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## Week 9 Focus: Ongoing Learning - Mentoring

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**Focus Question:** *Who can you learn from? What new insights do you want to gain more information around?*

### Description

Mentoring is an extremely important relationship for professionals at all stages of their career. Mentors can help you see below the waterline of how things operate, understand what is needed, identify conversations you need to have, and also help you avoid pitfalls based on their own experience.

Mentoring is usually a different relationship than coaching and supervision. Mentors provide insights and advice based on their own work experience.

Mentoring has been found to have multiple benefits for both mentor and protégé including more confidence, clarity about what's required, and some studies have even found reduced turnover and higher compensation. What do you see as benefits to mentoring?

### Activity

Consider the areas you could benefit from having a mentor support you around.

### Making Mentoring Work

There are several items which makes mentoring work including creating a roadmap of where you are going to go, having a plan, and being clear around your roles.

Mentoring typically has a fixed start and end. It can be beneficial to have clear GOALS around what the mentoring conversations are going to cover. Consider creating consistent meetings and a timeline or roadmap of where you are going.

Finally, it should be clear who is setting the meeting agenda, and what you want to accomplish in each conversation.

Be sure that you are clear on the roles the mentor and mentee or protégé will play.

Mentors can provide an important "inside track" of how things really get done in an organization or industry. They may also be someone you can take tricky issues to or seek alternative perspectives around.

While mentoring used to be seen as something only seasoned professionals offered, today the concept of "Reverse Mentoring" has taken root. Younger proteges are often teaching seasoned mentors' key elements around new ways of working, technology and other topics. This serves to ensure that there really is a beneficial two-way relationship.

### For more on this:

Check out sections 2 and 4 questions around Collaboration in both PlanDoTrack and Coaching Business Builder. These sections will provide you with possible questions you will want to ask in establishing your mentoring relationship. There are also multiple blog posts on the topic of mentoring over at the Teams365 blog at PotentialsRealized.com.

**"We're here for a reason. I believe a bit of the reason is to throw little torches out to lead people through the dark."**

Whoopi Goldberg

### Did You Know?

Three things that can weaken a mentoring relationship are:

1. Lack of commitment to the relationship
2. Unclear expectations
3. Lack of trust

What conversations are you both having to make sure you are avoiding these pitfalls?