

Mentoring Demystified

Mentoring
Works!

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Ann Rolfe is the author of:

- The Mentoring Conversation
- The Mentoring Guide
- The Mentoring Journal
- Take a Minute To Mentor
- How To Design and Run Your Own Mentoring Program
- Mentoring Demystified
- Mentoring Tips
- Mentoring Works Articles

Ann Rolfe

Australia's most published author on mentoring, has over twenty-five years experience in learning and development. For the last fifteen years, Ann Rolfe has specialised in helping organisations and individuals enjoy the benefits of mentoring. Widely respected as a consultant and presenter, her training programs and resources are used internationally to develop and support mentoring.

Ann Rolfe is the founder of Mentoring Works where we help you create mentoring conversations, relationships and programs that work. We offer a comprehensive range of resources that provide clear, practical guidance based on extensive experience and expertise.

Welcome

I hope that you will explore these pages and find exactly what you are looking for. If not, please email me at ann@mentoring-works.com and if I can assist, I will.

The website is updated regularly, so I recommend you bookmark and revisit. As well, you can subscribe to the Mentoring Works Newsletter and keep up to date.

In this eBook you'll find information on the core concepts of mentoring and some ways mentoring is implemented.

Enjoy!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ann Rolfe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ann Rolfe,
Founder, Mentoring Works

Definitions of Mentoring

"Mentoring is an alliance,
that creates a space for dialogue,
that results in reflection, action and learning." Mentoring –

developing insight to turn hindsight into foresight!

Mentoring is synergetic relationship - two or more people, engaged in a process that achieves more than each could alone.

Interaction with another that facilitates the process of metacognition

There are many different definitions of mentoring. It is important the people engaged in mentoring have an agreed definition.

Many Ways To Mentor

In the past, mentoring has been a one-to-one process, most often informal and unstructured. Contemporary mentoring takes many forms and though informal mentoring often occurs naturally and spontaneously, more structured approaches are emerging. Ways of mentoring include:

- Informal – conversations that happen by chance or by arrangement
- Formal – relationships in a structured program
- Peer mentoring - two colleagues mentor each other
- Reverse-mentoring - executives mentored by non-executives
- Cascading mentoring – each level of an organization mentor those below
- Group mentoring - one mentor meets with several mentoree's
- Mentoring round-tables - peers interact in a group mentoring conversation
- Mentoring circles - facilitated group, each person mentors one person and is mentored by another
- Mastermind mentoring and business coaching- experts coach a novices

The Mentoring Philosophy

Mentoring is a gift that is shared. It is a relationship that enables purposeful conversation. The conversation assists the mentoree to reflect on their own experience, make informed decisions and act upon the ideas that are generated.

The purpose of mentoring is development. It is about learning not teaching and both mentors and those mentored grow from the experience.

In mentoring, people develop a synergetic relationship through a conversation that enables them to set and achieve goals, make decisions and solve problems.

Any person who has the skill to facilitate the mentoring process may be a mentor.

