses.

5. **Competency identification**: The trainer should have the competency to identify the knowledge and skills required for the jobs, tasks, or roles for which those under his/her care are trained.

6. **Computer competence**: In today’s fast changing world, it is nearly impossible to conduct mentoring/coaching without a basic knowledge and understanding of computers.

7. **Objective preparation skill**: The trainer should be able to prepare clear statements, which describe desired output for whatever mentoring or coaching is to be done.

8. **Performance observation**: The trainer should have the competency to track and describe communicatively the performance of employees in the enterprise and their effects on tasks set to achieve entrepreneurial goals.

9. **Knowledge of subject**: The basis of mentoring/coaching is some content, skills or attitudes to be learnt, personalized, and applied by those being trained. A mentor/coach without a sound knowledge of content will not fulfil his/her role properly. It is, therefore, important that the mentor/coach should have the necessary occupational knowledge and expertise.

The following activity requires you to reflect on the foregoing.
Activity A

a. Suggest any two more skills that may not have been included in the list.
b. Go over the competencies again, including the two you suggested. Which ones do you think you as mentor/coach need to develop more than the others? Note them down here.
c. Explain why you need to develop those you mentioned in b) above more than others.

Record your response in your course journal.

For the two skills, the choice is yours. That means you now have twelve skills. Out of these, you then select those you need to improve on. The justification of your chosen ones gives you an indication of where there is need for improvement. On that basis you should take action to improve in those, so that mentoring/coaching are enhanced.

In the next section, we examine business competencies.

Business Competencies

Did you know that your organisation is a business, providing a service or product to the nation? Are you aware that, as mentor/coach, you need to understand the business approach to mentoring/coaching? A good mentor/coach must develop business competencies, and these have a strong management and administration base. The following are some of them.

1. **Business understanding:** This involves knowledge about functions of a business, economic vulnerabilities, measurements, distribution channels, input, output and information sources that define an enterprise relative to the industry or sector.

2. **An understanding of organizational behaviour:** The mentor/coach should see business enterprises as dynamic political, economic and social systems with multiple goals, and use this broader perspective as a framework for understanding and influencing events and change as mentoring and coaching are implemented.

3. **Understanding the enterprise:** The mentor/coach ought to be familiar with the strategy, structure, power networks, financial position and systems of the organisation for which training is undertaken.

4. **Change management skills:** Business enterprises are, by nature, dynamic. It is, therefore, important for the trainers to be sensitive to changes that take place from time-to-time and factor that into mentoring/coaching interventions.

Business competencies should be harmonized with the vision and mission of your organization. In the space provided, write the vision and mission statement of your organization.
Interpersonal Competencies

Interpersonal competencies are concerned with the way mentors and coaches interact with those under their care, and have a strong communication base. These are the main ones:

1. **Mentoring/Coaching skills**: The trainer should possess these skills in order to help individuals recognise and understand personal needs, values, problems and goals to improve performance.

2. **Feedback skills**: These involve communicating information, opinions, observations and conclusions so that they are understood and can be agreed upon by both the mentor and mentee, or the coach and those being coached.

3. **Group process skills**: Mentoring, but more especially coaching, can also be conducted in groups. The mentor/coach should, therefore, know what group dynamics are, and be able to influence such groups so that tasks, relationships and individual needs are addressed.

4. **Presentation skills**: A trainer without sound presentation competencies will achieve little success in the mentoring/coaching role. The skill involves presenting information orally and in written form so that the specified objectives are achieved.

5. **Questioning skills**: Training is not feasible without the ability to ask relevant questions at different levels to solicit information from those being mentored or coached. The so-called Socratic method guides learners towards construction of new levels of understanding.

6. **Relationship building**: This is an important competency aimed at establishing relationships and networks across a broad range of people and groups in the enterprise.

7. **Writing competency**: The trainer should be able to prepare written material that follows generally accepted rules of style and form, is appropriate for the audience, is creative and accomplishes its intended purpose.

Activity B, which comes next, encourages you to reflect on interpersonal skills.

### Activity B

Four interpersonal skills have been singled out for close examination. In the second column, explain against the skill (in the first column) what would happen to mentoring and coaching if that skill is not exercised.

Record your response in your course journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>What would happen if the mentor does not have that skill?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feedback skills</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>What would happen if the mentor does not have that skill?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring/Coaching skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses will differ from person to person. However, in a situation where the mentor/coach does not give feedback, there will be no progress made simply because there is no interaction. This also directly impacts on the relationship, because the absence of feedback leads to a weak relationship. Similarly, someone who lacks mentoring/coaching skills cannot perform the role according to expectation. Finally, a mentor who does not possess questioning skills cannot properly solicit information from the mentee.

**Intellectual Competencies**

The knowledge and skills related to thinking and the way we process information are referred to as intellectual skills. These are an important aspect for the mentor/coach. Among many others are the following:

1. **Conceptualisation**: This is the way the mentor/coach understands ideas and key issues about the knowledge that forms the basis for mentoring/coaching.
2. **Information search skills**: This involves gathering information from various sources and put that to good use when conducting mentoring/coaching.
3. **Data interpretation skills**: These are skills that involve scanning, evaluating, putting together information and drawing conclusions from data in order to conduct more effective coaching. The research course, one of the courses on the programme, gives more detailed insight into data interpretation skills.
4. **Intellectual versatility skills**: This is a range of competencies that involves recognizing, exploring and using ideas and practices to think logically and objectively about issues in question.
5. **Observation skills**: The mentor/coach should be able to recognise objectively what is happening in the different sections of, how the trainees react to the course, and the overall impact of the course on individual development.
6. **Self-knowledge**: As mentor/coach, you should know your personal values, needs, interests, and your capability to train others to develop the enterprise more
meaningfully. Self-knowledge enhances capacity to mentor and coach more effectively.

The activity that follows requires that you examine yourself as mentor/coach, and say what you think about your intellectual skills.

**Activity C**

a. Identify any three intellectual skills, which you think you need to develop (as a priority).
b. Explain how you intend to develop those skills.
c. How do those skills relate to the mentoring/coaching interventions in your enterprise?

Record your response in your course journal.

The choice of skills is purely personal, and depends on what you consider to be your deficiencies. Listing the competencies is an acknowledgement that you will do something about them in order to improve effectiveness as a mentor/coach. Thereafter, you should then discuss how the skills impact on your practice in the organisation you serve.

**THE ROLE OF THE MENTOR/COACH**

Quite apart from the competencies and skills you should acquire, it is necessary to have a clear perspective of your roles. As will be appreciated, these roles are numerous. Think of any two roles you regard as key to your function as mentor/coach.

Now, examine the following roles identified by McLagan (1989:49).

**Researcher**

As mentor/coach, you should be able to identify, develop and test new information, and demonstrate how the information can be used to improve the individual employee’s or the organisation’s performance.

**Course Designer**

As mentor/coach, you will be called upon to design courses to meet specific needs of employees. That means you should fulfil the role of preparing objectives for mentoring or coaching, identify appropriate content to achieve objectives, apply the most appropriate methods to deliver the course, decide how outcomes are evaluated, and come up with plans for training sessions.

**Change Agent**

Change is a permanent feature of every organisation. It is, therefore, your role to influence and support change. Through mentoring/coaching, you work to improve the functioning of groups, and departments, as well as to change the behaviour of individuals within the company.
Developer of Course Materials

As a developer of materials, it is your role to produce written or electronically mediated coaching materials. These will include audio/video tapes, graphs, and charts, aimed at helping employees to perform more effectively.

Needs Analyst

In this particular role, the mentor/coach is expected to identify knowledge gaps, ideal and actual performance conditions, and determining causes of discrepancies. The analyst gathers information from members of the organisation and other productivity-related options in order to determine the extent to which problems exist before mentoring/coaching can take place.

Career Advisor

The mentor/coach fulfils the role of helping individuals to assess personal competencies, values and goals in order to identify plan and implement career development actions. To be effective, there must be a clear understanding of the relationship between the individual’s needs and general adjustment so as to cope with career problems. As an individual learns to cope with career problems, his/her self-esteem and general adjustment to organisational needs, and to life, improves. The worker who is adjusted to entrepreneurial tasks, is also a better adjusted person. The mentor/coach, therefore, works to help people find their way in the world of work (Pace et al. 1991:157).

Evaluator

As evaluator, the trainer fulfils the role of identifying the impact of an intervention on the individual’s or organisation’s effectiveness. Tau and Thutoetsile (cited in Koul and Kanwar, 2006:27) have observed that evaluation (an aspect of quality assurance) is achieved through extensive consultation and participation processes, thus leading employees to understand and play their roles more clearly.

Manager

As manager, the mentor/coach fulfils the role of providing co-ordination and support services for the provision of coaching and mentoring interventions from beginning to end. The management function entails organisational skills including clear planning, setting and keeping to targets and deadlines, good monitoring and reporting frameworks, and appropriate flexibility.

To what extent do these roles agree with your experience in your organisation? We recognize that practitioners perform all the roles discussed above to a greater or lesser
extent as part of the overall job. The roles should be seen as integrated and interrelated. However, few people are more likely to perform the full range of roles, and in practice are more likely to be held responsible for clusters of roles. Now, work on the next activity that is based on the roles.

**Activity D**

The following table has been designed to help you remember the roles of the mentor/coach. Complete it by giving any two key responsibilities associated with each role. Record your response in your course journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Course designer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change agent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developer of course materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs analyst</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Career developer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluator</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Read the roles again, and compare your key responsibilities in the second column with the content you will have read.
SUMMARY
In this topic we discussed mentor/coach competencies, and in the process, covered the following main points:

- The four categories of competencies
- The skills and competencies belonging to each category
- Reflection on the different competencies and their applicability
- The roles of the mentor/mentee
- The interrelatedness of mentor/coach roles and competencies

SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS
1. Explain the differences between technical and business competencies in mentoring/coaching.
2. What are interpersonal competencies?
3. Explain the meaning of conceptualisation and data interpretation as intellectual skills in mentoring and coaching.
4. Suggest ways in which the mentor/coach is a change agent within an enterprise.

Record your response in your course journal.


**Topic 2.2 - Mentoring/Coaching Procedures, Methods, And Barriers**

**Introduction**

Based on competencies and skills the mentor/coach ought to possess, and based on the roles discussed in the foregoing topic, awareness of methods, their judicious selection, and application to mentoring situations is critical if any positive change on employee performance is to be made. However, before application of methods, important steps have to be taken as some kind of pre-requisite procedure starting with needs analysis for mentoring/coaching right up to evaluation of performance. Methods and their application value will be discussed as the basis for coaching and mentoring. Our discussion is then concluded with an examination of what could prevent effective coaching from taking place, namely, barriers to mentoring and coaching interventions.

**Objectives**

After completing this topic you should be able to:

1. Describe the critical events in the process of mentoring/coaching.
2. Define motivation and explain its relevance in mentoring/coaching interventions.
3. Discuss three on-the-job training methods.
4. Illustrate with examples how each method can be applied to your enterprise.
5. Explore barriers to learning and how the mentor can overcome them during intervention.

**Content**

- Critical Events
- Motivation
- On-The-Job Training Methods
- Secondment
- Job Rotation
- Coaching
- Mentoring
- Barriers To Learning
- Barriers Attributable To The Mentor/Coach
- Environmental Barriers
- Language Barriers
- Psychological Barriers

**Critical Events**

Langenbach (1993:14-33) has proposed a number of events about intervention. The mentor or coach should begin by establishing whether or not there is need for intervention. Specifying the performance of the individual in the job and establishing what that incumbent needs in order to perform more efficiently are also discussed. Once needs have been confirmed, objectives for training are spelt out and instructional strategies selected,
taking into account resources required. Intervention then takes place, followed by evaluation. The steps are summarized below.

### Instructional Design Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Identify needs of organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Define job performance requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Identify learner needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>List performance objectives to address learner needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Select instructional strategies and methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Identify instructional resources required to support mentoring interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Develop interventions and supporting materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Conduct mentoring and coaching intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Evaluate performance after intervention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mentoring and coaching are processes whose effectiveness depends on how you are able to sustain the attention and interest of those being mentored or coached. The beneficiaries must remain motivated during the process.

**Motivation**

Educationists (e.g. Hall, 2002) recognise that no learning can take place when learners are not motivated. It is one thing to have under you some individuals for mentoring or coaching, and quite another to make them learn. Put simply, motivation is the drive and willingness to learn, and that willingness depends on a variety of factors. Attitude is one of the factors, and trainers need to help adult learners build positive attitudes towards the intervention. The attitude that adults have will directly influence how receptive they are to the mentoring/coaching intervention. These attitudes are usually directed towards one or more of the following: the facilitator, the entrepreneurial task on which intervention is centred, and the participants’ expectation of success in the learning activity.

