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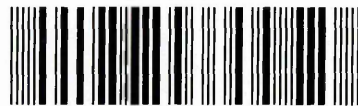
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**Insights into the determinants towards building successful  
dyadic mentoring relationships**

Peter R. Westland

A thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of  
Sheffield Hallam University  
for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration

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### Declaration

This thesis is being submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Doctorate in Business Administration from Sheffield Hallam University.

This thesis is the result of my own independent work, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are specifically acknowledged by clear cross referencing to the author/s work using the Harvard referencing notation, i.e. Author (YYYY p.no.) and are identified in the references section.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Peter R. Westland**

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(Total word count: 68,389)

# Abstract

This thesis provides insight to dyadic mentoring relationships experienced through a mentoring programme within a Higher Education Institution, UK. The aim of the investigation is to explore what happens within mentoring relationships, how they build and whether, determinants, characteristics and traits which differentiate 'successful' and 'unsuccessful' relationships can be identified.

This study is important since organisations and individuals invest time and resource into mentoring schemes and by providing insight into factors which support successful mentoring this may help to inform future mentoring scheme design and implementation. Currently there is an identified lack of in-depth empirical research in the field.

The experience of eleven mentoring pairs was the focus of this research. A longitudinal study was undertaken over the period of the mentoring intervention and the participants' 'lived' experiences were elicited at four points in time to provide insight into each of the mentoring relationships. Sixty seven interviews were recorded and interpreted.

Through the analysis of each case (relationship pairing) insights into the determinants that influence dyadic mentoring relationship building is presented. A conceptual framework is derived, offering new insights, new ways of thinking about how the complexities of mentoring relationship building interplay. This research labels the themes as: perspicacity, capacity, modus-operandi, ingredients. It identifies a typology and classification of mentoring relationship types, which this research labels as: progressive, flat-lining, break-down and reveals determinants which contribute to 'successful' mentoring relationships and conversely factors which inhibit development and may lead to dysfunctionality. The significance of an additional pre-mentoring phase, is highlighted, which focuses attention to the need for participants to have prior knowledge and understanding of their role and responsibility in the process of mentoring relationship building.

A mentoring relationship building framework is derived, which illustrates the inter-related roles of the mentor and mentee as they build their mentoring relationships over time through the phases of the mentoring process. These contributions and insight may inform future practice and scheme implementation within organisations and provide opportunities for further research.

# Contents

Acknowledgements .....	i
Abstract .....	ii

## **Chapter 1: Introduction..... 1**

1.01 Research Focus and Context	1
1.02 Personal Motivation and Rationale	4
1.03 Research Aim and Objectives	6
1.04 Structure of the Thesis	8
1.05 Outline of the thesis where the objectives are met	11

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review..... 12**

2.01 Introduction	12
2.02 The Origins of Mentoring	16
2.03 Definition and Meaning	19
2.04 Mentoring Relationship Building - Phases	24
2.05 Developmental Approach (UK) vs Career Sponsorship (US)	33
2.06 Mentor & Mentee Roles - within a relationship	35
2.07 Positive and negative aspects of mentoring relationships	38
2.08 Mentoring within the Higher Education environment (UK)	43
2.09 Conclusion	45

## **Chapter 3: Research Methodology ..... 50**

3.01 Introduction	50
3.02 Methodological Approach	51
3.03 Research Design & Strategy	55
3.04 The Mentoring Scheme	59
3.05 Mentors and Mentees: Participants	61
3.06 Why Longitudinal Investigation?	64
3.07 Ethics, Protocols and Anonymity	65
3.08 Methodological Reflexivity	66
3.09 Data: Collection, Management and Analysis Flowchart	68
3.10 Method of Data Collection	74
3.11 General Inductive Approach and Data Analysis	78
3.12 Approach to Transcript Analysis	81
3.13 Deriving a theoretical conceptual framework	81
i. Perspicacity	86
ii. Capacity	86
iii. Modus operandi	87
iv. Ingredients	87
3.14 Method of analysing individual mentoring relationships (case – unit of analysis)	88
3.15 Devising a Relationship Mapping Template	94
i. Examples of Mapping ‘Progressive’ Relationships	97
ii. Examples of Mapping ‘Flat-lining’ Relationships	98