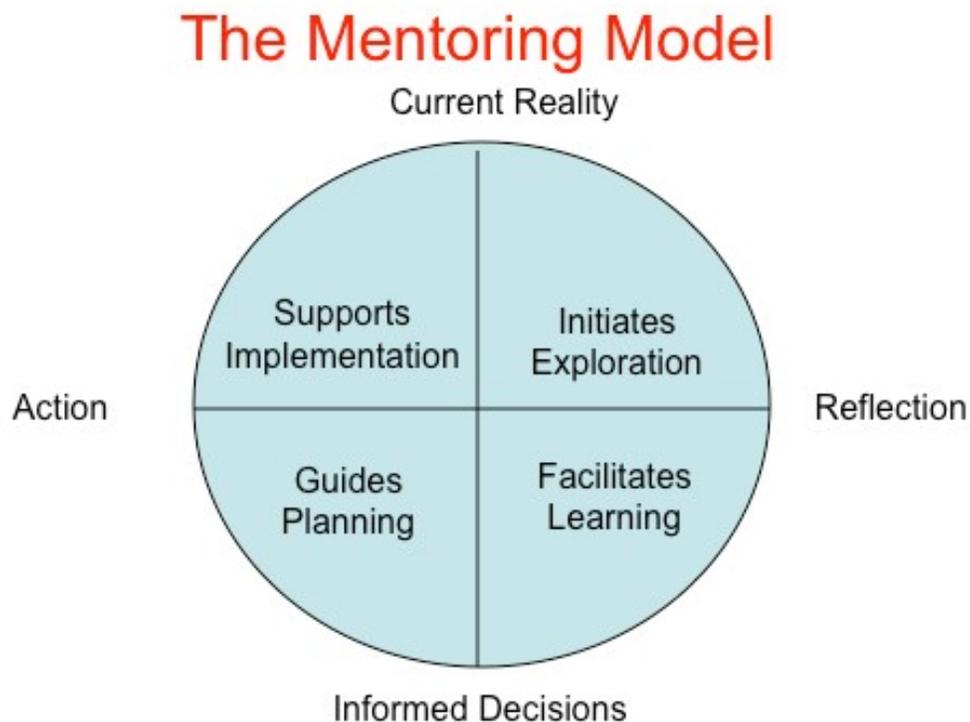
Mentoring is enriching and satisfying for both partners.

The Mentoring Process

The role of the mentor is to build rapport, ask questions, listen and elicit the mentoree's own wisdom. The mentor does not have to be older, wiser or have specialised knowledge in any field. They need to be skilled in leading a mentoring conversation.

The mentoring conversation invites the mentoree to reflect on their own experience with a situation, issue or problem, then gather information from a variety of sources (perhaps including the mentor), sort through options and decide on a course action, plan and implement it. Reviewing the results continues the learning cycle.

When mentoring is approached in this way, it is the mentor's questioning skills that extend and enhance the mentoree's thinking processes. The mentoree does not become dependent; they develop independent critical thinking. The mentoree is empowered, having come up with his or her own answers. They also take responsibility for their actions. Having explored possible consequences of actions, they are less vulnerable.



The Mentoring Mindset

Traditional mentoring grew from the concept of the older and wiser guiding the young and aspiring. Masters and apprentices, patrons and protégés and mastermind (expert/novice) mentoring continue this paradigm.

Contemporary mentoring has many forms and frequently people regard each other as partners, colleagues or peers, ignoring age, status or power. This more egalitarian approach suits today's generation and has much to offer.

Contrasting The Traditional Mentoring Paradigm with Contemporary Thinking.

Traditional Paradigm	Contemporary Thinking
The mentor picks a protégé	You look for mentors
A mentor is someone more senior	A mentor is someone you can learn from regardless of age or position
You should have a lot in common with your mentor	Difference provides potential for greater discovery, challenge and growth
Mentoring is for young people	Mentoring is for anyone at any stage of life or career
You have one mentor	You may have mentors for different aspects of life and career
Mentoring is one-to-one	Many ways to mentor - individual, group and mentoring circles
Mentors tell you what to do	A mentor is a sounding board
Mentors gives advice	Mentors assist your decision-making and problem-solving
You are a mentor or a mentoree	You are both mentor and mentoree
You need a mentor	A mentoring mindset enables you to gain insight by interacting with others with or without formal relationships

Informal Mentoring

Quite often, talking with a friend, relative or colleague can result in an "ah ha" moment, when suddenly we understand something that was previously a mystery, instantly see a solution to a problem, or realise that there are possibilities and options we had not previously considered.

Most of us have experienced a conversation or relationship that has provided us with encouragement or support and stimulated our thinking. Frequently such conversations happen by chance. You just happen to be in the right place at the right time, in the right frame of mind when the right person is around.