Wlodkowski (1985) proposes a number of strategies that the mentor/coach can adopt to get individuals more involved in the intervention. These include:

- Indicate your intention to work with the learners to help them master skills or work related attitudes that can enhance their performance.
- Eliminate and minimise any negative conditions that surround the situation that has necessitated intervention.
- Identify and deal with the possible wrong beliefs, expectations, and assumptions that may underlie negative learner attitude.
- Help the individual to attribute their success to their own ability, and help them understand that effort and persistence can overcome failure.
- Make the goal for mentoring or coaching as clear as possible.

Now, share your experiences with colleagues by working on this activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For each strategy discussed above, suggest concrete examples from your mentoring/coaching situations where it can be applied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record your response in your course journal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Situations will vary, and individual trainers will have different experiences. Link your examples to typical circumstances in the enterprise, and where possible, share with peers.

**ON-THE-JOB TRAINING METHODS AND TECHNIQUES**

Mentoring/coaching are different from classroom teaching in that they are done on the job, to address perceived deficiencies. Rae (2000:102) proposed the following on-the-job training methods that are alternatives to the direct content methods.

**Secondment**

Mentoring and coaching are implicit in secondment. Secondment relies on the exposure of an employee to performance of work in a different setup to enable the learner to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes. This involves the temporary transfer of an employee, not for contingency reasons but to another role in another area of work. Secondment is designed to enable the transferred employees to extend their knowledge and skills to afford them broader bases for development. Secondment is guided by the development needs of the individual and the development opportunities available to the transferred employees.

**Job Rotation**

While job rotation can take place when a job-holder leaves his/her job on promotion, it can also be used as a deliberate mentoring/coaching method to develop an individual employee. Rotation results in the employee becoming multi-skilled, and directly leads to the development of teamwork attitudes and behaviours, as well as enhancing job satisfaction. According to Gunigle (1998), rotation should be viewed as a long-term process in both mentoring and coaching. In the next activity share your understanding about the two methods discussed above.
Activity B

a. Briefly explain how secondment is done in your enterprise.

b. From personal experience, or from other people’s experience, illustrate the benefits of secondment and rotation in the mentoring and coaching processes.

Record your response in your course journal.

The important point to note is that the two methods are long term, and may not be used to address immediate challenges. However, when these are used, there could be positive results. The reference you make to your business organization should demonstrate benefits that can accrue.

COACHING

Coaching is a broad method comprising several methods and techniques. Scholars in the field of coaching (cf. Megginson, Joy – Matthews and Banfield, 1993; Clutterbuck, 2001) recognize its increasing importance in the business world, and emphasize the need to transform the mindset of managers to enable them to view human resources development, through coaching, not as a cost but an investment.

Coaching can be used for both training and development purposes, but is confined to one or two staff. A coaching programme is based on real work tasks. It is, therefore, an ideal multiple purpose training and development approach, observes Shora (1999). The formulation of objectives is the initial focus of attention. It is then followed by determining the approaches that must be used such as coaching by line managers, subject matter experts or experienced colleagues.

The functions of coaching include:

- Renewal training necessitated by the need to refresh learners after they have forgotten important knowledge they possessed when they joined the enterprise
- Facilitates new or extended duties of work. Such extension requires the job-holder to extend or increase skills beyond existing levels.
- Promotes career development. In this context, coaching facilitates the acquisitions of new knowledge, skills and attitudes either for purposes of promotion, or improvement of performance.
- Consolidation of competencies. It helps learners to fine-tune any skills they may have acquired on a training course. Knowledge acquired off the job very often needs to be adapted to a real life work situation. Coaching creates opportunities to help learners transfer training to particular work contexts.
Rae (2000:74) identified numerous advantages that accrue from this method of training and developing staff that will be enjoyed by the individual, line manager and the organization. These are:

- Improved individual performance;
- Improved team performance;
- Improved cumulative performance of the organization;
- Staff are better informed and more aware;
- Staff are better equipped for changes that occur;
- Staff are encouraged to be more innovative;
- Increased job satisfaction usually results;
- Manager eventually has more time for management level tasks;
- More systematic management progression is possible;
- Learning is performed at the workplace;
- Real work is used and thus leads to increased credibility in the eyes of the learners;
- The translation from learning to the work situation is increased; and
- The coaches themselves develop skills.

Coaching is no exception to the rule that actions that create opportunities will almost certainly possess some disadvantages, including the following:

- Time is required for both the learner and the coach.
- Coached skills are not always followed up by opportunities to practice them permanently.
- Expectations can be falsely raised.
- May be seen as a lost opportunity instead of going on a certificate-awarding course.
- Might damage existing staff relationships if some staff are excluded.
- As it requires line managers’ personal involvement, it may be alien to the managers’ preferred style of management.

Disadvantages of coaching tend to be more pronounced in some organisations than in others. Work on the following activity to reflect on some of the disadvantages raised above.

Activity C

Two columns are given below. In the first column, a disadvantage of coaching is itemised. The second column is left blank. Against each item, cite a typical example from a business enterprise to illustrate the truth of the disadvantages.

Record your response in your course journal.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disadvantage</th>
<th>Example from the workplace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of time for coaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damage to existing staff relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations can be falsely raised</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to practice newly acquired</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge and skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The examples will be as many as the different workplaces. For example, excluded members of the enterprise might develop an attitude that those selected for coaching are favourites of management. This is likely to result in strained relationships that interfere with performance. After citing your examples, imagine how you could ensure that negative developments are avoided.

Rae (2000: 75) has proposed a six-stage model for developing the coaching process as follows:

**Stage 1: Recognizing the Need**

Recognizing the need for the process of coaching may arise from problems identified by the performance appraisal process, or by the supervisor. The process of coaching must not be perceived as solely for the high flyers, the favoured worker, or merely concentrating on remedial training for the poor performer.

The major target groups for the coaching process are:

- the potential high flyers;
- succession candidates and those who are interested in career development;
- the poor performer who requires remedial training;
- staff required to perform new or extended duties or tasks;
- those needing consolidation of learning following participation in some other training form; and
- frustrated workers who need to have their commitment and energy rekindled.

It is important for the coach to confirm that coaching will be a most cost effective form of satisfying learning needs. Training and development objectives for either the individual or the group must be formulated.
Stage 2: Identifying the Opportunities for Coaching

These may flow from:

- day-to-day work of the identified employee;
- following failures, mistakes, or setbacks;
- relief coverage;
- planned delegation;
- promotion or career development;
- second mentor career development;
- projects, assignments, working parties, research or pilot studies;
- following training events;
- deputizing at meetings for manager; and
- introduction of new work.

Stage 3: Setting the Coaching Climate

It is critical to take deliberate measures to set the climate by demonstrating an open, honest and sincere interest in the learners. The coach should work collaboratively with the trainee to:

- set clear, quarterly standards with agreement regularly;
- make the environment motivating;
- review expectations for development regularly;
- accept that seeking help or admitting weaknesses is not wrong;
- encourage creative risk taking;
- concentrate on the future rather than dwell on the past;
- encourage learning from mistakes and successes;
- demonstrate that coaching is an ongoing process;
- fully open, frank and participative group or team meetings;
- encourage team members to seek and offer help; and
- develop a working environment of openness and trust.

Stage 4: Meeting the Learner

Encourage the learner to think about the proposed meeting agenda and its rationale in advance. In the meeting the coach should lead the learner to accept the need to change and develop rather than being imposed by the coach. A coaching plan must be proposed, discussed and agreed.

Stage 5: Agreeing the Assignment

The methodology for executing the task must be agreed – the learner being encouraged to determine the methodology in order to ensure ownership and motivation.
Stage 6: Implementation

Once the plans for implementation have been designed, they should be implemented expeditiously to avoid losing momentum. The learner should be allowed to proceed according to set plans, unless the learner is off-target completely. However, the learner must be allowed to make mistakes, and learn from them.

Stage 7: Review

Interim and final reviews are almost as important as the task itself. Reviews provide both the learner and coach an opportunity to reflect and assess the status of the task and the way forward. The final review determines learning and the achievement of the task. The final review maps out the strategies for the extension of learner development.

The foregoing stages of coaching are crucial in achieving intervention results. To what extent can you apply them to your enterprise? In the next activity, share your views.

Activity D

Suppose you are a supervisor in an enterprise. An employee keeps on coming late to work, and as a result his/her output is low. You know that the person is knowledgeable, but the performance does not reflect what the person is capable of. At the mid-year appraisal, you draw the employee’s attention to the issue, and there is a verbal promise that the individual will improve. In the months that follow, you do not notice any change in the performance, and you decide to do some coaching following the stages discussed above. Against each stage, briefly explain what you would do as you implement the mentoring/coaching process with reference to this particular situation.

Record your response in your course journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Explanation of what you would do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognising the need</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying opportunity for coaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting the coaching climate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting the employee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeing the assignment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your response is a fitting way of applying ideas you have interacted with. How you deal with each stage concerning the situation will be significant in as far as dealing with typical entrepreneurial situations is concerned.

**MENTORING TECHNIQUES**

Although there is an overlap between coaching and mentoring, we made a differentiation in which it was stated that a mentor is like a sounding board who gives advice, but the partner is free to pick and choose what to do. The context does not have specific performance objectives. On the other hand, a coach is trying to direct a person to some end result. The person may choose how to get there, and the coach is strategically assessing and monitoring the progress and giving advice for effectiveness and efficiency. It is on the basis of this distinction that the following techniques and mentoring considerations are suggested. Eaton and Johnson (2001) suggest actions to take when mentoring.

**Building Skills:** Set up opportunities for new skills to be learned and practiced.

- Use coaching and mentoring to break up large-scale tasks into smaller ones, gradually introducing new skills.
- Before selecting a training programme, coach and mentor your staff to identify performance targets they want to achieve.

**Progressing Projects:** Oversee progress and monitor any problems on projects.

- Link coaching and mentoring sessions with progress reports over the life of the project.
- Work through problems that could hinder the successful completion of the project.

**Developing Careers:** Prepare staff for promotion or show them a clear career path.

- Work on coaching and mentoring goals that could result in recognition for staff achievements.
- Focus on long-term projects that are challenging and bring out potential, rather than small-scale jobs.

**Solving Problems:** Help staff to identify problems and possible routes to a solution.

- Encourage staff to define the problem and to come up with their own route to a solution.
- Remain sympathetic to your staff’s difficulties, while encouraging them to deal with problems robustly.
**Brainstorming:** Direct the creative input of the team to keep projects on track.

- Accentuate the generation of creative options rather than getting bogged down in problems.
- In team coaching and mentoring, take a lead by offering creative ideas of your own, and then invite the team to assess them.

**Overcoming Conflicts:** Diffuse disagreements among team members.

- Coach and mentor staff to develop greater insights into others' perspectives and therefore avoid misunderstandings.

**Re-motivating Staff:** Restore enthusiasm and commitment within the team.

- Establish people's needs and aspirations and link these to performance targets.
- Be prepared to dig for the issues that really concern the employee and be ready to talk them through these issues.

**BARRIERS TO LEARNING**

The coach or mentor could have the best objectives and the best teaching methods, but it does not follow that such objectives will be achieved. In any meaningful discussion of coaching and mentoring, we ought to recognize that certain variables could prevent learning from taking place. These are referred to as *barriers.*

Rae (2000: 21 – 44) and Honey, Peter and Mumford (1996) have identified different types of learning barriers. The mentor/coach must be aware of such barriers to learning which could undermine their training and development efforts. The unavailability of suitable mentors/coaches poses serious challenges. They may be unskilled, or may lack the requisite instructional skills. We shall begin with barriers of the mentor/coach.

**Barriers Attributable to the Mentor/Coach**

According to Rae (2000: 21- 44) the trainer can inhibit the learning process in a variety of ways such as:

1. **The Use of inappropriate content.**
   
   This is usually caused by poor needs analysis. A vigorous identification of training needs must be conducted to establish what the learners:
   
   - must know;
   - could know; and
   - presently know.
2. **Use of wrong coaching approach.**

   Different types of learning objectives require different methods and tactics to communicate. Psychomotor objectives, which of necessity involve the teaching of physical skills, require such methods as demonstration, or role-play. Some methods are suitable for cognitive objectives, while others are more appropriate for affective objectives, that is, objectives to do with how individuals feel. A coach/mentor who lacks this awareness is likely to use the wrong methods.

3. **The unskilled trainer.**

   The coach, as trainer, may use methods and techniques that are not effective in spite of advice. This problem can be addressed through a training of trainers workshop in the additional skills required.

4. **The unskilled speaker.**

   This problem manifests itself in the deficiencies in actual presentation of material. The learners will observe too many hesitations, verbal noises and distracting mannerisms. These distractions will have the effect of making learners take more notice of them rather than of the message. The training of coaches on how to communicate through speech, can enhance their abilities to present materials effectively. The BBE course on business communication will be helpful in ensuring conscious improvement on both speech and related skills.

5. **Accent.**

   If a trainer’s accent is difficult to cope with on the part of the employee being coached, it may create misunderstanding and poor comprehension. This is true especially when the accent of the coach is affected by mother-tongue interference.