---

iii. Examples of Mapping 'Break-down' Relationships	99
3.16 Summary	100

## **Chapter 4: Data Analysis – Mentoring Relationship Building ..... 104**

4.01 Introduction	104
4.02 Learning culture within the organisation	105
4.03 Analysis of Mentoring Relationship Building	109
4.04 'Progressive' Mentoring Relationships	111
4.05 Relationship P1: M1/M2	112
4.06 Relationship P2: M3/M4	119
4.07 Relationship P4: M7 / M8	126
4.08 Relationship P6: M11/M12	131
4.09 Relationship P8: M15 / M16	137
4.10 Summary - Determinants supporting 'Progressive' Mentoring Relationships	143
4.11 'Flat-lining' Mentoring Relationships	147
4.12 Relationship P7: M13 / M14	147
4.13 Relationship P11: M21 / M22	152
4.14 Summary - Determinants influencing 'Flat-lining' Mentoring Relationships	158
4.15 'Break-down' Mentoring Relationships	161
4.16 Relationship P3: M5 / M6	161
4.17 Relationship P5: M9 / M10	165
4.18 Relationship P10: M19 / M20	172
4.19 Summary - Determinants influencing 'Break-down' Mentoring Relationships	175
4.20 Developing the Mentoring Relationship Building Framework	177

## **Chapter 5: Findings and Conclusions ..... 185**

5.01 Introduction	185
5.02 Organisational Enabling Structures	187
5.03 Readiness to Mentor	188
5.04 Mentoring Relationship Building	190
5.05 Tangible Outcomes	198
5.06 Longitudinal Analysis	199
5.07 Summary	202

## **Chapter 6: Contribution to Professional Knowledge and Practice ..... 204**

## **References ..... 211**

## **Appendix A: Semi-structured Interview – aide-memoire ..... 226**

## **Appendix B: Transcript log ..... 229**



**Tables:****Page**

01	Guide to the thesis where objectives met	11
02	Family resemblances for the term 'mentoring'	21-23
03	Suggested Mentor Competences of each Phase of the Mentoring Relationship: Clutterbuck & Lane (2005)	37
04	Benefits of Mentoring: Klason & Clutterbuck (2002)	39
05	Drawbacks of Mentoring Programmes: Douglas (1997)	40
06	Mentoring Relationship Matched Pairings (units of analysis)	63

**Figures:**

01	Kram 1983: Phases of Mentoring	27
02	Clutterbuck 2004: Phases of Mentoring	31
03	The research design and strategy	58
04	Data: Collection, Management and Analysis - Flowchart	72
05	Relationship pairing interview data set	80
06	Clustering to create axial codes: Mentor role in relationship	83
07	Developing a conceptual framework	84
08	Key Themes – Analytical Sense-making	85
09	Relationship Mapping Template	96
10	Examples of Mapping 'Progressive' Relationships	97
11	Examples of Mapping 'Flat-lining' Relationships	98
12	Examples of Mapping 'Break-down' Relationships	99
13	Relationship Mapping P1: M1/M2	112
14	Relationship Mapping P2: M3/M4	120
15	Relationship Mapping P4: M7/M8	127
16	Relationship Mapping P6: M11/M12	131
17	Relationship Mapping P8: M15/M16	138
18	Relationship Mapping P7: M13/M14	148
19	Relationship Mapping P11: M21/M22	153
20	Relationship Mapping P3: M5/M6	162
21	Relationship Mapping P5: M9/M10	165
22	Relationship Mapping P10: M19/M20	173
23	Emergent 'Relationship Phases / Stages' in developing a Mentoring Relationship Building Framework	179
24	Emergent 'Operational' steps towards developing a Mentoring Relationship Building Framework	179
25	Emergent 'Mentor Engagement Characteristics' towards developing a Mentoring Relationship Building Framework	180
26	Emergent 'Mentee Engagement Characteristics' towards developing a Mentoring Relationship Building Framework	181
27	Mentoring Relationship Building Framework	183

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

The focus of this research investigation is to develop a greater understanding of what happens 'inside' mentoring relationships, how they build and whether, determinants, characteristics and traits which differentiate 'successful' and 'unsuccessful' relationships can be identified.

