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Module 6

Mentoring Review and Assessment

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Module Title	Module 6: Mentoring Activities and Tool Uses		
Learning Objectives	Module 6 aims to educate learners on carrying out reviews and assessments of mentoring programmes and relationships, and monitoring performance of mentees.		
Learning Outcomes	Through Module 6, learners will be able to: 1. Comprehend the importance of a multidimensional evaluation process, which includes the establishment of KPIs, the analysis of outcomes and the role of timing.		
	2. Gain competence on the Use of Related Tools in the context of Review and Assessment		



1. Introduction

In this last module of the Mentors' training Curriculum of the Procare Project we aim to show you how a Mentoring Relationship should be reviewed and assessed, in order to better understand strength and weakness of the process, as well as opportunities for improvement. To do so, we need to point out methods and tools useful for the reader to perform an evaluation of the mentoring programme and relationship, and how to monitor, during this journey the performances of both Mentors and Mentees. Through this sixth module the reader will be able to understand why a multidimensional process of assessment and review should be undertaken and its advantages, the reader will know how to identify Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be the instrument to carry out the evaluation, how to choose them and use them in a proficient way. Moreover, the user will understand the concept of timing the evaluation and the importance of performing it as a continuous assessment, and how to interpret the outcomes of this process, while running a self-evaluation on its own performance and improvement. Furthermore, the final aim of this module, is to equip Mentors and Mentees of the needed competencies to proficiently use the tools of evaluation.

The sixth module will be structured in three chapters in which it will be analysed the entire process of review and assessment.

In the first chapter, it will be explained why a process of evaluation in a mentoring relationship is needed, why it is important to carry out an evaluation process, the actors involved and the risks related to an incorrect process of review and assessment.

In the second chapter, the reader will be informed about the different types of evaluation processes that can be carried out, what are the Key Performance Indicators and their role in the assessment procedure, as well as how many types of them existes and which are the best and more appropriate one(s) to use. Finally, the reader will learn what are the key aspects that should be evaluated in a mentoring relationship.

The last chapter will then introduce the user to the employment of the Tools developed by the Procare project, specifically for the mentoring relationship and explain how they are useful in monitoring the process and progress of this training relationship. Finally, there will be a space for suggesting other instruments and tools that can be flanked by the Procare ones in order to perform a better and exhaustive evaluation process.



Finally, a set of relevant best practices will be pointed out to be taken as an example to better conduct a review and assessment process in a mentoring relationship.

2. Why a Review and Assessment process of a Mentoring Relationship?

As all the new processes that are implemented in an organisation to improve its functioning, even a mentoring program can perform in a good way or in a poor one and, therefore, do not produce the expected results in the well-being of the organisation itself. Hence, carrying out an evaluation is essential to be aware of what has been done, how, why and if it has been effective or not. Reviewing and Assessing is the groundbase on which builds a better relationship between Mentor and Mentee as well as, learning from each other's mistakes to improve the process and produce better outcomes.

Through the analysis of the collected data, during the process of evaluation, the actors involved in the relationship will be able to deduce if the process was conducted correctly, with a high quality level, on the value of the produced outcomes and on the importance of the implementation of a Mentoring programme in the organisation.

Therefore, why should we perform this evaluation process? Who is going to be responsible for the evaluation and is there someone who will evaluate someone else? Which are the risks of performing a poor evaluation for the organisation and the mentoring programme itself? These are some of the questions that we will try to answer in the following paragraphs to avoid mistakes that can occur in an evaluation process and that can invalidate the mentoring process undertaken by the organisation.

2.a. Actors involved: peer and self-evaluation

In a mentoring relationship the actors involved are not just the mentor and the mentee. Other actors can be involved or interested in the outcomes of this process. However, the review and assessment process of this relationship is addressed for the actors actively involved in this training path, while other actors will be more interested in the outcomes of the evaluation process, in order to assess whether or not continuing in investing in such activities.