6. **Prejudices.**

   The trainer can unconsciously reveal his/her prejudices on such issues as race, sex, age, religion and political ideology. The obvious danger is that the employee being coached is likely to close off and fail to benefit from the coaching effort.

7. **Imposition of Views On the Trainees by the Trainer.**

   This may take such forms as:
   
   - Ignoring or rejecting the views of the learners.
   - Over direction to the trainers’ point of view.
   - Non-acceptance of the learners’ right to have a say in the learning process.
8. Lack of Knowledge.

Learners rarely tolerate lack of knowledge of the subject on the part of the trainers, though they may tolerate the lack of training or presentation skills. The coach must ensure familiarity with the subject. Alternatively, steps should be taken to develop the subject expertise by undergoing a short course of study. The next activity requires you to demonstrate your understanding of how barriers attributable to the coach can impact negatively on the intervention.

**Activity E**

Read carefully the barriers raised by Rae (2000). Four have been selected for discussion. These are listed in the first column. In the second column, suggest two ways in which each one affects the learner in a negative manner.

Record your response in your course journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Two negative effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using inappropriate content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prejudices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of wrong coaching methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The use of inappropriate content might lead the employee to acquire incorrect knowledge, while the coach’s prejudices can put off the learner. When the wrong coaching methods are used, it will be difficult to achieve objectives. Accent, which is a language issue closely linked with pronunciation and articulation of words, can lead to problems of comprehension. The employee will, therefore, miss out on important points.

**ENVIRONMENTAL BARRIERS**

Well-documented research has identified many barriers arising from the environment. Problems should be anticipated, when designing and implementing coaching interventions.
Planning is a key component of the task of the trainer, and some of the factors to be considered include: noise, heat, cold, ventilation, and space available.

Restricted time is often a critical environmental barrier. All training activities occur in the context of time, yet more often than not coaches, who may be in management positions barely have enough time on their hands to conduct coaching in a proper manner.

**LANGUAGE BARRIERS**

Speech as a barrier refers to vocabulary usage in either speech or written form that does not communicate shared understanding. Among some of the causes of language barrier are overuse of jargon, and mother tongue interference, especially when talking to an audience whose mother tongue is not English.

- Jargon must be used sparingly because it has the potential of being misunderstood. It will annoy and inhibit the learning process.
- Whatever is written must say exactly what is meant.
- The most appropriate and correct words and phrases should be consciously selected in context.

**PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS**

It is difficult to forecast barriers to listening and understanding during the coaching process. These are the most problematic and the most difficult to discern on the part of the mentor/coach. Such problems are both overt and covert. They manifest themselves through observable attitudes and behaviours displayed by the mentee. Negative attitudes that inhibit the learning process have been attributed to many causes, and these include:

1. **Shyness**
   
   The coach should encourage the individual to overcome their shyness by including items that encourage participation without exerting pressure.

2. **Aggression**
   
   Employees, who have been compelled into coaching against their will, interest or need have a tendency of exhibiting aggression. This barrier can be counteracted by firstly, agreeing on the need for the intervention, and secondly by designing a training programme that is interesting, enjoyable and relevant to the learner’s work and needs.

3. **Resistance to Change**
   
   Resistance to learning may be an integral part of an employee’s personality. The learner may be simply be saying, “why change?” Hence, providing adequate information on the objectives and methodology goes a long way in mitigating such a feeling.

4. **Know It All**
The learner’s knowledge, skill and experience must be acknowledged. The programme that has been designed should create learning opportunities for the learner to tap into his/her knowledge and skills. This barrier is worsened if the employee thinks he/she already knows all that is in the coaching programme.

5. **Too Old to Learn**

Old learners are often erroneously influenced by the adage that an old dog cannot be taught new tricks. Such employees tend to resist coaching, especially when they think they are about to retire.

6. **Status Difference**

In some classes of learners where coaching is done in groups there tend to be individual differences. Participants operate at different levels of the business enterprise, and this often impacts on their learning negatively. Higher status employees may not wish to comment in the presence of junior members, and vice versa, owing to a variety of status-based reasons. Progressive and competitive organizations are now actively playing down the social gap, and place more emphasis on the commonalities of the group members.

7. **Previous Experience**

Episodes recalled consciously or unconsciously from the past may act as barriers to learning. Creating a climate of trust in the learning situation can help learners to bring such problems to the surface.

8. **Lack of Confidence**

This often stems from a sense of learning difficulties learners have experienced. This barrier can be overcome by explaining the context and process fully at the start of a coaching event. It is advisable to start with coaching tasks, which contain questions that the individual should be able to answer. Such a task acts as a confidence builder.

9. **Lack of Motivation**

It has been observed that attitudes are internally generated. Learners bring a range of motivational attitudes. Some learners may have been compelled to attend the coaching intervention while others may not see its relevance.

It has been observed by Rae (2000: 38) that learning can be a frustrating experience. Often people feel that they have learnt nothing, in spite of the considerable time spent “learning”. In some situations people perceive learning as a successful and rewarding experience. It is critical to design the learning process effectively in order to address potential pitfalls in the learning process.
In the foregoing, discussion focused on environmental, language, and psychological barriers. Examples were given under each. What remains is for you to consciously relate these to your objective situation, and while you attempt that, quickly go through this activity.

**Activity F**

Suppose you were invited by the general manager of your enterprise to explain to a group of employees the meaning of barriers. Briefly write in the second column the sort of explanation you would give to your audience for each barrier.

Record your responses in your course journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>What it means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental barrier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language barrier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological barrier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To respond to the activity, go over the content discussed above and deduce what each one means. Share with colleagues wherever possible.

**SUMMARY**

The present section of the unit, probably the longest topic, was focused on procedures, methods and barriers. The main areas covered were:

- an outline of the events to be considered when planning and carrying out mentoring and coaching;
- identification, explanation, and discussion of on-the-job training methods;
- detailed explanation of what constitutes secondment, job rotation, and coaching;
- a definition of barriers of learning; and
- detailed discussion of environmental, language, and psychological barriers.
SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What is the importance of critical events, discussed at the beginning of this topic, to the mentor/coach?

2. How effective do you consider secondment and job rotation to be in effectively mentoring or coaching an employee?

3. With specific reference to the enterprise you are familiar with, identify any two barriers of learning attributable to the mentor/coach, which you think interfere with the mentoring/coaching interventions.

4. How would you ensure that the barriers you cited above do not interfere with mentoring/coaching?

5. In what ways are shyness and resistance to change psychological barriers to learning?

Record your responses in your course journal.
UNIT TWO – SUMMARY

<Insert unit summary>

ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

<Insert instructions for completion of unit assignment>
UNIT THREE - TRANSFER AND EVALUATION OF MENTORING/COACHING INTERVENTIONS

INTRODUCTION

In this Unit, two aspects that are closely related to mentoring and coaching are discussed. These are transfer and evaluation of mentoring and coaching interventions. The significance of interventions is that they should result in change of behaviour and performance. Change would be a reflection that transfer has occurred. However, to make that determination, the procedures taken for the intervention ought to be evaluated. Thus there is a close link between transfer and evaluation. The main focus of the unit is to discuss and demonstrate how these two activities take place.

OBJECTIVES

After working through this unit you should be able to:

1. Define ‘transfer’ and ‘evaluation’ of learning.
2. Explain the different types of transfer and evaluation.
3. Apply transfer and evaluation to coaching and mentoring interventions.

UNIT READINGS

As you complete this unit you are required to read the following chapters/articles:

- <Insert list of required readings>.

ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

<Insert a description of the unit assignments, activities and discussions to be completed as they progress through the unit. Detailed instructions can be attached as Appendices to the course main body.>
TOPIC 3.1 - TRANSFER OF LEARNING

INTRODUCTION
As already discussed, the primary aim of mentoring/coaching is to modify entrepreneurial attitudes, improve knowledge, and cultivate work habits towards improved performance by the individual. How does the mentor or coach know that the targeted learning has taken place so as to ensure that the employee is now performing better than before the intervention? The ability to apply knowledge and skills to workplace situations is referred to as transfer of learning. Several questions come to mind when discussing this aspect of mentoring/coaching: What is transfer of learning? How can the mentor facilitate transfer of learning? These and related questions will be addressed in this topic as a way of equipping the mentor/coach with important information towards successful intervention.

OBJECTIVES
After working through this topic you should be able to:

1. Define key concepts: transfer and retention.
2. Explain the relationship between motivation and affect.
3. Illustrate with examples how ideas about reinforcement can be applied practically in your enterprise.
4. Distinguish between positive and negative reinforcement.
5. Justify the significance of transfer of learning in mentoring and coaching interventions.

CONTENT
Sustaining the individual's motivation

- Motivation and Affect.
- Reinforcement.
- Transferring Learning to Tasks.
- Retention.
- Transfer Strategies.

WARM UP ACTIVITY
Some words and expressions are commonly used in the discussion of transfer of learning. You probably have read about them, or better still, used them in the operations of your enterprise. Explain what you understand by these two notions before reading on.

1. Positive reinforcement.
2. Negative reinforcement.
3. Positive transfer.
4. Negative transfer.
Record your responses in your course journal.

Bearing in mind your personal views, now read on and assess how your answers compare with the content below.

**SUSTAINING AN INDIVIDUAL’S MOTIVATION**
Transfer of learning is largely dependent on how the intervention was conducted. As Clutterbuck (2001) puts it, sustaining the motivation of the mentee is critical to transfer of whatever the individual is supposed to acquire. If the adult adopts a negative attitude to the coaching or mentoring, this may reduce motivation for learning, which impacts negatively on transfer of learning. Three aspects ought to be taken into account in sustaining learner motivation as follows:

1. **Maintaining learner attention**
   - Provide frequent response opportunities to the individual.
   - Help employees to realize their accountability for what they are learning.
   - Provide variety in personal presentation style, method of mentoring/coaching, and learning resources.
   - Introduce, connect, and end learning activities clearly; and
   - Do not overload with information.

2. **Building learner interest**
   - Relate Learning To Both The Interests Of The Enterprise And That Of The Adult.
   - Clearly State Or Demonstrate The Benefits That Will Be Gained From The Learning Activity.
   - While Training, Use Harmless Humour Frequently.
   - Selectively Use Examples, Analogies And Stories To Relax The Atmosphere.
   - Selectively Use Knowledge and comprehension questions to stimulate learner interest.

3. **Involving the learner**
   - Use application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation questions and tasks to stimulate learner involvement.
   - Make learner reaction and active participation an essential part of the learning process.
   - Introduce manageable challenges during learning.

McLagan (1989) observes that the trainer who consciously takes into account learner interest, learner attention, and learner involvement lays foundation for easy transfer.

**MOTIVATION AND AFFECT**
One aspect associated with motivation is **affect**. This is a term used in psychology when referring to emotion, feeling, or desire, especially one that leads to action. Learning does not take place in a vacuum. Although learning has to do with the intellect, employees also feel and have emotions while learning. Educationists (Abraham Maslow, 1908 – 1970);
Frederick Herzberg, 1923) theorized that workers are motivated to do something for a variety of reasons, and one of them is emotional satisfaction. The mentor/coach can use motivational strategies, including the following:

1. Integrate learner emotions within the learning process.
   - Emphasise and deal with the human perspective of what is being learnt, and apply this to the daily lives of adult learners.
   - When appropriate, relate content and learning activities to learner values.
   - Deal with and encourage the expression of emotions during learning.

2. Maintain an optimal emotional climate within the learning group.
   - There are times when coaching/mentoring takes place in groups. To maintain optimal emotional climate, these ideas should be taken into account.
   - Use co-operative goal structures to develop and maximise cohesiveness in the learning group.
   - Ensure that trainees understand each other as individuals.
   - In cases where employees come from different cultures, ensure that such backgrounds are understood by members to avoid prejudices and negative perceptions.
   - Human nature is very simple, yet very complex too. An understanding and appreciation of this is a prerequisite to effective employee motivation, and therefore, effective coaching. To understand motivation, one must understand what makes the mentee interested.

Activity A

1. Suggest ways of involving the learner and integrating the individual’s emotion within the mentoring process. Refer to your organization as you respond to the question.
2. Briefly, explain in what ways emotion and feeling are associated with learning by employees undergoing coaching or mentoring.

Record your response in your course journal.

Requesting the employee to suggest times he/she will be free for the intervention is an example of involvement. Regarding integration of the individual’s emotion, it is often prudent for the mentor/coach to establish any emotionally disturbing events in the employees work life that might interfere with the intervention. These will then be taken into account during the intervention. When you attend a meeting that you have no interest in, we say that you do not feel like attending. In other words, emotionally you would not be inclined to attend. The result is that you do not benefit much from the proceedings.
Similarly, when you teach an adult, and he/she has no interest in the topic, no learning will occur.