The purpose is to develop a framework that can be used to help us interpret and understand some of the intricacies and processes associated with building successful mentoring relationships. An objective is to develop a framework which will have a practical use, which will allow people to readily recognise different types of mentoring relationships, provide insight into the determinants which support and hinder mentoring relationship building and present a conceptual framework offering new insights, new ways of thinking about how the complexities of mentoring relationships interplay.

This chapter sets out the research focus and my personal motivation and rationale for undertaking this investigation and provides an outline structure of the thesis.

## 1.01 Research Focus and Context

The central argument of the thesis to be explored is that potentially there are key characteristics within dyadic mentoring relationships which may be identified as determinants which influence the success or otherwise of mentoring interventions. This thesis presents an investigation into mentor and mentee relationship interactions experienced through a mentoring programme. For the purposes of this research, the vehicle for this exploration is a mentoring programme set within a Higher Education Institution within the UK to support lecturing staff. The thesis explores dyadic mentoring relationships and the process of relationship building so that we can increase our knowledge and understanding of the process. The participants' experiences are considered as cases of mentoring and these *lived* experiences form the basis of developing this research. This research acknowledges and reflects on the conceptual



frameworks on the phases of the mentoring process as proffered by Kram (1983) and Clutterbuck (2004).

The aim is to gain an understanding (through undertaking a general inductive approach) of the determinants, traits and characteristics which contribute to successful mentoring relationship building and, conversely, factors which may inhibit the process. Through following mentor-mentee relationship pairings overtime, (longitudinally), the aim is to identify if there are factors which influence the building of mentoring relationships and thus provide insight into what happens inside successful and unsuccessful relationships.

This study is important since formal mentoring programmes have been introduced by many organisations in different sectors across the globe. Organisations invest significant resources implementing programmes with the purpose of supporting their staff. Mentoring is an everyday phenomenon, proffered as an effective means of supporting individuals (Garvey 2009, Megginson 2005, Clutterbuck 2004). Much of the underpinning research and theory is written by academics for academics (Garvey 2009 p50). This has resulted in a proliferation of literature but there is a reliance on a few key authors and within this relatively recent academic discipline there is an over reliance on anecdotal observations. Garvey (2009 p29) refers to Clutterbuck who argues that there is an over-reliance on single point samples and there is little attempt to track progression within mentoring relationships. Currently there is an identified lack of in-depth empirical research in the field of mentoring relationship building. As such, much of the contemporary literature is based on retrospective and anecdotal accounts and there are few longitudinal investigations. This thesis, by concentrating on what happens within mentoring relationships and focussing on the determinants which support or inhibit successful mentoring relationship building, may help inform future mentoring scheme implementation and increase our understanding of the process.

There is a general consensus for the need and potential value of longitudinal empirical research to gain greater knowledge and insight to the mentoring process and mentoring relationships. Dubois (2004), points to the need for

longitudinal study of mentoring relationships, to gain insight into the characteristics and benefits of mentoring relationships arguing that, *'there is critical work to be done in understanding the complexities of mentoring relationships in determining the circumstances under which mentoring efforts make a positive difference in developing effective approaches for linking mentoring research with practice'* (p.4).

Mentoring is traditionally a relationship between two people, the mentor and mentee (a dyad). It is suggested through the literature that the relationship is as fragile as any personal relation between humans (Scandura 1999) and develops over time through phases and stages (Levinson 1978, Kram 1983, Clutterbuck 2004). Not all relationships are fruitful in terms of outcomes and they can be dysfunctional, which is the nature of relationships. In relationships both parties can gain from the experience (De Vries 2005). Mentoring is therefore an interactive, fluid and complex process and takes time to develop. Each relationship is unique to the individuals concerned and therefore no two are the same, but are there common characteristics and traits which we can learn from which may determine and influence the mentoring process and lead to more success. What does a successful mentoring relationship comprise and what are the factors which may contribute to the functionality or dysfunctionality of a relationship. These are aspects which are considered through the data analysis and findings within this thesis.

The focus of this research is to explore mentoring relationship building. I was presented with a number of mentoring programmes which were being setup by different organisations upon which to undertake this investigation. I chose to research a mentoring scheme which was being introduced within a University. The programme was setup to support academic / lecturing staff who were relatively inexperienced in aspects of academic research, by matching them with more experienced academic researchers within the organisation. At the University all lecturing members of staff are required to undertake scholarly activity and staff development. The mentoring scheme aimed to bringing together experienced and less experienced members of academic staff.

