# Small Business Mentoring

# What is Mentoring?

*Mentoring is a relationship which gives people the opportunity to share their professional and personal skills and experiences, and to grow and develop in the process.*

Typically, it is a one-to-one relationship between a more experienced and a less experienced employee

*It is a relationship, not just a procedure or activity, where one person professionally assists the career development of another, outside the normal manager/subordinate relationship.*

(S Mind, ‘Business Mentoring and Coaching’, *Training and Development*, April 1993, p 26)

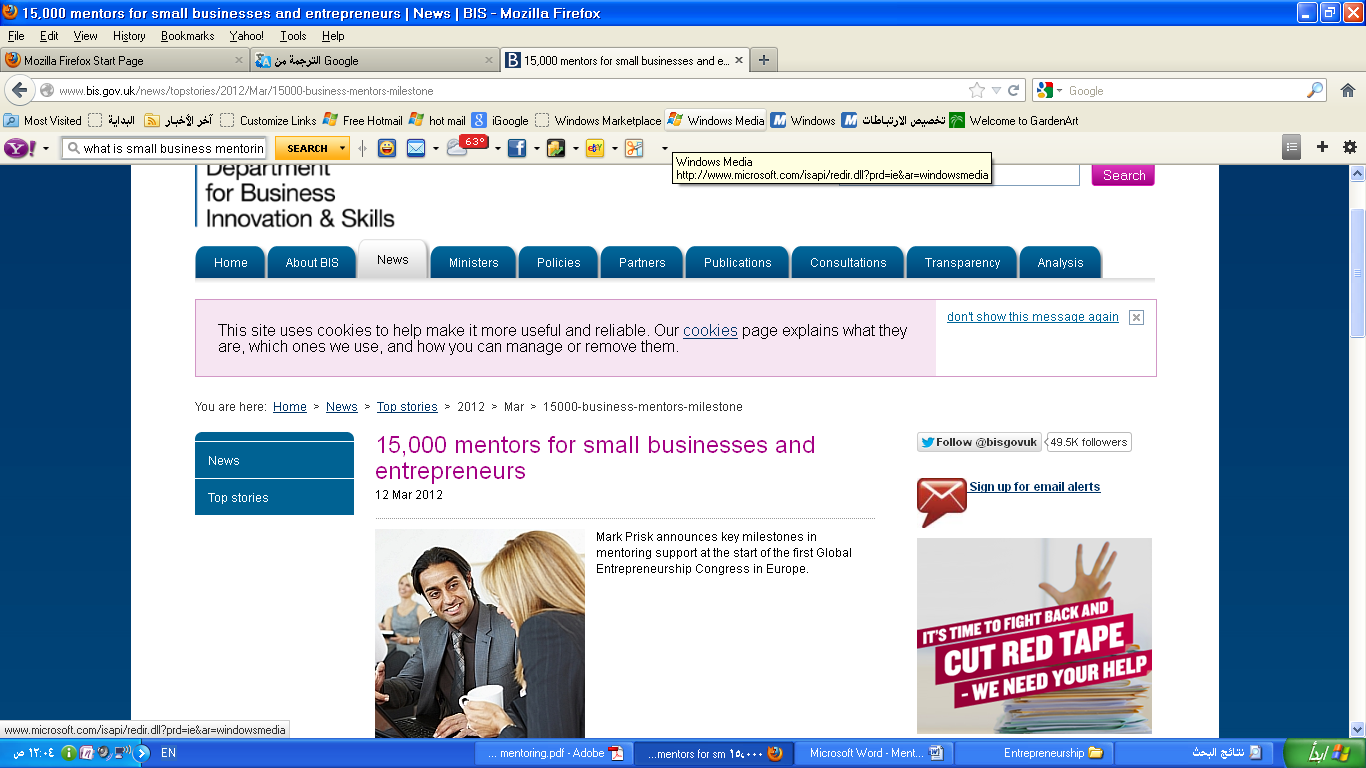
*A deliberate pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with a lesser skilled or experienced one, with the agreed-upon goal of having the less experienced person grow and develop specific competencies.*

(M Murray and M Owen, *Beyond the Myths of Mentoring: How to Facilitate an Effective Mentoring Program*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1991, p xiv)