**REINFORCEMENT**

Reinforcement is the process of shaping behaviour by controlling the consequences of that behaviour. In reinforcement a combination of rewards and punishments is used to reinforce desired behaviour or extinguish unwanted behaviour (cf. Skinner, 1953). According to Thorndike (1911), responses to stimuli that are followed by satisfaction will be strengthened, but responses that are followed by discomfort will be weakened. Learning must be accompanied by reinforcement. Reinforcement is, therefore, any strategy or event used by the mentor/coach to maintain or increase the probability of obtaining a particular response. Reinforcement helps the trainer achieve two goals, namely:

- It helps learners to be aware of the positive changes that their learning behaviour has produced.
- It affirms learner motivation for significant units of learning

It should be noted that the theory of motivation was propounded as early as 1911, and theorists have continued to develop it. Dates of its origin have been cited, largely to show how significant it is in the learning process.

Participants need specific knowledge of their learning results (feedback). Feedback must be specific, not general, and is a way of rewarding learning. The reward does not necessarily have to be monetary. It can simply be a demonstration of benefits to be realized from learning the material, for example, improvement in performance. Through reinforcement, trainers encourage correct modes of behaviour and performance. There are two types of reinforcement, namely:

1. **Positive Reinforcement**

   This is normally used by coaches when teaching a new skill or new information. As the name implies, positive reinforcement is ‘good’ and reinforces good learning behaviour.

2. **Negative Reinforcement**

   It is useful in trying to change modes of behaviour such as bad work habits or poor attitude to the business. The result of negative reinforcement is extinction. This means the trainer uses negative reinforcement until ‘bad’ behaviour disappears, or becomes extinct.
3. Association

This happens when a participant can associate the new information with something they already know, and apply this to work-related tasks to improve performance.

Reinforcement should, therefore, be part of the coaching/mentoring process to ensure correct behaviour. Trainers need to use it on a frequent and regular basis early in the process to help learners retain what they have learned. They should use reinforcement to maintain consistent positive behaviour. Proper use of reinforcement has positive implications for transfer of learning. To apply your understanding of reinforcement, work on the next activity.

### Activity B

1. Cite two examples of positive reinforcement and two of negative reinforcement that you have used in your business enterprise
2. Explain how these have helped in the achievement of objectives spelt out for a given lesson.

Record your responses in your course journal.

Reinforcement could be in the form of feedback where you inform participants that they have handled the task correctly. This is positive reinforcement, which will make them move on with confidence. On the other hand, where a participant is told that coming to work late does not show a good example to other employees, this will lead the individual to find ways of getting it right. This negative reinforcement, therefore, compels the learner to get rid of bad behaviour. Examples will vary from coach to coach.

If we accept that the learners are motivated and that they learn to the best of their abilities, the next step is to ensure that they can transfer learning.

### Learning Transfer

Learning transfer refers to the ability by the individual to apply knowledge, skills, or abilities gained in an educational setting to situations in their workplace. That means the employees would have developed insight into what is expected at the workplace. For that reason this capacity has been referred to as insightful learning (Curzon, 1993). Positive transfer occurs when something learned previously is helpful in a subsequent situation (Coles, 1991:305). It is important for the mentor/coach, imparting new information, to identify what the learners already know in relation to the new content to be taught, then to subsequently build on that new knowledge. Transfer of learning is based on the learner’s ability to retain information.
According to Broad and Newstrom (1992:6) transfer of learning involves learners in effectively applying the knowledge and skills they gained in learning. Full transfer of learning means that with practice on the job, the level of skill with which the learning is applied will increase beyond the level demonstrated at the end of the period of training. In other words, the learner is expected to improve even further after training (Gottesman, 2002). As with reinforcement, there are two types of transfer:

- **Positive transfer** occurs when participants use the behaviour taught in the course to solve problems in new settings.
- **Negative transfer** occurs when the participants fail to demonstrate the expected behaviour (which they are supposed to have learnt) to solve job-related tasks.

Transfer of learning is most likely to occur in the following situations.

1. When there should be similarity, that is, there should be some similarity between the new knowledge and the material that participants already know. When there is similarity, they will be able to apply knowledge learnt.
2. When the degree of original learning bears some significance in the transfer of learning. If the degree of original learning was high, transfer is easier.
3. When the critical attribute element should be considered. Where the information learned contains elements that are readily beneficial to the job, transfer is made easier.

Which of the three situations discussed above do you find applicable in your training situation? Share your experiences with colleagues.

**Retention**

One aspect of learning, which the mentor/coach should bear in mind is retention. This concept means that learners must retain information in order to benefit from training. The trainer’s job is incomplete until he/she has assisted the learner in retaining information. In order for participants to retain the information taught, they must see a meaning or purpose for that information. They must also understand, be able to interpret, and apply the information

The amount of retention will be directly affected by the degree of original learning. Simply stated, if the course participant did not learn the material well initially, he/she will not retain it well either. Retention is directly affected by the amount of practice during the learning. After learners demonstrate the desired performance, they should be urged to practice to maintain the desired performance. This is referred to as distributed practice. When learners have retained learning skills, they are expected to transfer them.
To share your personal views on transfer of learning and retention, work on this activity.

**Activity C**

Suppose you have just completed your degree in Business and Entrepreneurship, and are called upon to explain concepts to aspiring entrepreneurs. Explain the following to that audience.

1. Transfer of learning
2. Retention
3. In what way is retention linked with transfer of learning?

Record your response in your course journal.

To respond to this activity, please go through the discussion of the two terms above and formulate an answer. Share this with colleagues. Obviously, when it comes to the link between retention and transfer of learning, the individual can only transfer knowledge or skills if he/she has mastered (retained) that.

**Transfer Strategies**

There are three categories of transfer that the trainer ought to be aware of, namely, transfer before learning, transfer during learning, and transfer after learning. For each of the categories, strategies will be listed. Write two additional ones of your own in the space provided at the end of each category.

1. **Pre-Learning Strategies**
   - Inform learners of the courses they will attend.
   - Involve learners in planning the content to be used for coaching.
   - Brief learners on the importance of learning and on the coaching objectives, content, process, and application to the job.
   - Select learners who will benefit most from learning.
   - Allow co-workers to attend programmes together so that they can have some impact on the work of the group as a whole.
   - Align the learning programme with the strategic plan of the organization.
   - Develop learner readiness to make learners more receptive.

2. **Transfer Strategies During Coaching/Mentoring**
   - Prevent interruptions.
   - Monitor attendance and attention to learning.
   - Recognise learner participation.
   - Plan how best transfer can be done.
• Develop and spell out application-oriented objectives.
• Provide work-related tasks, which resemble the tasks the learner must carry out on the job.
• Give individualized feedback so that each individual knows how he/she is doing.
• Form peer groups to support learning.

3. Post-Learning Transfer Strategies

• Plan learners’ re-entry e.g. supervisor sits down with learners after learning and explores possibilities for the use of new knowledge and skills.
• Support the transfer psychologically e.g. by letting learners know that you would like to help them use what they have learnt.
• Provide opportunities to practise new skills and apply new knowledge.
• Reduce job pressures initially so that it is easier for learners to transfer learning.
• Arrange refresher sessions so that employees do not revert to their former state.
• Provide follow-up support.
• Develop and administer recognition systems as a way of motivating employees.
• Review learning content and learning skills for new participants.
• Develop a mentoring and guidance and counselling atmosphere.

It should be noted that although mentoring and coaching are relatively new as a field of study, they carry potential for greater success in enhancing the operations of a business enterprise, and achievement of strategic goals. Of course, the heightened success requires a greater responsibility on the part of the mentor/coach. Additionally, learners should come to the course with precisely defined expectations. Unfortunately, as we have already discussed, there are barriers to their learning. The best motivators for adult learners are interest and selfish benefit. If they can be shown that the course benefits them pragmatically, learners will perform better, and benefits will be long lasting.

SUMMARY
There is a close link between transfer of learning and the coaching/mentoring intervention. The basis of transfer has been indicated to be the motivation that is consciously sustained by the coach/mentor. In the foregoing discussion the following main areas were focused on:

1. How the motivation of the employee can be sustained by the mentor/coach.
2. The link between motivation and the way participants feel about the training they will be going through.
3. The definition of reinforcement as an aspect of transfer.
4. The two types of reinforcement.
5. What is involved in the attempt to transfer knowledge and skills to work related tasks.
6. The definition of retention and its link with transfer of learning.
7. An explanation of positive and negative transfer.
8. Strategies that can be used to promote transfer before, during, and after coaching.

**SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

1. Discuss the importance of motivation in acquiring attitudes and work habits.
2. What do you understand by the affective and cognitive aspects of motivation in the coaching/mentoring intervention?
3. Explain, with reference to your enterprise when negative reinforcement can benefit the participant.
4. Participants could retain knowledge and skills, after coaching/mentoring, but fail to transfer them. What factors could hinder transfer in your organization?
5. Suggest three post-intervention strategies you have found viable in promoting positive transfer in your organization. Explain why you think these are especially important to you.

Record your responses in your course journal.
TOPIC 3.2 - EVALUATION OF MENTORING AND COACHING INTERVENTIONS

INTRODUCTION
The critical stages in mentoring and coaching have already been discussed. Among them are needs assessment, identification of employees with needs, selecting and applying methods, and implementing the programme. What then happens after mentoring and coaching have taken place? Stakeholders (the coach/mentor, the organisation, and the participants) need to take stock of the extent to which the interventions have achieved intended objectives. The important stage that gives this type of feedback is referred to as ‘evaluation’. In this topic, the focus is on evaluation. Discussion will centre around defining the term and relating concepts; stakeholders in evaluation; the rationale for evaluation; models of evaluation; and stages in conducting the process.

OBJECTIVES
After working through this topic you should be able to:

1. Define ‘evaluation’ and related terms.
2. Explain guidelines suited for a business enterprise.
3. Describe Kilpatrick’s Model.
4. Apply Kilpatrick’s Model to mentoring/coaching situations.
5. Describe Pratt’s Checklist Model.
6. Apply Pratt’s Checklist Model to mentoring/coaching situations.

CONTENT
• What is Evaluation.
• Guidelines for Evaluation.
• The Kilpatrick Model.
• Pratt’s Checklist Model.
• Forms of Programme Evaluation.

WARM UP ACTIVITY
1. Evaluation can be either positive or negative. What do you understand by this statement?
2. What models of evaluation are you aware of?

Record your responses in your course journal.

After you have reflected on the questions above, now read on.

WHAT IS EVALUATION?
Evaluation simply means determining the value of the mentoring/coaching intervention. According to Leigh (1996) evaluation is the process of attempting to assess the total value
of training. The key stakeholders in an evaluation process are: the trainees, the trainer (coach/mentor), the training and development department, the manager.

Many training programmes fail to deliver the expected organizational benefits. Having a well-structured measuring system in place can help you determine where the problem lies. On a positive note, being able to demonstrate a real and significant benefit to your organization from the training you provide can help you gain more resources from important decision-makers.

Consider also that the business environment is not standing still. Your competitors, technology, legislation and regulations are constantly changing. What was a successful training programme yesterday may not be a cost-effective programme tomorrow. Being able to measure results will help you adapt to such changing circumstances.

The major stakeholders in an evaluation process identified above share a common interest in the evaluation of the results of training.

- The employees are interested in finding out if the training they have undergone, has met their expectations and aspirations. They are also interested in determining whether the objectives, which were benchmarked at the beginning of the programme were satisfied.
- The trainer’s primary concern is to find out whether the training provided was the most effective within the constraints then prevailing. If the training or development objectives were not met, the trainer will need to identify the causes of that state of affairs, so that remedial action can be taken.
- The department of training and development that is responsible for designing and delivering training and development, must determine whether the intervention programme has made optimum use of the available resources. There is now an increasing demand for accountability. The training function must justify the use of such resources as people, finance, time and facilities.
- Line managers who are the clients to whom the training and development department work are seeking reassurance that the time their subordinates have spent on a coaching course has generated significant value/benefits. They are also keen to find out whether the knowledge, skills and attitude gaps, for which training was mounted, have been met.

Leigh (1990:156) notes that the information that the various parties seek in an evaluation process overlap. Particular attention will be paid to whether the deficiency in performance originally diagnosed has been rectified. All parties are, therefore, interested in being reassured that the time and money invested in the training effort delivered created worthwhile results. Evaluation is undertaken to establish a cost/benefit ratio in the light of the time spent off the job and the costs incurred to provide the training. In sum, therefore, evaluation determines merit or worth, assesses impact, identifies improvements, and
provides accountability. How significant do you find these views. Share your perceptions by working on this activity.

Activity A

1. List the stakeholders in your business enterprise.
2. How do they participate in the evaluation of mentoring/coaching programmes?
3. What suggestions do you have for the improvement of the way evaluation is carried out in your organisation?

Record your responses in your course journal.

When responding to the activity, refer to your workplace and share what obtains regarding evaluation. Evaluation in workplaces can be unsatisfactory, or may not be in place altogether. The suggestions you make in the last question are meant to help you make a conscious effort to apply what you have so far learnt about evaluation.

GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION

There are criteria that can be used to conduct evaluation of a mentoring/coaching intervention. Some of the considerations are duration of the intervention, number of participants, topics covered, and the venue, to mention but a few. Evaluation literature points to some models that have been used for purposes of conducting reliable and valid evaluation, and two of these will be discussed subsequently. Instruments used to solicit data should be both reliable and valid.

A training programme must demonstrate beyond any reasonable doubt that change achieved is attributed to training and not a consequence of other different factors.

The Kirkpatrick Model

The most well-known and used model for measuring the effectiveness of training programmes was developed by Donald Kirkpatrick in the late 1950s. Kilpatrick’s (1959; 1998) ideas have since been adapted and modified by a number of writers, however, the basic structure has well stood the test of time. The basic structure of Kirkpatrick’s four-level model is shown here.

Kirkpatrick Model for Evaluating Effectiveness of Training Programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 4 - Results</th>
<th>What organizational benefits resulted from the training?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 3 - Behavior</td>
<td>To what extent did participants change their behavior back in the workplace as a result of the training?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 - Learning</td>
<td>To what extent did participants improve knowledge and skills and change attitudes as a result of the training?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Level 1 - Reaction | How did participants react to the program?

Evaluation at each level answers whether a fundamental requirement of the training programme was met. It’s not that conducting evaluation at one level is more important than another. All levels of evaluation are important. In fact, the Kirkpatrick model explains the usefulness of performing training evaluations at each level. Each level provides a diagnostic checkpoint for problems at the succeeding level. So, if participants did not learn (Level 2), participant reactions gathered at Level 1 (Reaction) will reveal the barriers to learning. Now moving up to the next level, if participants did not use the skills once back in the workplace (Level 3), perhaps they did not learn the required skills in the first place (Level 2). The crucial question is: How do you apply this model to the evaluation of mentoring or coaching in a typical business enterprise situation?

In http://hubpages.com/profile/easylearningweb lucid explanation on how to apply the model is given from the bottom upwards.

**Reaction (Level 1)** – Distribute an evaluation or feedback form. This is often called a “smilesheet” and can be administered in either paper format or online format. This type of evaluation is usually inexpensive and used by many business organizations. Be sure to distribute evaluations immediately after training ends. You can include questions to evaluate the instructor, material covered, training materials and any other equipment used.

**Learning (Level 2)** – To assess the amount of learning, consider using pre-tests and post-tests. The tests determine how students have advanced with regard to skills, knowledge and attitude. Pre-tests should be administered before the class begins, and post-tests would be given at the completion of the training class. You can administer pre-tests and post-tests on paper or online. You can include multiple choice/fill-in the blank type questions, and/or may include work-related hands-on exercises for the learner to complete online.

**Behavior (Level 3)** – To determine the extent of behavior and capability improvement, consider observing learners for an extended period of time after training is completed. This can be measured via post training interviews, monitoring progress and meeting with managers of the learners to determine if the training has allowed the learner to excel in his/her job.

**Results (Level 4)** – To determine the business impact of the training programme, key performance indicators including return on investment, staff turnover, employee retention, quality ratings and other types of quantifiable aspects of the performance of the organization should be measured.

To express your views on the Kirkpatrick Model, work on the following activity.
Activity B

In your enterprise, some coaching would have taken place, or you have undergone some coaching in the past. In what ways would Kilpatrick’s model have been useful in evaluating the effectiveness of the training?

Record your responses in your course journal.

Although there is no prescribed answer that fits all situations, it is noteworthy that the Model is systematic. By categorizing aspects of evaluation into four, that ensures nothing of importance has been left out. All stakeholders are included in the reflection. One of the main benefits of the Model is that results are most helpful in decision-making. As an example, when planning for new participants, lessons from the evaluation will influence the structuring of the content as well as issues of time management to ensure that everyone benefits from the intervention.

Pratt’s Check-List

Pratt’s (1980) checklist was based on evaluation of the curriculum but is cited here because of its potential benefits in the evaluation of mentoring/coaching interventions. His tri-dimensional curriculum evaluation model evaluates three dimensions of the curriculum, which are efficiency, effectiveness and acceptability. For Pratt (1980:421), efficiency means “the production of output relative to input of energy and resources”. Effectiveness refers to the accomplishment of the curriculum objectives. Thirdly, acceptability refers to the process of determining to what extent the curriculum is accepted and supported by all involved or affected by the curriculum. This resonates the ideas by Kilpatrick (1959) especially when we consider Pratt’s view on what should happen from the beginning up to the end of the intervention. Pratt (1980:410-413) discusses a checklist that would best guide the trainer, in our case the coach/mentor. Darussalam (2010:56), who is supportive of Pratt’s views observes that effectiveness of a programme is something that has criteria that can be measured from the aspects of quality and achievement. The following is a checklist of Pratt’s 14-point criteria.

1. Aim
   - Is the intended outcome clearly and concisely spelt out?
   - Does the objective include the most important aspects of the curriculum?

2. Rationale
   - Is the necessity and need for the programme convincingly spelt out?
   - Are objections anticipated and how will they be dealt with?
   - Was a needs assessment made?

3. Purposefulness
   - Have major specific intended outcomes been identified?
   - Is there an indication of the expected changes in the learners?
• Have the type and importance of each goal been defined?
• Is each objective in agreement with or relevant to the aim?
• Is each objective precise, applicable, functional and appropriate?
• Will the aim be realized if all objectives have been achieved?

4. Performance Criteria
• Has every goal been drawn according to criteria which promote feasibility?
• Are these criteria congruent, complete, objective, reliable, efficient and discreet?
• Grading
  • Is the grading system clear and explicit?
  • Does the grading reflect the priorities of objectives?
  • Does the grading system ensure that a goal has been achieved before a credit is given?

5. Context
• Is the social and community context described?
• Is it clear how the curriculum links with or overlaps with the programme of the learner and the organization?

6. Entry Requirements
• Is there a description of the learners for whom the curriculum is intended?
• Has the recruiting process been clearly spelt out?
• Are the pre-requisites valid?
• Are pre-tests appropriate?
• Has provision been made for learners who do not attain admission?
• Instruction
  • Has the schedule for instruction been set out in sufficient detail?
  • Is it viable?
  • What is the motivational value of the content?
  • Is the content relevant in regard to goals?
  • Are the educational strategies sufficiently applicable, creative and diversified?
  • Does instruction contribute to the realization of the goals?
• Management of diversity
  • Does formative evaluation take place regularly, and is it valid?
  • Is pre-planned remediation applicable, motivational and effective?
  • Is provision made for the faster learner?

7. Logistics
• Is there an indication of the minimum and maximum number of learners involved in the curriculum?
• Are material and equipment specified?
• Does the material comply with all requirements?
• Has a realistic time allocation been made?
Have the capacities, responsibilities and qualities of tutors been properly analysed?
Have the financial costs been analysed?

8. Pre-Testing/Try-out
- Has provision been made for pre-testing/try-out?
- If pre-testing has been carried out, are the results available?

9. Programme Evaluation
- Are there valid evaluation measures to determine effectiveness and acceptability?
- Are all aspects of the curriculum evaluated?
- Has provision been made for on-going revision and monitoring of the curriculum?

10. Implementation
- Has a strategy and time schedule for implementation been drawn up?
- Have roles and incentives been clearly defined?
- Is it a realistic implementation strategy?
- Production
  - Is the curriculum guaranteed against stylistic and typographic errors and unnecessary word usage?
  - Has the curriculum been professionally produced?

It should be noted that some terminology in the model may not apply to mentoring/coaching because Pratt was concerned with the evaluation of a teacher education programme. Notwithstanding that, the model is a useful handmaid for evaluating your procedures when mentoring or coaching. From the above it appears that the main purpose of evaluation is to make a value determination of the success of the relevant educational undertaking, and thus the extent to which the objectives have been realized. One exceptionally important aspect appears to be not only the gathering of data, but also the processing thereof in order to determine to what extent re-planning is necessary. Now, work on the following activity to share your personal views on the foregoing discussion.

**Activity C**

Examine each of the 14 evaluation criteria in the check-list alongside a coaching programme that you have designed, then answer these questions:

1. To what extent does your curriculum comply with each evaluation item?
2. What constraints in your situation prevent you from applying some of the evaluation criteria suggested by Pratt?
3. How can you overcome some of the constraints in order to conduct evaluation more effectively?
4. Suggest any two additional criteria of your own that can be used to evaluate coaching programmes in your situation.

5. To what extent does the coach’s or mentor’s ability to implement and evaluate a curriculum a form of empowerment?

Record your responses in your course journal.

For this particular activity, there are no right or wrong answers. You are advised to examine each evaluation criterion carefully, then relate it to your mentoring/coaching programme. In particular, try and answer each question under the criterion, and note down your response. As you do that, link with what we have already discussed in the previous topics. Each situation will make its own demands, hence that is where your originality is called into play. Once you are satisfied that you have given enough attention to each question, discuss with colleagues and share your answers with them for the fuller understanding of programme implementation and evaluation.

**Forms of Programme Evaluation**

We shall conclude the topic with a brief explanation of three forms of programme evaluation, namely, comparative evaluation, linking evaluation, and fundamental evaluation. These are discussed below.

1. **Comparative Evaluation**

   This involves comparing the objects, which must be judged with other actual or ideal objects. The functions of comparative evaluation may be distinguished as follows:

   - determining whether standards aimed at are achievable;
   - identification of possible shortcomings in the mentoring/coaching circumstances;
   - the maintenance of comparable norms and standards; and
   - meeting stakeholder expectations.

2. **Linking Evaluation**

   This entails linking different programme elements with each other. Since this happens during implementation, it is also known as implementation evaluation, and involves:

   - identifying the real or anticipated results; and
   - identifying the causes of particular events during implementation.
3. **Fundamental Evaluation**

This involves constructing criteria for evaluation, and takes place with reference to:

- theories about learning and programme development; and
- the demands of stakeholders as well as social and economic circumstances.

In the next activity, let us share your ideas about the three forms of evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity D</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What distinguishes each of the three forms of programme evaluation from the other?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In what way does each form of evaluation influence the coach when developing a programme for the business enterprise?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Record your responses in your course journal.

To answer question a., you should re-read the three forms, and single out those specifics that characterize each one. For question 2., you should clearly show that the three are closely interrelated, and that each one impacts on programme development.

**SUMMARY**

The significance of evaluation as a critical event in the mentoring/coaching programme cannot be overemphasised. Results of evaluation facilitate decision-making at various levels to key stakeholders. This was brought out in the foregoing discussion during which these areas were examined.

- The definition of evaluation, relative to mentoring/coaching was offered.
- To give some sense of direction to mentors/coaches who are preoccupied with programmes, guidelines were offered.
- The Kilpatrick Model was explained, and ideas about how it can be applied were shared.
- Although Pratt’s Model was developed to serve conventional education evaluation needs, its potential benefit for evaluating mentoring/coaching interventions led us to cite it for discussion.
- Three forms of programme evaluation, and their relevance were discussed. These are comparative, linking, and fundamental evaluation.

**SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

1. By referring to your business enterprise identify two benefits of evaluation and explain their significance in the training interventions that are in place.
2. Compare and contrast the Kilpatrick and the Pratt’s Checklist Models with reference to the evaluation of mentoring and coaching interventions in your enterprise.
3. Why do you think a mentor/coach needs to develop a clear awareness of comparative, linking, and fundamental evaluation within a business enterprise?

Record your responses in your course journal.

**ADDITIONAL REFERENCES**

The following references are provided if you wish to learn more about this topic.


http://hubpages.com/profile/easylearningweb (Retrieved 18/03/2011)
UNIT THREE — SUMMARY

<Insert unit summary>

ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

<Insert instructions for completion of unit assignment>
UNIT FOUR - CONSULTING IN BUSINESS

UNIT INTRODUCTION

Unit Four begins with a conscious demonstration of the link between consulting, on the one hand, and mentoring/coaching on the other. The background to the field of consultancy is given, followed by detailed discussion of procedures and advice to be taken before one gets into the consulting business. There are three phases in the preparation to enter the consulting business, namely, evaluation phase, setting-up phase, and the execution phase. These are explained in some detail, to illustrate what is expected of the consulting entrepreneur. Typical work of activities, linked to the top 20 consulting businesses thriving today are further expanded. The critical issues of SWOT Analysis, marketing, and billing receive attention to serve as foundation background for the aspiring consultant.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

After working through this Unit you should be able to:

1. give a historical background of consulting.
2. Demonstrate the link between consulting and mentoring/coaching
3. Discuss steps that can be followed in setting up a consultancy.
4. Relate ideas about consulting to your business environment.

UNIT READINGS

As you complete this unit you are required to read the following chapters/articles:

- <Insert list of required readings>.

ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

<Insert a description of the unit assignments, activities and discussions to be completed as they progress through the unit. Detailed instructions can be attached as Appendices to the course main body.>
TOPIC 4.1 - BACKGROUND TO CONSULTING

INTRODUCTION
Consulting has been defined earlier (see Unit 1) as an enterprise which provides professional or expert advice in a particular enterprise. Consultancy then provides analysis and interpretation, which draws upon and applies the knowledge, skills, and techniques of the consultant to meet a specific external need. Provision of advice, therefore, links consulting with mentoring/coaching. Obvious questions come to mind when discussing the background to consulting, and these include: How do consultants work? Are there any specific approaches to consulting? What qualifications should a consultant have? What is the current state of the industry? These questions are the main focus of our discussion. This discussion takes into cognisance living reality, namely, that the consultancy business presents many challenges, and in order for the aspiring consultant to be best in the field, it is necessary to acquire the necessary intelligence.

OBJECTIVES
After working through this topic you should be able to:

1. Give a brief history of consulting.
2. Explain the typical work activities of consultants.
3. Evaluate the business situation in order to make a decision about entering into the consultancy enterprise.
4. Illustrate with examples the different activities associated with consultants.
5. List the top 20 consulting enterprises thriving today.

CONTENT
- Historical Background.
- What Consultants Do.
- Typical Work Activities of Consultants.
- Internal Corporate Consulting.
- Who Can Become Consultant.
- Top 20 Consulting Businesses Thriving Today.

WARM-UP ACTIVITY
Many people today talk of starting consultancy businesses. What general idea do you have about consultancy?

Record your responses in your course journal.

It is often best to start with personal general understanding before getting into academic and practical views about a notion. So, after offering your personal view, it now remains for you to find more about the issue of consulting.
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

There are not many books on consultancy, and most of those available are e-books. In view of the focus of our programme on business and entrepreneurship, discussion will mainly centre around management consulting, which indicates the practice of helping organisations improve their performance primarily through the analysis of existing business problems and development of plans for improvement. As http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Management_consulting puts it, organisations hire services of consultants for a number of reasons, including gaining more objective external advice and access to the specialised knowledge of the expert.

Sturdy et al (2009) give a brief history of consultancy, observing that after World War II, a number of new management consulting firms formed, which brought a rigorous analytical approach to the study of management and strategy. Reference is made to the work done at Boston Consulting Group and the Harvard business school during the 1960s and 1970s where tools and approaches that would define the new field of strategic management were developed. Also, this set the groundwork for many consulting firms to follow. It was only after World War II, in the wake of the development of international trade led by the USA, that management consulting emerged in Europe.

Starting a consulting enterprise at lower levels than those described above has historically been on the increase. This is for important reasons, some of them signifying the dynamics of modern life both economically and socially. As Ziedman (2009) puts it, Years ago, a "good job" meant working for a large, stable company, getting a regular income with some additional benefits, and eventually retiring at a ripe old age. Today, the same definition doesn't hold for many people. Instead, a "good job" may mean one that leaves time to spend with the family or one that provides a better-than-average income or one that allows you to work in the comfort of your own home. If these aspects appeal to you, then consulting may be a viable option.

This brief historical background sounds exciting, more especially that there are other reasons for going the route of consulting in order to earn a living. Tackle the following activity as a way of reflecting on the foregoing.

Activity A

1. List names of consulting companies in your community.
2. Visit the companies and find out what type of consultancy they do.
3. As you interact with the consultants, find out the reasons that led them to form consultancy companies.
4. Carefully examine the economic situation in your country. In what ways does it encourage or discourage consulting businesses?

Record your responses in your course journal.
The first three questions require that you conduct some mini research to gather information from people in the business. When you come to the last question, it is important that you examine what is going on in your country. For example, against the background of recession many companies that offer formal employment may be retrenching workers. This might probably give impetus to individuals to start their own consulting businesses. Given this scenario, it would be instructive to establish the role of consultants.

**WHAT CONSULTANTS DO**

In all countries, worldwide, the talk of doing ‘one’s own thing’ is rampant. However, when asked what that thing is, there are no clear answers. It is true to say consultants do their own thing, but exactly what do they do? McKenna (2006) sheds light on this matter in his book-long argument on consultancy as the newest profession. What follows is his line of thinking.

He documents the rise of management consulting in the United States. Christopher McKenna’s story contains a number of surprising twists on the origins, spread, and various mutations of the industry. It is a novel study that deserves the attention of business historians, management professors, and organizational scholars. In the book, McKenna takes up three related questions:

- First, what do consultants actually do, and why do firms decide to hire them?
- Second, to what degree do consultants try to formalize their knowledge and make themselves into a profession?
- Third, do consultants deserve to be labelled, as they sometimes are, “witch doctors” or “miracle workers”?

McKenna begins with what might be called a transaction-cost perspective. He points out that consultants are familiar with the best practices of firms in a given industry. He describes the hiring of consultants as the equivalent of a make-or-buy decision, whereby firms can choose either to create knowledge themselves or to buy it from others. By choosing the second option, they avoid having to sink managerial time into figuring out the best course to follow. Viewed in this light, the consulting industry would appear to serve a “functional” need.

While McKenna’s summation of the industry’s services includes the service aspect, he is more interested in the struggles of management consultants, and their firms, to legitimise their usefulness to clients and, in so doing, to expand their customer bases. Indeed, his story is not really about transaction costs as much as it is about how management consultants have taken advantage of openings provided by regulatory changes to promote themselves, adding to their list of customers by persuading governments, non-profit organizations, and firms around the world to buy their services. McKenna demonstrates how consultants propagated certain conceptions of organizational strategies. Essentially,
therefore, consultants consult by giving expert advice to businesses and enterprises that require it.

Friedl (http://unixwiz.net/techtips/be-consultant.html) in his discussion of different flavours of consultants explains two things that consultants do, as discussed below.

**Contracting**

A contractor is typically hired for one project (via a contract), and the relationship is often more technical than personal. For example, one is hired to write a communications coaching manual, build a website, or conduct training in a particular area for a number of specified days. At the end of the project, the consultant is done and moves on. Normally, most contractors work on one project at a time, which allows a great deal of focus, and though there might remain a bit of work after the project has finished, for example, helping the in-house staff integrate the work, once the consultant moves on, the focus goes with him. A contractor who has done a good job in the first project stands the chance of being given more consideration in subsequent projects, but these will, nevertheless be new projects.

**Consulting**

What consultants do in this scenario is that they typically have multiple customers at a time, and consultancy is more about a long-term relationship than it is about a specific project. There will certainly be projects in the course of a consulting relationship, sometimes big ones, but the general idea is that the consultant is an always available resource that can be called on for big or small matters. As an instance, an IT consultant becomes the IT department for several customers, and they use the consultant so that they do not have to hire a dedicated person for it.

Unlike the contractor, this involves a lot of juggling when the fluctuating demands of multiple customers come into play. It will be difficult for the consultant to get a deeper focus because of the multiple customers served. However, in terms of stable income, long term relationships are worth it in the long run.

**Job Description**

Management consultants are involved in providing objective advice, expertise and specialist skills with the aim of creating value, maximising growth or improving the business performance of their clients.

They are primarily concerned with the strategy, structure, management and operations of an organisation. Consultants can assist by identifying options with recommendations, providing additional resources and/or the implementation of solutions.
Consultants operate across a wide variety of services such as business strategy, marketing, financial and management controls, human resources, information technology, e-business and operations, and supply-chain management.

As with the type of work, the range of consultancy firms also varies from the larger firms that offer end-to-end solutions to smaller or niche firms that offer specialist expertise, skills and industry knowledge.

**Typical Work Activities**

The day-to-day activities of management consultants are often complex and varied. Consultancy is essentially entrepreneurial in nature and project-based. Projects can vary in length depending on the type of consultancy, firm and the demands of the client. They can involve an individual or a large team. They can be based at one site or across several international borders.

Typical tasks, particularly for new graduate recruits involve:

- carrying out research and data collection;
- conducting analysis;
- interviewing client’s employees, management team and other stakeholders;
- running focus groups and facilitating workshops;
- preparing business proposals/presentations; and
- spending the majority of time at the client’s site.

In addition to the above, tasks for more experienced and senior consultants involve:

- identifying issues and forming hypotheses;
- formulating and implementing recommendations/solutions;
- ensuring the client receives the assistance needed to implement the recommendations/solutions;
- managing projects and programmes;
- leading and managing those within the team, including analysts; and
- larger leadership role in the management of client relationships.

Let us look back on the foregoing discussion and work on this activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. With reference to contracting, explain what you understand by the observation that the relationship is often more technical than personal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The main distinguishing feature between contracting and consulting is that in the latter, the consultant has multiple customers at a time. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of contracting as you experience it in your business environment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Record your responses in your course journal.

A technical relationship is one that lacks closeness in terms of detailed familiarity at personal level. It tends to be purely formal and business-like, and once the project is over, there ends the relationship. Contracting has several advantages, one of them being that the consultant after completing the project, gets a lump sum, which can be put to good use compared to small amounts that come from a client periodically. However, the disadvantage is that the consultant might go for some time without a job, despite the need to subsist.

**INTERNAL CORPORATE CONSULTING**

A third dimension of types of consultants and what they do has been termed internal corporate consulting (cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Management_consulting), whose status is explained below.

Internal corporate consulting involves hiring internal management consultants either from within the corporation, or from external branches of the same company. Internal consulting groups are often formed around a number of practice areas, commonly including: organisational development, process management, information technology, design services, training, and development. The following potential benefits of internal consultants to the organisation include these ones.

**Advantages**

- If properly managed and empowered, internal consulting groups evaluate engagement on projects in light of the corporation’s strategic and tactical objectives.
- Often the internal consultant requires less time on a project due to familiarity with the corporation, and is able to guide a project through to implementation – a step that would often be too costly if an external consultant were used.
- Internal relationship provides opportunities to keep certain corporate information private.
- It is likely that the time and materials cost of internal consultants is significantly less than external consultants operating in the same capacity.
- Internal consulting positions can be used to recruit and develop potential senior managers of the organisation.

**Disadvantages**

The use of internal consultants to conduct consultancy has its shortcomings. These should be carefully weighed before engagement.

- The internal consultant may not bring the objectivity to the consulting relationship that an external firm can.
• An internal consultant may not bring best practices from other corporations.
• Where the consulting industry is strong and consulting compensation high, it can be
difficult to recruit candidates.
• It is often difficult to accurately measure the true costs and benefits of an internal
consulting group.
• When financial times get tough, internal consulting groups that have not effectively
demonstrated economic value (costs versus benefits) are likely to face size
reductions or reassignment.

Having looked at what consulting is all about, as well as what consultants do, a relevant
question remains to be answered, namely: Can anyone, for whatever reason, become a
consultant?

WHO CAN BECOME A CONSULTANT?
The whole idea of offering professional advice and offering expertise to an organisation is,
for the consultant, almost like training a new employee to take over your job. You simply
share the tips, tricks, and techniques you've acquired over the years, both as mentor/coach.

So How Do You Become A Consultant?

Everyone has an untapped reservoir of knowledge. Put yours to work for you as an
independent consultant by teaching your skills to others. Anyone can be a consultant - as
long as you have the experience, skill, and knowledge in your chosen field. You do not need
to be recognized as the ultimate best in your field to become a consultant. It is also not
necessary that you have been a CEO in a top company or even held a titled position. You
also do not need to have owned or operated a business to become a successful business
consultant.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, it is important to have a clear understanding of
entrepreneurship. Venturing into entrepreneurship is really starting up your own business,
and starting one’s own small business requires dedication and the ability to stay focused on
the details of becoming an entrepreneur. There is a veritable laundry list of steps that are
required to be successful in creating a business venture, and a successful business owner
will learn to know these processes like the back of his or her hand. The following ideas,
sourced from http://www.powerhomebiz.com/vol5/consulting.htm can be insightful. These
are now discussed below.

You will, however, need the ability to sell yourself, and an up-to-date understanding of the
area in which you intend to be involved with. Look over your educational strengths and
combine them with any training and on-the-job experience gained in the marketplace.
Insight, thorough study, and common sense can be joined together as a substitute for years
of experience in a field.
Take an honest look at your own training and experience. You may have worked all your life in a particular field and received special training and education along the same lines. If you've worked as a special event coordinator for an exclusive island resort, you can offer your services as a consultant who helps plan, develop and execute theme parties for corporations and other hotels.

You may also qualify as a consultant if you have taken any advanced academic degrees, certifications or special studies in your area of expertise. There are a number of fields that require certifications and special licensing before you can begin operating as a consultant. If you are computer networking specialist, you must pass the Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (MCSE) certification at the very least. If you want to work as an educational consultant, you must have a qualification in the field.

The key is to choose an area in which you have had some experience, or spent some time learning about, and one that you enjoy. If you have worked as advertising professional with strong experience in crafting successful multimedia campaigns, you can embark on a career as an advertising consultant developing strategic ad campaigns for clients. If you have worked in a newspaper or run your own newsletter, you can offer your services as an editorial consultant helping clients produce top-notch corporate annual reports or well-written web sites (Zeidman, 2009).