The participants, all volunteers, made up 11 mentor-mentee pairings (cases) from across the University. These pairings provided the focus of the investigation, each representing a case for study (unit of analysis). A simple gap analysis was undertaken matching the mentors, who were identified as being more experienced in specific research areas, with the mentees wishing to develop complementary aspects. To re-emphasise, this research investigation is to explore mentoring relationship building and develop our understanding of what happens within mentoring relationships.

To focus this investigation the journey of each mentoring relationship, as it builds, is followed through the participants 'lived' experiences by means of a longitudinal research method by interviewing both the mentors and mentees at four stages in the mentoring process: **Interview 1**, (-1 month); **Interview 2**, (+3 months); **Interview 3**, (+6 months); **Interview 4**, (+9 months).

Having introduced the research focus and context for the investigation into developing our understanding of how mentoring relationships might develop successfully or otherwise, the next section considers my motivation and the rationale for undertaking this research.

## **1.02 Personal Motivation and Rationale**

I have been working in Higher Education in the UK since September 1991 and I have experienced many changes in the business environment. Higher Education, as with most organisations, is founded on people, without them the organisations would not exist. Higher Education Institutions are learning organisations and learning communities, for both students and staff; they adapt through the ability of people to grow and develop their knowledge to meet the challenges through support and guidance.

My experience is that we learn from each other, both formally and informally, and continue to learn throughout our life. If I think back through my life I can identify key influences and in particular key people who have helped me develop and transform. For example, I had difficulty in learning to read and write

at school and as a consequence struggled through junior school. It was by chance that my uncle was on a train where he overheard a discussion between two people who were from the newly founded dyslexia institute in Bath, this is back in 1970. From this we were put in contact with a practitioner supporting pupils with reading and writing difficulties and I was taken to see her once a week for over a year. I realise now that she was my first encounter with a mentor, someone who supported, provide guidance and helped me develop both in terms of reading but also as a person, it was a transformational experience. I can point to other people who have had a significant influence on my development, certain staff at school and university and colleagues at work who have supported me. In my various capacities at work I have helped and supported many students and colleagues. I spend most of my time, on a daily basis, interacting with colleagues and realise that to a large extent I am informally mentoring them through my leadership and management role. So part of my motivation for undertaking this research into mentoring is to gain greater insight into the phenomenon which is prevalent in all our everyday lives. My view is that mentoring has been and remains a key component and influence on human transformational development over the millennia and yet the intricacies and complexities of the process of building successful mentoring relationships are not fully understood.

My personal motivation and rationale for undertaking this research, is that I want to gain a greater understanding of what happens within mentoring relationships and what factors contribute to building a successful mentoring relationship. There is an identified lack of empirical research, an over reliance on single point, retrospective and anecdotal accounts. There is a scarcity of longitudinal research investigations following the 'lived' experiences of participants within a mentoring relationship. There is a lack of understanding as to what constitutes a successful mentoring relationship; what does one look like and how is it achieved. If one is engaged in mentoring what are the indicators that the relationship is building successfully. What tools can a mentor or mentee use in practice to identify and gauge, within the process, how well a relationship is building? Are there indicators, determinants, which can be drawn to the participant's attention such that the relationship may be enhanced? Are there



different types of relationship that can be identified and is there a framework within which mentoring relationships may be referred to? Having identified these gaps in knowledge, my contribution to knowledge and practice will be: the development of a mentoring relationship building framework, based on a longitudinal analysis of the 'lived' experiences of the participants; a typology for recognising mentoring relationship types; a conceptual framework offering new insights, new ways of thinking about how the complexities of mentoring relationships interplay.

Having outlined my personal motivation and rationale for undertaking this investigation the next section sets out the aims and objectives of the research.

### **1.03 Research Aim and Objectives**

**The aim** of the investigation is to explore what happens within mentoring relationships and whether, determinants, distinguishing features, characteristics and traits which differentiate successful and unsuccessful relationships can be identified.

The vehicle for this exploration is a mentoring scheme within Higher Education.