Having said so, the main actors to be considered as "active" in the evaluation process are the Mentor and the Mentee. A mentoring relationship takes as stated that the two actors are not at the same level from an experience point of view. The more experienced one is guiding the less experienced one. Nonetheless, the review and assessment process should flow both ways, in order to understand if the action of the Mentor has been effective in improving and supporting the Mentee situation and whether the Mentee is performing accordingly to implement the tips, advice and suggestions the Mentor is trying to provide.

Therefore, we can talk of a "peer" process of evaluation where the subject of the evaluation changes if the Mentor or the Mentee is in charge of the process. To be more specific, it can be said that the evaluation of the Mentor will be on the progress reached by the Mentee and on the qualitative aspects of their relationship, while the Mentee will run an evaluation on the rapport with its Mentor and on the progress he/she is achieving.

Notwithstanding that, in the assessment of the Mentoring relationship it should also be included in a process of self-evaluation. The Mentee can try to assess whether or not this kind of activity is helping reaching out his/her objectives or if his/her well being is improving. The same perspective can be adopted by the Mentor that should self-evaluate his/her work and methods to understand if the approach undertaken is more or less effective.

2.b. When an evaluation process can be ineffective?

The Review and Assessment process of a Mentoring Relationship can, as all human activities, be undermined by mistakes and errors. In order to conduct an effective process of evaluation it is necessary to avoid paths that can lead to incorrect outcomes that will weaken the process of mentoring, or even the programme in its entirety.

Hereafter, it will be presented a non exhaustive list of mistakes that are common and that should be avoided. First of all, the evaluator, being the Mentor or the Mentee, should avoid giving unfair or biassed evaluations. This will undermine the trust relationship built during the mentoring process. Secondly, the use of appropriate means of assessment should be encouraged. It is not possible to collect useful data from ineffective tools. Every aspect of the relationship, whether collecting information of a quantitative or qualitative nature, should be gathered with the correct and fine tuned instrument. Later on this module it will be given a definition of both qualitative and quantitative indicators and a list of possible tools for data collection. Thirdly, once the evaluation





process in its first phase of opinion collection has been completed, these data should be understood and analysed. A tainted analysis of the available data will lead to an incorrect evaluation which might induce poor decisions over the mentoring programme. Lastly, the evaluation should be carried out investing the correct amount of time in order to avoid missing important steps and therefore invalidating the entire process.

3. Perform a valid monitoring and assessment phase

To perform a valid evaluation phase of a Mentoring relationship it is necessary to understand how a process of evaluation is carried out, which are the steps, the timing, the different types of indicators and which type of assessment process is best for our relationship.

First of all we need to consider the evaluation moment as a process that, for its nature, should be defined as systemic: this means that whoever is performing should determine a strategy. Therefore, the evaluator, in this case both Mentor and/or Mentee, should hypothesise the reasons why and how this relationship will be beneficial for them and their organisation. They should also identify the changes/improvements they are trying to achieve, both during the mentorship and after it is concluded (*in itinere* and *ex post* evaluations). Lastly, they should collect data, analyse them and proceed in decision making, in order to improve the possible outcomes of future Mentoring relationships.

Following the intervention logic explained above, the whole process should be centred on the utility of the produced results, where the outcomes of the assessing and reviewing process are useful for all the actors involved in order to improve actions that have been undertaken, know how to access already available information related to previous experiences and/or create new ones that can be used to promote sustainable changes along time. Moreover, Mentors and Mentees should consider the fact that reality might differ from the expectations that they have been developing before or during their relationship. Finally, the correct value should be assigned to the results obtained during the evaluation process, in order to avoid committing the mistakes that have been highlighted in the previous chapter.

With this in mind, for developing a proper system for evaluation there is the necessity to identify and define **Key Performance Indicators** (KPIs) as instruments to measure the progress in the mentoring relationship and its quality and effectiveness. What are KPIs and how to identify them will be deepened in the following paragraphs.





