

THE BUSINESS CONTINUITY INSTITUTE MENTORING SCHEME

1. INTRODUCTION

Being an Affiliate, Associate, Member, or Fellow of the BCI means different things to different people. As a relatively new discipline in the workplace there are few defined career development paths for new entrants into the world of Business Continuity to follow. Therefore, as a way of sharing ideas and to encourage new and existing Business Continuity practitioners to develop their ideas and to give members of the BCI encouragement to grow their knowledge, the Institute has established a Mentoring scheme. This scheme is designed to assist all members of the BCI to develop their skills, abilities and competencies with a view to developing and furthering their profession.

2. MENTORING AND COACHING

Mentoring and Coaching involves a commitment from both the Mentor and the Mentee. This commitment will mainly be in the form of time. The scheme involves those of higher grades in the BCI providing mentoring services to lower BCI grades. A set of criteria is laid out below as a guideline for Mentors and Mentees.

"What does Mentoring involve?"

Mentoring can be regarded as a four-fold activity:

- (a) Sponsorship - Traditional management thinking equates mentoring with helping people to progress in an organisation. In fact, this sponsorship role is just one aspect of mentoring
- (b) Learning - This involves helping another person with their personal and/or professional development. Mentoring is not the same as teaching or coaching. In a mentoring relationship the Mentee sets the agenda for what s/he wants to learn and the mentor assists in as non-directive a manner as possible, acting as facilitator and adviser rather than as teacher or trainer. While coaching is trainer-centred, mentoring is learner-centred.
- (c) Support - this includes giving encouragement, helping self-confidence and providing a sympathetic ear. Such support, or non-directive personal help, is usually focused more on work issues than on the Mentees outside work/personal life. "Counselling" implies a set of professional skills that are applied only to problem situations. Mentoring can involve support, not just picking up the pieces from problems the Mentee has encountered, but also instilling confidence in the Mentee to build on achievements and strive for greater things.

- (d) Encouragement of self-reliance - This is a fundamental goal of any mentoring relationship. When Mentees are able to take responsibility for themselves, their careers and their own development, without the need for any further assistance from a mentor, then the formal mentoring relationship is no longer required. Many continue more as informal friendship and this is an indication of success in mentoring.

3. REGISTER OF MENTORING

The BCI office holds lists of BCI members willing to become Mentors and of BCI members wishing to become Mentees. The BCI office will match the two requirements and will inform both parties. In the case where a Mentor and Mentee have agreed a partnership beforehand, both parties should inform the BCI office.

4. GUIDELINES

- The partnership between Mentor and Mentee will be registered with the BCI office.
- The partnership will meet at least twice a year on a formal basis, this meeting can be electronically on the internet, by telephone or in person.
- The partnership may meet informally as many times as they wish and as often as may be practical.
- A record of that a meeting has taken place will be registered with the BCI office to enable the Institute to track the progress of the Mentoring Scheme. The full content of the meeting need not be made public but this may happen if both parties agree that it is in the interest of the partnership.
- The maximum number of people a Mentor can have is 3.
- The relationship between the Mentor and the Mentee is confidential.
- Any works published or submitted for publication by the Mentee should acknowledge the Mentor and the BCI Mentoring Scheme with words to the effect:
- 'The author acknowledges the support provided by "A.Fellow" through the Mentoring Scheme of the Business Continuity Institute.
- Both parties will be requested to submit formal feedback on a six monthly basis to the BCI office to report on the progress of the Mentoring Scheme.
- To avoid any conflict of interest within an organisation the partnership should first seek approval from their line manager.

4.1. Mentor

There is a wide difference between a Mentor and a line manager and it is this distinction that must be underlined in respect of a Mentor and Mentee relationship or partnership. The role of the Mentor is to provide a mirror for the Mentee and allow the Mentee to develop their skills in their own way. The Mentor should avoid answering specific questions from the Mentee, instead posing the question back to the Mentee and assisting them in finding the answer. The Mentor may set the Mentee a series of questions to be answered by a certain time as a method of developing a particular skill area where the Mentee has expressed a desire to learn more about.

4.1.1. Mentor Characteristics

A good mentor is:

- Responsive to the Mentee's circumstances
- Mentally energetic
- Action orientated
- Highly respected in their particular field
- Knowledgeable about the BCI disciplines
- Willing to learn
- A listener and coach
- A developer of trust and mutual respect
- Encouraging and motivating

4.1.2. Mentor Behaviours

A good Mentor always:

- Listens with empathy
- Shares experience
- Encourages learning
- Develops insight through reflection
- Provides a professional friendship
- Acts as a sounding board for new and established ideas and thinking
- Avoids providing the answers
- Provides the route map for the Mentee to find the answers

A good Mentor sometimes:

- Coaches
- Acts as a role model
- Provides help and support
- Challenges thinking and ideas
- Opens doors and removes stumbling blocks
- Poses questions to initiate debate
- Sets the student questions to be answered within a time period to help develop skill areas
- Assists the student in finding answers to questions raised by the student

A good Mentor never:

- Disciplines
- Appraises work or behaviour
- Assesses
- Supervises

4.2. Mentee

The role of the Mentee is to identify skill areas that require strengthening. Regular contact with the Mentor is vital to gain and maintain the momentum of progression and development within the BCI skill areas. It is the Mentees' responsibility to seek progression and development in the BCI skill areas and to be honest about their desired direction.

4.2.1. Mentee Characteristics

A good Mentee:

- Asks questions
- Challenges established thinking and ideas
- Seeks answers within themselves
- Willing to learn
- Is honest with themselves and their Mentor
- Listens
- Identifies areas of skill set that requires building upon

4.3. Mentee Expectations

The Mentee should expect to receive guidance from the Mentor on all aspects of Business Continuity Management. However, the Mentee should not expect the Mentor to provide the answers, only pointers to finding them. Within the Mentor/Mentee relationship the Mentee will have the bulk of the work to develop themselves through the BCI disciplines. One example may be that the Mentor sets the Mentee a question regarding a particular area of the BCI skill set for discussion and debate at a future meeting.

Acknowledgements:

Thanks to Bob Mathews MBCI for his kind help and assistance in preparing this document.

Also thanks to Garry Poole FBCI, Bob Draper FBCI and Nigel Bridger MBCI for their feedback and comments.