Formal mentoring need not exist for us to have a conversation that produces useful insight. Mentoring occurs when there is a deliberate intent to learn, grow or develop wisdom through conversation. Informal mentoring could mean that:

- There is no discussion of the desire to mentor or be mentored;

Or

- The mentoring is a by-product of another relationship such as managing, coaching or teaching;

Or

- While both parties have agreed to the mentoring, there is no definite process or format to the conversation.

Formal Mentoring

Formal mentoring has a structure. It involves an agreement to mentor and be mentored, a clear framework for mentoring and perhaps a program of support.

In a formal mentoring relationship, there is discussion of expectations, goals and the process to be used. The frequency and duration of contact is agreed and ground-rules are established.

Individuals may establish their own mentoring arrangements or participate in a mentoring program.

Mentoring Programs

Mentoring programs exist within organizations, in professions and industries, and as community initiatives.

Mentoring programs are designed to achieve:

- Strategic objectives for companies or government agencies;
- Career aspirations or professional development of individuals; or
- Support young or disadvantaged people.

In every case, the purpose of the mentoring program is to produce positive outcomes for the people involved.

A mentoring program provides support for people engaged in mentoring. A program has documented objectives and guidelines and plans for:

- Budget and resources for the program
- Communication or marketing
- Recruiting participants
- Matching pairs
- Education, training and information
- Activities and events
- Trouble shooting and exit strategies
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Continuity of the program

Usually, a program co-ordinator or project team will have responsibility for implementing the program. This person or group will:

- Manage the logistics, administration and resources of the program
- Serve as a central point of contact and communication
- Select and match participants
- Organise education, events and participant materials
- Monitor and support participants
- Evaluate and report results

For more information see: Rolfe, A. (2006) How To Design and Run Your Own Mentoring Program. Available from www.mentoring-works.com.

Peer Mentoring

Two people form a mentoring partnership and take turns in mentoring each other as peers. Each one simply facilitates the mentoring process by asking questions, listening and reflecting. As in most types of mentoring, there is a place for offering another perspective, expressing an opinion or providing information. However, the decision-making responsibility always resides with the person who will implement and experience the consequences of their own actions. Because the partners recognise each other as peers, it can be easier to offer and receive input as information rather than advice.

Reverse Mentoring

Based on old paradigm mentoring where a more senior person (in terms of age, position or experience) mentors a junior, reverse mentoring places the more junior person as the mentor. Usually used when executives need to understand operations or technology that can be shared by shopfloor, front-line or tech-savvy employees. The key to success in reverse mentoring is the ability to create and maintain an attitude of openness to the experience and dissolve the barriers of status, power and position.

Cascading Mentoring

A top-down process of mentoring allows people at each level of the organization develop insight for themselves and others by sharing their knowledge and experience with those below. Particular attention needs to be paid to ensuring that the mentoring process is employed rather than instruction. Since mentoring is usually best when the mentor and mentoree are not in a direct line of authority, this type of mentoring will sometimes be combined with mentoring round-tables, group mentoring and/or mentoring circles.

Group Mentoring

One mentor can be teamed with several mentorees who meet at the same time. A wonderful synergy can develop in this environment. As the mentor poses questions, listens and reflects he or she draws all members of the group into the conversation. Each one has their own experience and insight to share and can draw their own learning from the discussion.

Mentoring Round-Tables

Derived from the mastermind concept described by Dale Carnegie, peers meet as a group to explore a topic, issue or goal. The process may involve questions to an individual that elicit insight from reflecting on their own experience, group brainstorming, or drawing on the expertise of members of the group to provide information and options.

Mentoring Circles™

A facilitator meets with four, six, eight or ten people, each of whom is both mentor and mentoree. They meet regularly as a group to learn, discuss and experience mentoring. The difference between mentoring circles and group mentoring is that the group and facilitator discuss only the mentoring process. Mentoring conversations remain confidential. Each person in the circle mentors the person on their left and later is mentored by the person on their right, so the person they mentor does not mentor them.