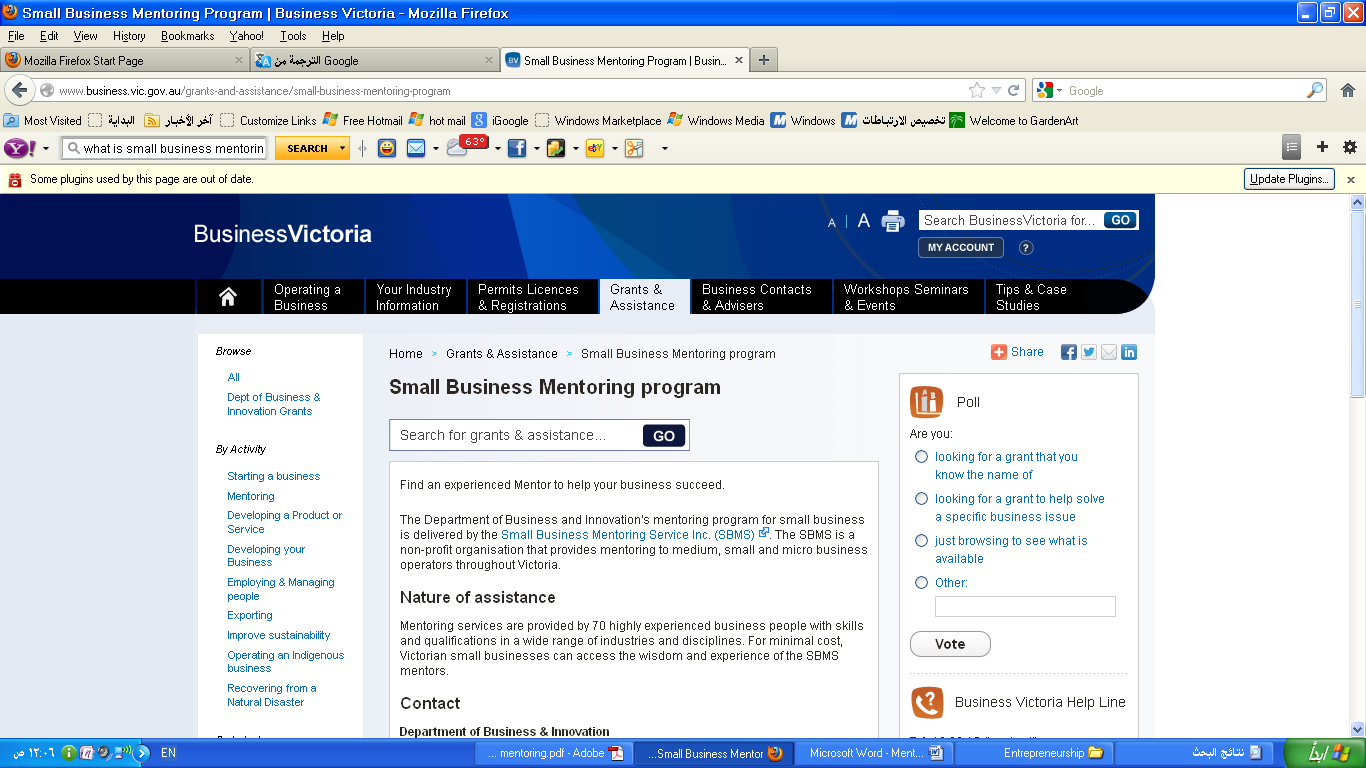
<http://www.sbms.org.au/>



<http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2012/Mar/15000-business-mentors-milestone>



<http://www.business.vic.gov.au/grants-and-assistance/small-business-mentoring-program>



**Why a mentoring program?**

Mentoring, when well designed, properly implemented will help:

1. Attract and retain talented people.
2. Develop people ? those who mentor as well as those mentored
3. Facilitate career planning and progression
4. Increase the return on your investment in learning and development and reduce turnover costs.
5. mentoring is a relatively easy to administer strategy which can improve the self-esteem and job competitiveness
6. mentoring is an effective method for the transference of professional, technical and management skills and knowledge,
7. mentoring benefits all concerned — the agency, the mentorees, mentors and other employees — by increasing the skills, flexibility and knowledge of all participating employees, and
8. mentoring is conducted in-house and so can meet the particular needs of the agency.

**The benefits of mentoring programs**

Structured mentoring programs can offer the following benefits to mentorees, mentors

***Benefits to the mentor***

* opportunities to test new ideas
* enhanced knowledge of other areas of the agency
* renewed enthusiasm for their role as an experienced person
* challenging discussions with people who have fresh perspectives
* satisfaction from contributing to the mentoree’s development
* opportunities to reflect upon and articulate their role
* improved ability to share experience and knowledge

***Benefits to the mentoree:***

* increased skills and knowledge
* increased potential for career mobility and promotion
* improved understanding of their roles in the organisation
* a supportive environment in which successes and failures can be evaluated
* a powerful learning tool to acquire competencies and professional experience
* networking opportunities
* development of professional skills and self-confidence
* recognition and satisfaction
* empowerment

## Before Establishing a Relationship

Before establishing a relationship, mentors and mentorees should think about, discuss, and agree on:

* What is the focus of the mentoring -- career goals, business plans, projects, deliverables, management, etc.?
* What is the intended result? (job interviews? referrals? networking?)
* How much time will be required? (one party may require more time)
* How long will the relationship last? (3 months? 1 project? forever?)
* Who should contact whom, when and how often?
* How quickly and often will questions asked or answered?
* Will mentoring be done via email, phone, in person, conferences, etc.?