3.a. What are the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Key Performance Indicators or KPIs are an extremely useful tool to measure the work done and if it is producing a relevant impact. Furthermore, they prove themselves as excellent at defining the value of the impact and can be used to better manage the available resources to focus on improvement efforts.

To define KPIs we can say that: "Key Performance Indicators are the critical quantifiable indicators of progress toward an intended result. KPIs provide a focus for strategic and operational improvement, create an analytical basis for decision making and help focus attention on what matters most. Managing with the use of KPIs includes setting targets and tracking progress towards those targets." It is important to notice that an indicator can only measure what "has" happened, in the past tense, so the only type of measurement is descriptive or lagging. Any KPI that attempts to measure something in a future state as predictive, diagnostic, or prescriptive is no longer an "indicator", it is a "prognosticator".

Setting good KPIs is not always easy, nonetheless, some essential points can be followed to have a benchmark in this process:

- Provide objective evidence of progress towards desired results.
- Measure what is intended to be measured to help inform better decision making.
- Offer a comparison that gauges the degree of performance change over time.
- Track efficiency, effectiveness, quality, timeliness, governance, compliance, behaviours, performance or resource utilisation.
- Find a balance between leading and lagging elements or aspects.



In order to avoid operational mistakes a specification must be taken into account: the difference between KPIs and OKR, where OKR represents a performance management system called Objective and Key Results. So, if the OKR are used proficiently they can help actors organise work, focusing on the needs that are essential to achieve the expected key result in a setted time frame, as can be seen in the following tab.



To point out the relevant differences between OKR and KPIs, KPIs must respond to certain characteristics: the indicators must be quantifiable (and therefore measurable), directional, operational, and therefore they can exert an effective change in the strategy adopted; finally, they have to be practical and adaptable to needs. A summary of the differences can be seen in the following tab.

So, what type of indicators Mentors and Mentees should look after for evaluating their mentoring relationship? What kind of evaluation should they carry-out?



KPI vs OKR

KPI	WEEKDONE	OKR
Key Performance Indicator		Objectives & Key Results
Business metrics reflecting performance		Goal-setting method to improve performance & drive changes
Sets the performance level to be achieved		For alignment, engagement and focus
For performance management and measurement		A specific are of improvement to focus on
Not changeable on a regular basis		Frequently set, adaptive, tracked and re-evaluated
Monitors the steady state & provides benchmarks		Informs everyone on what's important to achieve company goals
Leadership led / Top-Down	\triangleright	Bottom-up & Top-Down

3.b. How many different indicators can be considered?

Concerning the different types of indicators that can be considered while developing an evaluation system for a Mentoring relationship the actors should consider both Qualitative and Quantitative indicators.

- 1. Quantitative indicators: they serve to present facts with a specific objective that can be measured with a numeric value against a standard. Usually, these analyses are not subject to distortion, personal feelings, prejudices, or interpretations. They usually answer questions like: How many? How much?
- 2. Qualitative indicators: they are useful to understand the non-numeric conformance to a standard, they include interpretations of personal feelings, tastes, opinions, or experiences.

Hereafter we present some examples of both kinds of indicators in order to give the reader a more hand-on approach to the evaluation process and the choice of indicators:

QUANTITATIVE:

- share of participants who defined their objectives during the programme;
- share of participants who reached at least one of the objectives during the programme;





- total amount of reached objectives compared to the total amount of pre-established objectives;
- share of programme participants who state the programme contributed to: increasing their self-confidence, improving their motivation, improving their wellbeing at workplace;
- share of participants who: have lower absenteeism or improved their education performance.

QUALITATIVE:

- narratives from beneficiaries on what differences the mentoring made to them. Stories about how mentoring helped them: increase self-confidence and motivation or decide on their next steps;
- narratives from mentors on what differences the mentoring made to the beneficiaries and on what can be the benefits of Mentorship for Mentors themselves.