To succeed in the consulting business, you must be an expert at recognizing problems and shaping solutions to those problems. It is important that you have excellent time management skills to enable you to submit your deliverables on time, handle various clients simultaneously, and work on expanding your cadre of clients.

You must also have networking skills to help generate word-of-mouth for your consulting business.

To apply the attributes of a consultant discussed above, respond to the activity below.

### Activity C

The attributes of a consultant (discussed above) have been selected, and are listed in the first column. By closely looking at consultancy in your country, briefly explain why each attribute is significant. Use space in the second column against each attribute.

Record your responses in your course journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Significance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possession of networking skills.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to recognise problems and shape possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attribute</td>
<td>Significance</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>solutions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting in an area you have experience in.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession of relevant academic qualifications.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination of educational strengths and market forces.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to sell yourself.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An update of trends in the field you intend to do consulting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The main idea of the activity is to encourage critical evaluation of each attribute and relate it to typical consultancy situations. This is the best way to make use of the new knowledge from your studies, and to make your dream for setting up a consultancy enterprise realizable. To wind up discussion on the background to consulting, let us conclude with an examination of the top areas of consultancy in the industry.

**TOP 20 CONSULTING BUSINESSES THRIVING TODAY**
The aspiring consultant should be aware of what is happening in the industry. In particular, it is needful to know what areas consultants now commonly take. This awareness prepares the consultant to make the leap. As explained by Thompson (2009), and in [http://www.gaebler.com/Starting-an-IT-Consulting-Business.htm](http://www.gaebler.com/Starting-an-IT-Consulting-Business.htm)

Although you can be a consultant in just about any field these days, the current top 20 consulting businesses include:

1. **Accounting**: Accounting is something that every business needs, no matter how large or small. Accounting consultants can help a business with all of its financial needs.

2. **Advertising**: This type of consultant is normally hired by a business to develop a good strategic advertising campaign.

3. **Auditing**: From consultants who audit utility bills for small businesses to consultants who handle major work for telecommunications firms, auditing consultants are enjoying the fruits of their labor.
4. Business: Know how to help a business turn a profit? If you have a good business sense, then you'll do well as a business consultant. After computer consulting, people in this field are the next most sought after.

5. Business writing: Everyone knows that most businesspeople have trouble when it comes to writing a report--or even a simple memo. Enter the business-writing consultant, and everyone is happy!

6. Career counseling: With more and more people finding themselves victims of a corporate downsizing, career counselors will always be in demand. Career counselors guide their clients into a profession or job that will help them be both happy and productive as an employee.

7. Communications: Communications consultants specialize in helping employees in both large and small businesses better communicate with each other, which ultimately makes the business more efficient and operate smoothly.

8. Computer consulting: From software to hardware, and everything in between, if you know computers, your biggest problem will be not having enough hours in the day to meet your clients' demands!

9. Editorial services: From producing newsletters to corporate annual reports, consultants who are experts in the editorial field will always be appreciated.

10. Executive search/headhunter firms: While this is not for everyone, there are people who enjoy finding talent for employers.

11. Gardening: In the past decade the demand for gardening consultants has blossomed (pun intended) into a $1 million-a-year business. Not only are businesses hiring gardening consultants; so are people who are too busy to take care of their gardens at home.

12. Grantsmanship: Once you learn how to write a grant proposal, you can name your price.

13. Human resources: As long as businesses have people problems (and they always will), consultants in this field will enjoy a never-ending supply of corporate clients, both large and small. (People-problem prevention programs could include teaching employees to get along with others, respect and even violence prevention in the workplace.)
14. Insurance: Everyone needs insurance, and everyone needs an insurance consultant to help them find the best plan and pricing for them.

15. Marketing: Can you help a business write a marketing plan? Or do you have ideas that you feel will help promote a business? If so, why not try your hand as a marketing consultant?

16. Payroll management: Everyone needs to get paid. By using your knowledge and expertise in payroll management, you can provide this service to many businesses, both large and small.

17. Public relations: Getting good press coverage for any organization is a real art. When an organization finds a good PR consultant, they hang on to them for life!

18. Publishing: If you're interested in the publishing field, then learn everything you can and you, too, can be a publishing consultant. A publishing consultant usually helps new ventures when they are ready to launch a new newspaper, magazine, newsletter--and even websites and electronic newsletters.

19. Taxes: With the right marketing and business plan (and a sincere interest in taxes), your career as a tax consultant can be very lucrative. A tax consultant advises businesses on the legal methods to pay the least amount of tax possible.

20. Writing services: Anything related to the written word will always be in demand. Find your specialty in the writing field, and the sky will be the limit!

Bearing these key areas of consultation in mind, respond to the following activity.

**Activity D**

1. With reference to your country, suggest any two areas of consultancy, not mentioned in the top 20, that have become popular.

2. Select any five areas from the top 20, which you think should be focused on by aspiring consultants in your community.

3. Prepare a five-point speech for a group of aspiring consultants and address them, justifying the choice you made.

Record your responses in your course journal.

This activity encourages you to think critically and creatively about your business environment, and to select typical examples that apply. The justification of your chosen five areas of consultancy will lead to innovative thinking. Bearing this in mind, there are no answers prescribed.
SUMMARY
It is of fundamental importance to have background intelligence about any issue. This is true of those who want to venture into consultancy enterprises. They need background information before taking the leap. Such information is reflected in the areas covered in the foregoing discussion, which include:

- a brief historical background to consultancy;
- typical activities of consultants, including contracting and consulting;
- the job description of a consultant;
- typical work activities in the work of a consultant;
- internal corporate consulting;
- what is required for one to become a consultant; and
- the top 20 consulting businesses thriving today.

SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS
1. Briefly explain why business management consultancy came into being.
2. To what extent do you agree with the view that many are motivated to become business management consultants, but few succeed? Support your argument with examples you have either experienced or observed.
3. In many organisations in developing countries, there tends to be few examples of internal corporate consulting.
4. Why do you think this state of affairs prevails?
5. What suggestions can you make to encourage that type of consultancy?
6. From your close study of mentoring and coaching, what do you consider to be the link between these two interventions and consulting?

Record your responses in your course journal.
**TOPIC 4.2 - SETTING UP A CONSULTANCY**

**INTRODUCTION**

Setting up the consultancy is a decisive step taken after doing the background research to ensure viability. To guide this critical stage, a number of steps have to be taken. In the present unit some key questions are answered. Among them are: What are the phases of setting up? What is involved in executing laid down plans? How should customers be billed?

**OBJECTIVES**

After working through this topic you should be able to:

1. Distinguish the evaluation phase from the setting up and execution phases.
2. Identify and explain the different steps involved in setting up the consulting business.
3. List and justify steps involved in the execution phase.
4. Distinguish one billing method from the other.
5. Compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages of each billing method.

**CONTENT**

- Phases Of Establishing A Consulting Enterprise.
- Setting Up The Business.
- The Execution Phase.
- Billing.

**WARM-UP ACTIVITY**

Suggest what the aspiring consultant is expected to do in each of these three phases.

- Evaluation phase
- Setting up phase
- Execution phase

Record your responses in your course journal.

A general personal understanding of the three phases will help you assimilate the ideas to be discussed in the discussion that follows. Bear this understanding in mind as you engage in the discussion.

**PHASES OF ESTABLISHING A CONSULTING ENTERPRISE**

Thompson (2009) has identified three phases in establishing a consultancy, namely, evaluation phase, set up phase, and execution phase. The first phase leads to the second, and the second to the third. Each one has tasks to be fulfilled. We have already discussed the evaluation phase, but before discussing the next phases, here is a conspectus of all he phases.
Probably closely linked with these phases is the question: When do I start the business? Zeidman (2009) puts his view in answer to this question in a most encouraging manner to aspiring consultants. He observes that first, he has never been able to find a correlation between the availability of consulting jobs and any other factors such as the economy, the unemployment rate, the stock market, or who wins the World Series. But if he had to pick a good time for consulting, this would be it. As large, established companies are laying off workers, and new startups are hiring at ravenous rates, people are realizing that job security is not guaranteed even for employees of large, "stable" companies. The lack of security as a consultant doesn't seem so bad, and the much higher potential income of consulting begins to look more tempting. In other words, the time when there is an economic downturn, and job security is threatened, can be a good time to set up. Work on the following activity before moving on to the setting up stage.

**Activity A**

The evaluation phase has been placed first. Explain the significance of this phase as the foundation of setting up a consultancy business.

Record your responses in your course journal.
Before one can plunge into the consultancy business, one ought to conduct environmental analysis (evaluation) to determine feasibility. This includes identification of the relevant area of consultancy, the players in that particular field, personal attributes of the aspiring consultants, to name a few. These will form the foundation for subsequent actions, leading to the setting up of the enterprise.

**SETTING UP THE BUSINESS**
A thousand and one steps on setting up a consultancy business have been proposed by experts, and the following have been selected for consideration. These have been identified from [http://www.powerhomebiz.com/vol45/questions.htm](http://www.powerhomebiz.com/vol45/questions.htm), McKenna (2006), and Mauldin (2007).

**Step 1 – SWOT Analysis**
Examine your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the business situation (cf. Porter, 1998; Gordon, 2010).

Conducting SWOT Analysis is a mini project within setting up, and it is important that you carry this out following typical project management procedures. One of the courses in this programme is: *Project Management*. Revise it carefully for this reason, and many others, especially that in consultancy you will have recurring projects, each with a beginning and an end. It is also advisable to read one of the courses on the programme: *Risk Management*. 
The following activity is specifically on the SWOT Analysis. Work on it carefully in order to establish a firm foundation for setting up.

**Activity B**

Two aspects from each of the four points on the SWOT Analysis axis are listed. In the second column, briefly explain how you rate yourself for the consulting business you have in mind.

Record your responses in your course journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>How you rate yourself</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaknesses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase revenue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential to be hired</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steady income needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The response is purely personal, and the purpose of coming up with it, helps you reflect on your potential, as well as to help you apply the views to your proposed project.

**Step 2 - Choose Your Legal Structure**

It is best to formalize your business structure right from the start, both for legal and tax considerations. The three most common forms of business are sole proprietorship, partnership and corporations. Many self-employed consultants prefer to set-up their business as sole proprietorship, which is the easiest business form to set-up. However, you
may be susceptible to legal liabilities since any liabilities incurred by your business become personal liability. In the first course to this programme: *Introduction to Entrepreneurship*, the forms of business are spelt out.

**Step 3 - Prepare Your Business Plan**

Like any other business, it is important that you prepare your own business plan. Even though you will not present the plan to potential investors, the business plan can help you think through your strategies for keeping the business afloat and profitable, marketing and getting your expertise known to your customers, organizing your business, and generating and managing your finances. One of our courses to this programme is: *Introduction to Business Planning*. Go through it carefully as you are setting up.

**Step 4 - Create Your Home Office**

If you are starting this business on a shoestring budget, you can start-out by working from your home. This is particularly important if you are embarking on this business on a part-time basis. You can work from a spare room, a garage or loft converted into an office, or even a small corner tucked in the hallway. The design of your office will largely depend on various factors: (a) the kind of consulting field you are in (e.g. an interior designer may need a bigger space than a an online marketing consultant); (b) the equipment and supplies that you need; and (c) whether you expect to entertain and meet with clients in your home. If you expect to meet clients regularly in your home office, better check the zoning regulations in your area as neighbours may complain on the increased number of traffic in your vicinity.

**Step 5 - Name the Business**

A sole proprietorship in the name of the owner is often sufficient. Follow the legal procedures necessary for naming a business.

**Step 6 – Obtain Licences and Permits**

Check with state and local authorities for requirements. Many local jurisdictions require an occupational license. Some areas of specialization require certification, such as for a Certified Public Accountant.

**Step 7 – Bookkeeping and Accounting System**

**Step 8 – Hire Employees**

These will handle administrative tasks and assignments, if necessary. A sole proprietor can usually handle the work at the outset. If employees are hired, then take steps to obtain an Employee Identification Number and withhold taxes.

**Step 9 - Establish Pricing Model**

Check out what the competition charges. Compensation is usually received in the form of hourly fees or a price for an entire project. Retainers are sometimes received wherein the consultant agrees to be available for a certain number of hours each month.

**Step 10 – Bid for Jobs**

Establish a profile on the site and bid for jobs. Not only will you gain experience, but you will also hone your job bidding skills.

**Step 11 – Initial Marketing**

*Advertise services.* Create a brochure, make cold calls, place ads in media that your target market reads, create a newsletter and speak to groups. Create a website for potential clients to access your information.