Mastermind Mentoring and Business Coaching

Closer to the traditional paradigm of mentoring and the master-apprentice teaching relationship, a person with significant expertise or guru status in a particular field takes on one who wishes to learn to become like the master or do what they do. Typically, the novice pays the expert and a contract and structured program are involved. A group mentoring process, often on-line or by telephone, as well as one-to-one contact is usually employed. Though questions and answers may be a feature of mastermind mentoring, it is not so much the learner's own insight but the master's formulas for success that are shared. Mastermind mentoring is prevalent for marketing, public speaking and ecommerce. Many business coaches are franchisees who have purchased the right to use intellectual property and systems developed by a particular expert. However, there are a few business mentors and some coaches who apply a mentoring philosophy of listening and questioning to elicit the mentoree's own wisdom.

The Differences Between Mentoring and Coaching

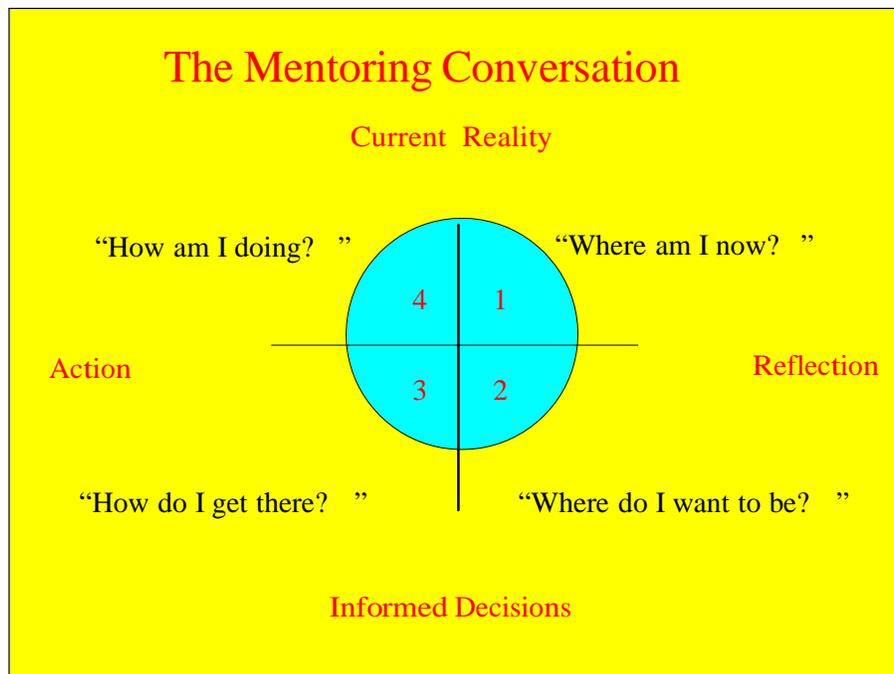
There are many similarities and differences between mentoring and coaching. However the most important distinction is:

Coaching is used when there is a well-defined goal that is based on improving skills and performance.

Mentoring is valuable for career development, providing general guidance, setting and achieving goals, making decisions or facilitating problem solving.

Coaching is about performance, mentoring is personal. So while it is appropriate and desirable for a person's immediate supervisor to coach them, a mentor is best not to be in the direct reporting line.

The similarities and differences of mentoring and coaching are explored in more detail in: Mentoring Works Articles Vol 1: Do I Need A Mentor or Coach? and The Mentoring Conversation. Available from www.mentoring-works.com.



The Mentoring Conversation

The Mentoring Conversation™ is a model based on learning theories such as those developed by David Kolb, Honey and Mumford, and Bernice McCarthy, as well as classic problem solving and strategic planning and decision-making processes.