Therefore, to determine an evaluation strategy for a Mentoring relationship it is useful to keep in mind the aims of this kind of actions: promote the development and satisfaction of participants. The Evaluation strategy should be set in the preparatory phase of the Mentorship, because objectives and goals are elaborated in this phase and so should be the indicators that have to be tailored to the measurement of these objectives and goals.

A Mentoring relationship produces a good outcome for the organisation when all the participants define together aims and objectives and when they have an active role during the whole duration. In the following paragraphs other examples for KPIs are presented and subsequently, in the next chapter it will be shown how other tools developed by the Procare Project are not just useful in establishing a good Mentoring relationship, but also to evaluate its effectiveness.

3.c. What type of indicators can be used in reviewing and assessing a Mentoring Relationship?

The type of indicators to be used, as well as the evaluation process itself will vary if the object of the assessment process is the Mentoring Programme as a whole or just the Mentoring Relationship. Consequently, when the object of analysis is the individual, the evaluation should focus as much as possible on the changes experienced by the individual, while documenting the improvements or the stepbacks.





Therefore, the evaluation of the Mentoring Relationship usually focuses on two aspects: the degree of implementation of the initiative, and whether or not the individual participants have achieved the desired results. In order to assess this we can list, in the following paragraphs, some KPIs to be used as a benchmark for your evaluation process.

The first example of KPIs that will be presented is the AIMS indicator. In order to measure whether both parties have clearly defined the reasons why they are interacting, if the objectives of the mentoring relationship have been clearly defined and have been shared between Mentor and Mentee so that both of them will know when the goals of this relationship have been achieved.

The second example is the COMMUNICATION or ENGAGEMENT indicator, that aims to measure if both actors are communicating through the means they prefer, in the timeframe they setted and if both of them are actively listening to each other also thanks to a monitoring in the body language. Some metrics can be: Number of sign ups, Number of active mentoring relationships, Number of mentoring sessions, Number of hours mentoring, Number of actions set/notes taken.

The third is the TRUST indicator, where it is measured the level of confidentiality between Mentor and Mentee. Some useful elements to be considered are: meeting presence, increase in information shared with the ongoing in time of the relationship.

Another helpful indicator can monitor the PROCESS: this means if the sessions are held with the correct length in time, the participants feel that the relationship is of mutual benefit, both Mentor and Mentee are aware of the different phases a mentoring relationship is usually built on and, ultimately, like each other.

The PROGRESS or LEARNING/DEVELOPMENT indicator is a handy indicator to underline if the Mentee has defined clearly its professional goals and are moving towards their achievement. Some metrics to use can be: Number of goals set, Number of goals achieved, Personal satisfaction score.

The SATISFACTION score as an indicator can be implemented by engaging actors asking them for satisfaction feedback. In order to make a fruitful use of this indicator, something we can suggest is to embed this mechanism in the mentoring journey so that mentors and mentees can provide their feedback at the right time and location.



Finally, the RETENTION indicator can be used to monitor the eventual success of a mentoring programme as a whole, more than a relationship *stricto sensu*. As a matter of fact, an increase in retention rate might indicate that the mentoring program is a success. If employee satisfaction among participation is high and their career objectives are met, while the organisation invests in a rewarding system for those whose effort is evident, then the mentoring sessions might have reached their goal in improving working conditions and work satisfaction. Some metrics to measure these improvements can be: Employee engagement, Employee satisfaction, Retention rates, Promotion rates, Performance ratings, Participation rates.