**Step 12 - Gather Business Intelligence**

Identify information to establish what prosperous business consultancies do in order to be successful. Make use of this to improve your business operations. Gordon (2010) provides insightful information on business intelligence. The gathering of business intelligence, and related information should be done systematically. It is some kind of research, for which you will find ideas from one of our courses on the programme – *Business Research* – extremely useful. You will be guided on information gathering, including how to use both quantitative and qualitative techniques such as:

- statistical analysis
- Observation
- Case studies
- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Surveys

**Step 13 – Establish Comprehensive Marketing Plan**

The greatest mistake made by novice consultants is assuming that a market exists for their knowledge, products, and services. They invest a great deal of time, effort, talent and money on this assumption. Some useful marketing strategies include:
- Attend conferences and ask people what they think about your consulting business idea.
- Speak to trusted colleagues.
- Conduct a focus group study on your selected consulting area of expertise.
- Send out a questionnaire to some potential clients.
- Volunteer on campus and at conferences and try out your ideas.

**Activity C**

A total of 13 steps necessary to set up the consulting business has been listed.

1. Suggest any two more that you think are necessary, but have not been included.
2. Five steps have been identified for further reflection. In the second column, write a brief justification why each step is important to you as an aspiring consultant.

Record your responses in your course journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparing a business plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naming the business</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establishing pricing policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gathering business intelligence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total marketing plan</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Read the discussion above in order to respond to the activity.

**THE EXECUTION PHASE**

Friedl ([http://unixwiz.net/techtips/be-consultant.html](http://unixwiz.net/techtips/be-consultant.html)) offers comprehensive insight into what to do once you have started.

1. **Make the customer feel you can do the job.**

   Your customer certainly has to believe you can do the job, but they cannot wonder if you're going to get back to them, or if you're going to do something stupid (again?), or offend one of their customers. Your practice is never more stable than when your customers trust you completely to take care of them.
2. **Be a self-starter.**

But it takes more than good customer service skills: one must be a self starter, require very little supervision, and the ability to keep on task without a boss looking over your shoulder.

Working at home can be a wonderfully comfortable and productive work environment, but it's not meant for everybody. Distractions abound — spouse/children, the television, that really comfy couch — and it's really easy to burn tons of time without getting anything done. Working by yourself requires substantial time-management discipline.

Though some consultants prefer a solitary work-at-home, it doesn't have to be this way. Many consultants spend much of their time on the road, with plenty of human contact, and you can tailor your practice to have whatever mix you like.

3. **Market your business,**

Once you've set up your consulting business, the next step is to let people know that you are available for work. You must now find someone willing and able to pay you for your expert advice.

Your marketing should focus on packaging you as an expert in your field and highlighting the value that you could provide clients. You must let people know that you are a professional with the expertise they need - you can help the clients solve their problems, supplement their staff, act as a catalyst, teach their organization, create new business or influence other people.

4. **Network with people.**

Interacting with players in your targeted industry is one of the most, if not the most, effective way of marketing your consulting business. Simply put, the more contacts you have, the greater your chances of getting clients for your consulting business. Start with the people you already know - your former colleagues and bosses, your friends and existing industry contacts.

You should also actively participate in every networking opportunity that you can find: participation in industry organizations and events, breakfast gatherings, chamber of commerce activities, professional groups and social clubs. The more visible you are, the greater the chances that your name will be on top of the potential clients' heads when they look for a person with your expertise (see Train’s (2000) views on networking.)
5. **Find ways of ensuring job security.**

Consultants — even *good* consultants — are often considered a necessary evil by customers who use them, and it's *exceptionally* easy to stop using one. It doesn't require firing or confrontation, just "we don't need you any more" or even just not calling.

This is not personal to your customer — it's just business — but when your gravy train evaporates without notice, it's *very* personal, and terrifying.

The best way to approach this is to *diversify* — if you have only one ongoing project, you can find yourself out of work with no more notice than the time it takes the phone to ring. By being aggressive about finding more than one customer, and even making it a point to value a backlog of work, you have a fighting chance at dodging the vaporizing-customer bullet.

6. **Manage your cash flow with care.**

Beyond having regular on-going work lies matter of cash flow. Even if you regularly invoice at the start of every month, customers have their own schedule for paying, and this can be nerve-wracking to deal with.

7. **Do not create the impression that you are desperate.**

Where it gets tricky is when a customer is a bit late to pay for consultancy done for whatever reason. Your creditors don't really care, and you can find them sending 'final warnings'. You must be prepared for this, and never show the customer you are desperate for the payment, as this casts you in a negative image. It does not mean you do nothing about it, especially when the delay is too prolonged. There are times when you have to take recourse to legal procedures.

8. **Keep up-to-date of knowledge and skills.**

You should create the right impression about your abilities and qualifications to do the work for a customer. If your credentials are doubted then the relationship will not be a good one. Clients want to see all or some of the following consulting skills and knowledge:

- critical thinking
- problem solving
- communication skills
- project management
- leadership
Credibility can be damaged if the customer concludes that they know better than you. There are several ways of developing skills and knowledge level once you set up the consultancy (see [http://www.fabjob.com/business consultant.asp](http://www.fabjob.com/business consultant.asp)).

The following are additional skills that can foster confidence in the customer and give you a competitive edge in getting hired:

- Undertaking traditional education programmes including MBA.
- Getting educational credentials quickly or conveniently through:
  - accelerated, executive, part-time.
  - distance learning.
  - business seminars.
- Getting practical experience to build up your credentials and help you get hired including:
  - internships
  - volunteer opportunities
  - consulting for your current employer
  - opportunities for hands-on experience
- Getting links to valuable resources you can use e.g. project management software.
- Getting information and resources on business ethics.


When I go into the bank and find a long line to reach a teller, it's of course frustrating. Mentally, I start a timer in my head, and the longer the timer goes the worse of an experience it is. What stops the timer? Is it leaving the bank? No. It's reaching the teller.

When your customer pages you, his timer starts. Return his call immediately. If the customer has an emergency, it's much better for him to hear your voice five minutes after paging saying "I am on the road right now, I can jump right on this in an hour" than to just sit around waiting, wondering if you got the page. When the customer knows you're going to be on the case, he can stop worrying and attend to what's in front of him. Never dodge a call even though you may be tempted to do so.


As a consultant, you are presenting yourself as an expert. As an expert, you need to be visible talking about your expertise. Public speaking is an excellent opportunity to present your expertise to an interested audience. If you are nervous about the idea of speaking in public, you can start small. Public libraries often arrange for events that utilize speakers. Volunteer to share your knowledge in their forums.
You may also want to contact organizations and clubs in your area to offer your expertise. If you've built an impressive enough resume, you can even get an agent to look for possible speaking engagements for you.

How to bill your customers is another important operational step in the execution stage. However, because there are quite a few points to make, it will be discussed in more detail than the other points above.

### Activity D

Ten points under the executive phase have been discussed. Justify why each one is critical by giving your brief explanation in the second column. Only six have been selected for the exercise.

Record your responses in your course journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good public speaking skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping your knowledge up to date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of cash flow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring job security</td>
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<tr>
<td>Networking with people</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Being a self-starter</td>
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</table>

### BILLING

There are all kinds of arrangements for getting paid, and none is really superior to any other. Some consultants have virtually operated on a strictly hourly basis, invoicing once or twice a month, but it's also possible to do "monthly retainer", "fixed-bid contract", or some other combination. No method of billing can avoid talking about "churning", which will also be defined.

#### Hourly Billing

This is the easiest to manage. You work an hour, you invoice the customer for an hour. For occasional or ill-defined work, it's hard to use anything but hourly billing. The customer bears the brunt of projects that get out of hand, and the customer is really at the mercy of the consultant for being fair. This makes many customers nervous for fear of project-creep and "churning" (defined below).
Retainer

There are many variations of "retainer" arrangements, but one version is where the customer purchases a guaranteed minimum number of hours per month (at a substantial discount), and they are "worked off" as the month goes on. These are particularly popular for "outsourced IT departments", where you form a remote help desk, servicing issues as they come up.

They are good for the customer, because they get a significant discount for a consultant, and good for the consultant, who has a predictable income stream every month.

Fixed-bid Projects

When a customer has a specific project, you provide a fixed quote: "I can do that job for $X". Customers often prefer these, because they know in advance what they are going to pay, but they are the most problematic for the consultant.

These require highly detailed specifications that list exactly what is expected of the consultant. If it’s not entirely clear what the requirements are, there will be endless disagreements over whether this or that is "in the scope of work": The customer will think it is ("you work for free"), and you will think it isn't ("customer pay me more"). It should be remembered that all projects run into unexpected roadblocks: your fixed bid means you should allow for that.

Generally speaking, ambiguities in a specification must be resolved in favour of the customer (you're the consultant, you should know how to do this), though it's certainly possible for a customer to try to take advantage of you. It's not unheard of for a consultant to go back to the well on a fixed-bid project, laying out a case why the project has gone over and why you need to be paid more. This is always uncomfortable.

If you've been telling the customer "it's going great" for six weeks, you're going to have a hard time showing up on the due date explaining why you are not finished and also asking for more money. Instead, if you have been making regular detailed progress reports, even including your own mis-steps, it's more likely that problems will be headed off at the pass, and the customer will be more amenable to sharing the cost of surprises. Remember, customers hate unhappy surprises much more than timely bad news.

Churning

This is the all-too-common phenomenon of a consultant doing work not asked for in order to charge more, or charging work that has not been done. running the clock simply to run the clock whether the customer actually needs the work or not. This could be outright lying on an invoice, or recommending/doing work that's not really required.
Deal in good faith, and fully intent for the customer to provide you with a great reference when the project is over. It is impossible to give a customer satisfaction if they are wondering about the legitimacy of your invoices. Reflect on the billing approaches suggested above by working on the next activity.

**Activity E**

Choose the two billing approaches you think will be suitable for your consulting business. Write a brief explanation to justify why each one of these will suit your enterprise.

Record your responses in your course journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Billing approach</th>
<th>Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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</table>

**SUMMARY**

The topic, more practical in its structuring, demonstrated with examples from the consulting business, the three phases one goes through in order to realise one’s dream of becoming a consultant. In the discussion, a range of issues were discussed, including:

- Explanation of the three phases.
- A discussion of the setting up stage, which involved steps such as conducting the SWOT Analysis, establishing an office, naming the consultancy, and advertising, to name a few.
- Explanation of the execution phase, which included justification of aspects such as marketing, networking, monitoring of the cash flow, and being accessible when sought by clients.
- Discussion of billing methods such as hourly billing and fixed bid project.

**SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

1. Discuss reasons for setting up an office at home, and explain the advantages and disadvantages.
2. Which of the three phases do you consider easier to go through: evaluation, setting-up, and execution phase? Support your view with reference to practical situations.
3. Explain the difficulties that consultants usually face with billing. Suggest how you would handle some of the difficulties in billing.
4. What do you understand by ‘churning’? Discuss the significance of churning in the relationship between the consultant and the customer.

Record your responses in your course journal.

SUPPLEMENTARY REFERENCES
To learn more about this topic it is recommended you review one or more the references below.


Thompson, J. (2009). *How to get started in consulting*. IMC Northern California Chapter:Tri-Valley ABC.


Zeidman, B. ( 2009 ).*How to start a consulting business*. The Chalkboard Network.

www.chalknet.com


http://unixwiz.net/techtips/be-consultant.html (Retrieved 15/03/2011)


http://www.fabjob.com/business consultant.asp (Retrieved 20/03/2011)
UNIT FOUR – SUMMARY

<Insert unit summary>

ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

<Insert instructions for completion of unit assignment>
Final Assignment/Major Project

Complete the following open book examination and submit it to your instructor.

NOTE: This is only a suggested final examination and may be replaced by the instructor based on local circumstances.

Coursework Assignment [100 marks]

1. Explain the concepts: ‘Mentoring’ and ‘Coaching’ with reference to a business enterprise environment of your choice. (5 marks)

2. At workplaces, we commonly hear of training rather than mentoring. What is the distinction between mentoring and training within a business enterprise? (10 marks)

Suppose you were a mentor/coach in a business enterprise.

3. Identify any five competencies you would expect to see in a mentor/coach to be recruited to replace you. (5 marks)

4. Justify why you would insist to your CEO to consider each of the three competencies. (10 marks)

Your enterprise has recruited eight new employees who will be on probation for six months before they can be offered permanent appointment. After a month of observation, it is decided that three of these require mentoring, while five require coaching. You are requested to either mentor or coach either group. By closely referring to a particular enterprise, and supported with views from scholars in the field:

5. Explain the procedures you would follow for either mentoring or coaching. (15 marks)

6. Suggest the methods you would follow in the process, justifying your choice for the methods. (15 marks)

7. Discuss the barriers you would anticipate in the transfer of learning resulting from mentoring/coaching. (15 marks)

Business consulting is considered an important entrepreneurial activity in the business world.

8. Briefly explain to interested entrepreneurs what consulting means. (5 marks)

9. Discuss the following phases of setting up your own consultancy: Evaluation, Set Up, and Execution. (20 marks)

Once you have completed your open book examination submit it to your instructor for feedback and grading.


LESSONS LEARNED

<Insert summary/lessons learned from course script>.

APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL

<Insert brief description of how course graduates should apply their new found knowledge and skill>.

COURSE EVALUATION

<Insert instructions on how to complete and submit a course evaluation. You should include a course evaluation form in the Appendices>