The mentoring conversation aims at facilitating self-development. It is based on four questions:

1. Where am I now?
2. Where do I want to be?
3. How do I get there? And
4. How am I doing?

The mentor firstly facilitates reflection and the exploration of options. Next, the mentor assists the mentoree to make informed decisions, set goals and formulate practical strategies to achieve them. The mentor then encourages and supports the mentoree as they implement their plan.

When a mentor models and leads the mentoring conversation as described, the mentoree learns a valuable problem solving and decision-making process that can be applied in any situation. Thus, a mentor assists not only with immediate needs but also equips the mentoree to deal with future issues.

Extract from Rolfe, A. (2006) The Mentoring Conversation. Available from www.mentoring-works.com.

Be Mentored

If you wish to be mentored you need to answer these questions:

1. Why do I want a mentor? What is my purpose or goal and how will it benefit me?
2. Who would be a suitable mentor for me? What sort of person could I respect and trust with confidence? Who would have the necessary skills to listen without judgement, probe without prying and expand my ideas without instructing?
3. Where do I find potential mentors? And how do I connect with them?

There are web-based systems that personally connect you with a mentor. These can be located with an internet search.

Your own community or organization may have, or be able to implement, a mentoring program.

Organizations, government agencies and universities in many countries provide mentoring programs to particular groups. Some are free, some are subsidised and some require you to pay for the mentoring.

Resources for people who wish to be mentored are available from www.mentoring-works.com.

Mentor Others

Do you have the ability to listen without judgement, probe without prying and expand someone's ideas without instructing? Can you develop rapport? Keep your ego in check, so that instead of immediately giving your answer, solution or advice, you can ask questions to draw out what another already knows or can discover for themselves?

For some, the ability to mentor seems to come naturally. For the rest of us, learning a process, practicing the skills and developing habits of communication is necessary. These attributes will serve us well in all relationships, build our professional capability and allow us to shine as mentors and leaders.

If you have mentoring ability, or a willingness to develop it, there will be many opportunities to offer your assistance informally or as part of a mentoring program. Mentoring programs run by companies, government agencies, schools and universities are always looking for volunteer mentors. A little research will enable you to identify mentoring programs in your community, industry or the field to which you wish to contribute.

Resources for people who wish to mentor are available from www.mentoring-works.com.

Develop Or Manage A Mentoring Program

Mentoring grows ever more popular. Mentoring programs serve communities, businesses, government, the military, universities and schools around the world. Mentoring aims may be as diverse as keeping young people out of gangs, succession planning in multi-national corporations, sending corporate executives to work with community leaders in tribal cultures - to build the skills of both, or career development for disadvantaged and minority groups.

Regardless of the purpose of mentoring, it represents the very best of human endeavours. Mentoring is a relationship for growth. Most mentors are motivated by the altruistic desire to assist someone. Most people who are mentored recognise their potential for an enhanced future. Whether it is skills for living, business success or career advancement, mentoring is a gift of shared wisdom that benefits both parties.

A successful mentoring program is one that is planned, supported and managed so that it meets the needs of the people involved and the organization that runs it.

Need More Help To Implement Your Mentoring Program?

Buy the book: How To Design And Run Your Own Mentoring Program. Find out more here <http://mentoring-works.com/HOW2.html>

Online Course: Designing Mentoring Programs. Webinars, group chat and one-to-one support. Find out more here <http://mentoring-works.com/DMP.html>

Consulting http://mentoring-works.com/mentor_consulting.html

Public Programs: Designing Mentoring Programs. http://www.mentoring-works.com/public_programs

In-house Planning Workshops http://mentoring-works.com/inhouse_mentoring_planning.html

In-house Customised Training For Mentoring Participants http://mentoring-works.com/mentor_consulting.html#consult

One-to-one: Mentoring On Your Mentoring Program personal assistance by Ann Rolfe to find out more email ann@mentoring-works.com

[Contactus](#) for further information and discuss your needs.