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**DIGITAL LEARNING**  
IN THE FAMILY

# Summary of IO2: “How to Coach Mentors for Becoming Guides in Learning?”





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## I. Introduction

Instruction, Curricula and Assessments are needed; however, they are not satisfactory for stimulating meaningful learning among adults; especially if they recently arrived from non-Western countries. Becoming an 'Active Learner' is the main step for becoming a lifelong learner. The transition from receptive towards 'active learning' needs a mentor, and even a coach. His/her role is to support the learner at decisive stages in the process; Important is the trust and the more personal exchange between learner and coach. As the teacher is responsible for the final grading and decision on 'succeed' versus 'fail', there is a need for a coach who supports the learner at moments of doubt and despair. A learning coach primarily needs to build and maintain a trust relationship to the student. In case a friction between the teacher and the students emerges, it is the coach who needs an independent position so that anonymity towards the student can be guaranteed. In summary: The coach's priority is to encourage the learner to adjust the student's learning style so that active learning is likely to emerge.

## II. Profile of a Mentor

### What skills should the mentors have?

The mentor helps the mentee to understand its needs, limitations and strengths in order to achieve the desired learning outcomes. This help is even more vital for learners once they recently arrived from abroad and lack the fluency in listening and speaking in the local language (e.g. German, Italian or Dutch). Typically have the next skills and virtues:

- Willingness to participate in the mentee's personal and professional growth.
- Disposition and willingness to communicate, listen, advise and create a climate of trust
- Willingness to evaluate goals and results
- Appreciation of diversity in culture, personality and style.

### What skills should mentors learn?

Most crucial is that the mentor is sensitive to the learner's cognitive and emotional status and observes the learner's progress to 'take risk' and 'willingness' to claim ownership of one's own learning. Secondly, the mentor's skill and courage to raise the dialogue to the learner on 'one's learning attitude': What learning approaches are needed nowadays and how to understand the challenges in the teacher role.

### Mentor Skills and Competences:

- Establish an open dialogue with the mentee by answering all important questions
- Listen attentively and discreetly to the mentee
- Take care of the mentee by understanding their wants and needs
- help the mentee to clarify his true expectations
- Stimulate reflection and engagement in the mentee
- Express your own evaluation honestly.
- Provide the mentee with opportunities/inspiration to learn through the exchange of work, organizational, cultural and relationship experiences.
- Be committed to being a role model
- ensure that he finds the time and willingness to take on the role of mentor.



## **Mentor skills**

- Communication, both face-to-face and at a distance, by phone, email, social networks;
- Training through case analysis, storytelling;
- Information enriched with documents, books and articles;
- Evaluation with minutes of the meetings held and status report.

## **Inter/multicultural competence.**

The ideal process between mentor and mentee is an asymmetrical one: The mentee needs coaching and support in order to acquire additional skills for social integration and to qualify for the next career step. For further directives, please consult the complete IO2 Report.

## **III.1 Kick-off process for mentors**

### **BEFORE the first meeting**

For further directives, please consult the complete IO2 Report.

#### **1. Definition and discussion of the goals of the mentoring**

For further directives, please consult the complete IO2 Report.

#### **2. How do you achieve the goals of the mentoring?**

- Talk to your mentee about the learning goals. Which goals are particularly important to the mentee? Which goals are easy to achieve? Which goals can cause problems?
- For further directives, please consult the complete IO2 Report. At each meeting or conversation, always set a date for a new meeting or conversation with your mentee.

### **AFTER the meeting**

- Your mentee will probably always send you a short summary of your respective conversation and a brief assessment of whether he is satisfied with the meeting and the joint work or whether there are problems from the mentee's point of view. You can use this text to start the next conversation. (Note: Important information on how to deal with (critical) feedback can be found in the Feedback Toolkit.)
- You should also briefly summarize each conversation in writing for your records.

## **III.2 Kick-off procedure for participants**

### **BEFORE the first meeting**

- Have you already written a curriculum vitae (CV)? Send your resume (CV) to your mentor or bring your resume (CV) with you to the first meeting.



- For further directives, please consult the complete IO2 Report..

### **AT the first meeting**

Very important: ALWAYS ask if you don't understand something! Your mentor will help you!

### **AFTER the meeting**

- Always write a text of what you have done to achieve your learning goals. Make a note of what you still need to do. What are your new tasks?
- For further directives, please consult the complete IO2 Report.

Send this text to your mentor after each meeting.

- Write to your mentor if you are satisfied with the meeting and the joint work. Write to your mentor about what was not so good and what problems you see in working together. Your mentor will talk to you about your text at the next meeting.

## **III.3 Rules (agreements) between participant and mentor**

Sit down and decide together how you want to work. Clarify that in a written document. The form below should help. For further directives, please consult the complete IO2 Report.