



Tool 1

The Mentor-Coaching Approach for Building Capacity: An Overview

This distillation of the mentor-coaching frame, process, and relationship is designed to help clarify the orientation and intentionality of the learning partnership between mentor-coach and mentee.

Mentor-Coaching Is...

A collaborative learning relationship and reflective process that is established together by a mentor-coach and a mentee. This co-created partnership, of ongoing support and challenge, evolves over time through structured conversations to facilitate engagement, capacity building, desired growth, and change. (WMMC, p. 3)

Intention of the Mentor-Coaching Process: Growth and Change over Time

- The mentor-coach supports the mentee in being deeply engaged in a process that is designed to expand awareness and enhance the capacity to notice and choose actions in service of ongoing learning and growth.
- There is an ongoing commitment to deep reflection and impactful choices leading to effective action and accountability.
- Mentor-coaching provides the structure, rigour, and commitment that adaptive change and new leadership or teaching behaviours require.

The Mentor-Coaching Conversation: Attention, Intention, and Action

- The mentee chooses the agenda and the path of the conversation, thus keeping the focus centred on her or his growth and development.
- The agreement is that it is the mentee's work throughout the conversation. The mentor-coach asks questions that foster exploration and new discoveries, perspectives, and possibilities for action.
- Each conversation is a dedicated time for being "on purpose" and intentional regarding awareness, choice, trust, action, and accountability.



The Mentor-Coaching Relationship: Authentic, Connected, and Action-Focused

- The mentor-coaching relationship is collaborative and supportive, committed to an ethos of confidentiality, mutual respect, inquiry, and reflection.
- The mentor-coaching relationship is “on purpose” and about building capacity in the mentee over time.
- As it is the mentee’s work, the mentor-coach and mentee collaborate and co-create, keeping the light on the mentee and on the identified focus of the work they are stepping into.

The Mentor-Coach: Present, Listening, and Inquiring

- The mentor-coach is skilled in being present, listening deeply, and asking the mentee impactful questions in support of their expanding awareness and capacities.
- The mentor-coach believes that the mentee is resourceful, creative, and expert in their own life and that they hold the wisdom and answers within.
- The mentor-coach remembers that it is the mentee’s work (and thus refrains from fixing, solving, or making assumptions) and only interprets and shares their own experience when it is in service of the mentee.

The Mentee: Growth Stance

- The mentee is committed to investing in their own growth and development over time.
- The mentee remembers that they are resourceful, creative, and expert in their own life and that they hold the wisdom and answers within.
- The mentee recognizes that it is their agenda/work and that their expanding awareness, choices, and actions are enhanced through inquiry and reflection.