1. Identify characteristics, traits and determinants within a mentoring relationship which influence relationship building.
2. Develop a conceptual framework to gain understanding of the process of mentoring relationship building.
3. Analyse the 'lived' experience of each mentoring relationship pair (case) over time to determine how successfully the relationships built.
4. Present a typology of mentoring relationships.
5. Analyse the role and responsibility of the mentor and mentee in contributing to

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the building of the mentoring relationship and present an overarching relationship building framework.

6. Establish the consensus or divergence with the findings in relation to contemporary literature and theory.
7. Identify the contribution to professional knowledge and practice.

(The next section sets out the structure of the thesis)

## **1.04 Structure of the Thesis**

The previous section identified the aim and objectives of the research. The purpose of this section is to set out the structure of the thesis and provide context to navigate the document.

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the principal focus of the research and set out my personal motivations and rationale for undertaking the investigation. The chapter describes the context and aim and objectives of the study. The chapter concludes with an outline structure of the thesis.

### **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The purpose of this chapter is to present a review of literature relating to dyadic mentoring relationships and highlight key influences for consideration within the subject domain which form the overarching reference points for the ultimate findings of the study. The definition and meaning of mentoring is discussed to provide further context and understanding. The phases or stages of the mentoring process and mentoring relationship building is explored with reference to key works by Kram (1983) and Clutterbuck (2004). Different approaches and purposes of mentoring are considered, for example, to support mentees to provide career opportunities through mentor sponsorship or to support the mentee through what is described as the developmental approach. The roles and engagement of the mentor and mentee in the process of mentoring through phases of a mentoring relationship is discussed and the potential positive and negative aspects of mentoring highlighted. Finally, mentoring within Higher Education will be contextualised, indicating the scale and environment within which the investigation is set.

### **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

Within this chapter is a description of the nature of the investigation, a rationale for the general inductive approach (Thomas 2006) which has been adopted set within the methodological paradigm of neo-positivism (Johnson & Duberley 2000). Within this chapter is a description of the research methodology,

research design and strategy, the mentoring scheme and identification of the participant population and mentor-mentee pairings which represent individual cases (units of analysis). The rationale for the longitudinal nature of the investigation and how the semi-structured interviews are constructed and conducted is described. Consideration of ethics, protocols, anonymity and confidentiality are outlined with regard the research design. The method and approach to analysing the data (general inductive analytic approach) is presented setting out a step-by-step description of the process concluding with an acknowledgement of methodological reflexivity. The chapter describes the process and method of data management, data reduction, coding and analysis towards the identification of emergent themes. The method of data analysis derived four themes which represent a framework from which to provide a conceptual understanding of the cases and create a platform to analytically make sense of the data. This research labels these themes as: **perspicacity, capacity, modus operandi, ingredients**. These are defined for the purposes of this research as a prelude to the analysis of the cases, units of analysis (the individual mentoring relationships). The method by which each of the relationships are mapped over time to enable sense-making and analysis of the determinants, characteristics and traits which contributed to mentoring relationship building is presented.

#### **Chapter 4: Data Analysis**

This chapter presents an analysis of the participants' perceptions of the organisational learning environment within which they work to set the context within which the data is collected.

A detailed analysis of each of the mentoring relationship pairings (cases – units of analysis) is presented. The pairings are clustered into classifications of similar type representing a typology, to provide insight into mentoring relationship building, identifying those factors which support more successful relationships and conversely factors which inhibit relationship building and may lead to dysfunctionality. The three types of relationships represent clusters which follow a similar pattern: 1. Relationships which build progressively through the phases of the mentoring process; 2. those which falter; 3. those



which failed and were terminated, this research labels these as: **progressive, flat-lining, break-down** (respectively).

A **mentoring relationship building framework**, a model to support our understanding and knowledge of the process of mentoring relationship building in practice is presented as a product of the analysis of the mentoring relationships.

The findings are supported by quotes and illustrations; the participant's 'voice' is conveyed throughout. The findings are set against the phases and stages of the mentoring process proffered by contemporary literature and theory to provide insight into mentoring relationship building and contribution to the phenomenon of mentoring.