Some other KPIs can be identified in the changing of the symptoms that are strictly related to the burnout syndrome. Hence, if the condition of the mentee is changing from one of the following status, then the mentoring relationship might have been effective. The metrics to be used are: Increased self-confidence; Increased self-awareness; Leadership skill development; Art of delivering feedback; Art of asking questions; Becoming a good listener; Exposure to new and different perspectives; Growing a personal network; Increased job satisfaction; Supporting another person; Paying it forward;

In the end, it can be suggested to use and build a measurement framework in which actors will be able to collect, in a logical way, outputs, results, indicators, changes, methods for data collection, sources and timeframe. It is particularly relevant in this context keeping in mind that results can be divided into immediate, mid-term and long-term benefits; indicators (as KPIs) monitor the progress accomplished towards the expected changes that should be measure both through qualitative and quantitative instruments; finally, the time frame is extremely important in order to share and forecast dedicated moments for reviewing and assessing the mentoring relationship.

4. Using PROCARE Mentoring Sessions tools for evaluation

In conclusion of this module it should be pointed out that, in implementing a mentoring relationship as previewed by the Procare Project, Mentors and Mentees will gain acquaintance with some innovative tools, techniques and methods that have been explained in the previous modules. Therefore, some of the developed instruments are, for intrinsic nature, useful to evaluate progress in the mentoring process (not just to implement it). In the following sections, some useful tools will be reviewed under a different perspective, hence from a review and assessment point of view.





4.a. Procare toolkit: not just an implementation instrument

The first tool that can be used for a continuous assessment of the mentoring relationship is the Mentor and Mentee Diary. As a matter of fact they can use this instrument to keep track of discussions, activities, thoughts, observations, events and other documentation that is useful or worth bringing into the mentoring relationship. Through this tool, both the mentor and the Mentee can be aware of the changes in perspective and in actions undertaken in order to reach professional or private life goals. But also, it is possible to glimpse feedbacks, improvements and stepbacks in the way events are seen and faced.

A second useful tool, for its nature, is the self-monitoring tool. Thanks to the implementation of this tool in a mentoring relationship with regular frequency, it is possible to track down how the self perception is being changed thanks to the mentoring process, as well as the modifications occurring the expectations and professional goals.

Another extremely important tool in the evaluation of a mentoring relationship established under the Procare Methodology is the "Mentoring Agreement". In this document, goals and objectives are settled so that the whole process is oriented towards the reaching of them and, consequently, the evaluation phase should deal with which of them have been reached, how and to what extent. This instrument is extremely important because, in its coordinated development between Mentor and Mentee, it should specify review session frequency, daily self-monitoring procedures as well as forecasting a specific time for evaluation.

As it has been highlighted the importance of setting goals, it should be noted that the SMART goals setting process envisaged by this project is another important performance indicator of a Mentoring Relationship. Evaluating, reviewing and assessing which objectives are being met, which ones are being excluded from the process because mainly connected to unrealistic expectations and which are just not yet being achieved.

Following this intervention logic, this project has recommended the design of a SWOT analysis. Even if this tool is, usually, being used only to assess both a current situation and a forecast one, the draft of another one in a certain time of the Mentoring relationship can be used as an indicator to identify if the shadowing process has been effective or not.

Then, another important tool to be used in a similar way as the SWOT analysis is the SKILL MAP. The development of a Skill Map at the beginning of the Mentorship and then the production of





a new one at a certain time of the mentoring process can highlight how skills that were to be assimilated are now owned by the Mentee.

In the end the GROW model can be, itself, a valid indicator to track benefit and realisation of the aims of a Mentoring Relationship.

In the next paragraphs a brief description of the tools to be used in collecting data for the evaluation process will be provided, while in the last section some indications on the timeframe for the evaluation will be given.

4.b. Which instruments can be used in collecting data?

The easiest way in collecting data is through the fill out of surveys both from a quantitative and qualitative point of view. These tools serve to collect ideas of personal opinions and perceptions, such as levels of enthusiasm towards the mentoring relationship or satisfaction with career development.

Another interesting way in collecting data can be seen in the Organisational HR Data such as retention and promotion rates can give actors the measure to analyse and identify if the mentoring programme is producing the desired results.

Lastly, the feedback session, thanks also to the use of the Dairy, can be an extremely valuable tool in collecting qualitative data.