## Notes for Mentorees:

Before entering into a mentoring agreement, Mentorees should consider:

* What aspects of your career or life are you hoping to improve via a mentoring arrangement?
* Is a mentoring arrangement a suitable way to meet your goals?
* How much time and effort do you anticipate will be required?
* How much time and effort are you willing to put into the mentoring arrangement?

A mentor should also remember that you, not your mentor, will manage your own career and life choices – a mentor is there to help you ask the right questions and guide you toward resources that will help you to make these choices.

## Notes for Mentors

Before entering into a mentoring arrangement, mentors should consider:

* How much time can you commit to providing mentoring?
* What is it that you would like to get out of a mentoring relationship?
* What strengths do you have, and what is the best way to pass on these skills to someone else?
* What experience do you have that will allow you to provide constructive advice and feedback?
* What boundaries do you wish to set for the relationship?

A mentor should also remember that the mentoree will ultimately make his or her own choices. If your mentoree chooses a path or option that you do not recommend or agree with, try not to take it personally. Your mentoree may be more ready or comfortable to take the chosen course of action.

## Elements of the Relationship

* A level of commitment: It is essential that both parties have a realistic sense of the time commitment that each expects from the other before they begin to work together. The time commitment may need to be adjusted as the relationship develops, but both mentor and mentoree must be willing to put in appropriate amounts of time and effort.
* Shared areas of interest: Mentoree’ skills and experience levels will vary, as well as his or her interests and goals. The mentor should discuss areas of interest with the mentoree before working with him or her.
* Balanced expectations: Remember to discuss what each of you hopes to gain from the relationship
* A mutually respectful relationship: Mentors and mentoree must have a willingness to consider each other's viewpoints and communication styles. Remember to stay within the boundaries you set regarding time commitment, hours of contact, schedule/deadlines, etc. Mentoring does not run one way only. Mentors and mentoree will learn from each other.
* Open, two-way communication: Both mentor and mentoree should be active partners in the relationship, and both should feel free to discuss the progress of the relationship.
* A certain level of conflict: You may have different ideas about how to approach a specific problem or project. Recognize mistakes and conflict as part of learning. Accept that the mentoree’ decisions are ultimately his or her own to make.

## What Not to Expect

Few things you **should not** **expect** from mentoring.

* Don’t expect the first person you contact to be a **good** **fit**. Mentoring is a **personal relationship**. Both the mentor and the mentoree have individual goals for a mentoring commitment. As in any relationship, the goals and philosophies of both parties occasionally do **not** **go together** well. If you do not feel that it is working out, talk it over and see if anything can be done.
* Don’t expect **immediate** **results**: It takes **time** to develop a mentoring relationship. Getting to know a person is a gradual process. Sometimes a mentoree is shy, uncooperative or embarrassed about bringing up a specific issue and needs time to approach a mentor about it. Also, schedules can get tight at times and make it difficult to keep in regular contact. Keep a positive attitude and keep communication open.
* Don’t expect your mentoree to **work** for you for **free**. At times it may be desirable for a mentoree to work on a specific assignment to learn or develop a skill. In most cases, it is best if the task is a sample assignment, rather than a client project. If you feel comfortable giving your mentoree an assignment related to a fee-based project you are working on, we suggest offering a fee or some other form of compensation.
* Don’t expect your mentor to give you a **job**. While some mentoring relationships can lead to paid work, expecting your mentor to make job offer is overstepping the boundaries of the relationship. A mentor can be a valuable resource for introductions and job leads. Your mentor is there to help and teach, not to hire.

**Personal Characteristics of Successful Mentors**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Trustworthiness * Commitment | * Shared decision-making * Empathy for others | * Open communication style * Enjoyment of people |

**Personal Characteristics of Successful Mentees**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Responsiveness to  new ideas * Desire for personal growth  and development | * Time availability * Flexibility | * Positive attitude * Receptivity to feedback and coaching |

**Components for Mentor/Mentee Job Descriptions**

A job description outlines the duties, expectations, and responsibilities of the mentor, mentee, and the umbrella organization.

**In a written format include:**

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| --- | --- |
| * job title * time requirement — beginning and ending dates and suggested number of contact hours * physical location * overall purpose for the program | * specific responsibilities including goal setting, commitment, and personal contract development * needed personal qualifications including open communication, willingness to be with people, and desire to help people grow and develop * support provided to participants including educational training and materials |

<http://www.facebook.com/dblwmalarshad.saudimentor>



<http://www.tcf.org.sa/dimm/Pages/default.aspx>