In this last section the timeframe of the evaluation process will be discussed, underlying the importance of running a continuous assessment of the mentoring relationship to be ready to make all necessary improvements to reach the prefixed personal and professional goals.



4.c. When is the time for evaluation?

The timing of the evaluation process is fundamental in order to monitor improvement and be, eventually, ready to undertake corrective actions to reach the goals that have been setted by the Mentoring programme.

As it has already been mentioned, the process of evaluation in the Procare Project has been defined as a "Review and Assessment" phase. This means that the implied message is to run evaluations from two points of view: on one hand for monitor the implementation process of the Mentoring relationship, while on the other to assess issues and difficulties that can, therefore, be addressed to deliver the expected results of improving the working conditions of Mentee, their awareness over burnout syndrome symptoms and their job satisfaction.

Anyhow, the reader should bear in mind that a Mentoring relationship is a process of training and improving skills that require time and that usually can last up to 12 months. Consequently, a suggestion to be taken in account is to devise an agenda for evaluation in the first phases of the establishment of the Mentoring process. In doing so, the actors will be able to have clear milestones to work towards and to use as benchmarks for evaluation. The Mentoring Agreement should collect and include this timeframe.

The main suggestion, having said so, is to use some of the Procare Mentoring Sessions tools for having a continuous assessment such as the Diary. This tool being filled out after every session could be used to monitor improvements and quality of the relationship every month, where also feedback can be collected from both the Mentor and the Mentee. The Self-evaluation tool represents, as well, a powerful instrument in evaluating impact of the Mentoring session and can be recommended to be used every three months in order to collect data on the precourse done during the whole relationship.

It is also being advised that a more in-depth assessment will be run after the first six months. During this evaluation actors should use other tools, such as surveys, the re-writing of the SWOT analysis and the Smart Goals setting. These can be extremely useful to understand the effectiveness of the Mentoring relationship looking to mid-term objectives. In this way it is possible to understand whether or not there is a better awareness about burnout symptoms, or about professional expectations and the path to be undertaken to reach career goals.

Finally, a last final evaluation should be run, where the subject will be the achievement of career goals, the improvement of job satisfaction and awareness about the burnout syndrome and its risks and how to avoid it. This assessment can be put in practice through the collective use of all above





mentioned tools especially, surveys, retention rate, once again the self-monitoring tool. The SWOT analysis, and the Smart Goals Setting can be used as a benchmark in order to identify how many of the improvements have been effectively being reached.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the Review and Assessment of a Mentoring Relationship should be carried out during the whole period of its implementation, based on a shared schedule between Mentors and Mentees, using different type of tools adapted to the moment in time in which the evaluation is being run and with the aim of identify "problems" to be tackled in order to reach the mentoring sessions objectives.

5. Summary

In the present module we have highlighted the importance of including a Review and Assessment process in a Mentoring programme. There are many actors involved in an evaluation process, and many stakeholders that might be interested in the outcomes of the evaluation in order to understand if a similar initiative can be effectively replicated. The main actors that should be active in the evaluation process should be firstly the Mentor and the Mentee both evaluating one another and themselves as well.

Further on we focused on which Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that should be included and used, giving a non-exhaustive list of them and explaining their functioning and examples of useful metrics to measure them. These KPIs tend to measure performance of both the actors (Mentor and Mentee) as well as the Mentoring relationship itself.

Finally we discussed how the Mentoring Sessions Tools devised by the Procare Project are not just helpful in carrying-out a successful mentoring relationship, but can be also taken as an instrument for monitor, review and assess the process of mentoring and the outcomes produced. In this last part we stressed the importance of setting a shared timeframe to be aware that an evaluation must be performed and it is vital to execute it during and half-term, in order to tackle issues and to be able of achieving set goals, ex-post to be aware of have been working correctly and of what needs to change in order to have better performance and effective mentoring sessions in the future.



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