## **Chapter 5: Findings and Conclusions**

This chapter presents a reflection on the overall findings set against the aim and objectives of the investigation and discusses the conclusions reached through undertaking this research. The chapter describes the accumulated evidence and seeks to offer new insight and understanding relating to the distinguishing features, characteristics and traits which differentiate successful and unsuccessful mentoring relationships. The approach to the research is discussed as well as pathways to further study identified. The conclusions provide sense-making of the key elements derived from this research investigation.

## **Chapter 6: Contribution to Professional Knowledge and Practice**

This chapter identifies the principal outcomes and how and why the research constitutes a contribution to professional knowledge and how the findings may inform practice.

Having outlined the structure of the thesis the next section provides guidance as to where the objectives are met within the document.

## 1.05 Outline of the thesis where the objectives are met

Table (01) below, provides a guide to the thesis and identifies where the objectives are met.

	<p><b>The aim</b> of the investigation is to explore what happens within mentoring relationships and whether, determinants, distinguishing features, characteristics and traits which differentiate successful and unsuccessful relationships can be identified.</p> <p>The vehicle for this exploration is a mentoring scheme within Higher Education.</p>	<p><b>Outline of the thesis: Chapters</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction</li> <li>2. Literature Review</li> <li>3. Research Methodology</li> <li>4. Data Analysis</li> <li>5. Findings &amp; Conclusions</li> <li>6. Contribution to Professional Knowledge and Practice</li> </ol>
	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Where met: Chapter</b>
1.	<b>Identify</b> characteristics, traits and determinants within a mentoring relationship which influence relationship building.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Literature Review</li> <li>3. Research Methodology</li> <li>4. Data Analysis</li> <li>5. Findings &amp; Conclusions</li> </ol>
2.	<b>Develop</b> a conceptual framework to gain understanding of the process of mentoring relationship building.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Research Methodology</li> <li>4. Data Analysis</li> <li>5. findings &amp; Conclusions</li> </ol>
3.	<b>Analyse</b> the 'lived' experience of each mentoring relationship pair (case) over time to determine how successfully the relationships built.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Research Methodology</li> <li>4. Data Analysis</li> <li>5. Findings &amp; Conclusions</li> </ol>
4.	<b>Present</b> a typology of mentoring relationships.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Data Analysis</li> <li>5. Findings &amp; Conclusions</li> </ol>
5.	<b>Analyse</b> the role and responsibility of the mentor and mentee in contributing to the building of the mentoring relationship and present an overarching relationship building framework.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Literature Review</li> <li>4. Data Analysis</li> <li>5. Findings &amp; Conclusions</li> </ol>
6.	<b>Establish</b> the consensus or divergence with the findings in relation to contemporary literature and theory	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Literature Review</li> <li>4. Data Analysis</li> <li>5. Findings &amp; Conclusions</li> </ol>
7.	<b>Identify</b> the contribution to professional knowledge and practice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Findings &amp; Conclusions</li> <li>6. Contribution to Professional Knowledge and Practice</li> </ol>

Having set the research focus and context, personal motivation, rationale and the aim and objectives of the investigation, to explore what happens within mentoring relationships and whether, determinants, distinguishing features, characteristics and traits which differentiate successful and unsuccessful relationships can be identified, the next chapter presents a literature review of the subject domain.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

*'When asked to contemplate relationships that have made a difference in our lives—relationships that have given us the courage to do the things we think we cannot do, relationships that have guided our professional development or even changed the course of our lives—many of us think of mentoring relationships. At its best, mentoring can be a life-altering relationship that inspires mutual growth, learning and development. Its effects can be remarkable, profound and enduring; mentoring relationships have the capacity to transform individuals, groups, organizations, and communities'.*

*(Ragins & Kram 2007 p3)*

### 2.01 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature relating to dyadic mentoring relationships and underlines key influences for consideration within the subject domain. The review concentrates on works which form the overarching reference points for the ultimate findings of the study.

The structure of the chapter considers the: origins of mentoring, definition and meaning, mentoring relationship building - phases of the mentoring process, developmental mentoring vs career sponsorship, role and engagement of the mentor and mentee within a relationship, negative and positive aspects of mentoring, mentoring in the Higher Education environment. The conclusions affirm the gap in knowledge with regard to our understanding of the intricacies of building successful mentoring relationships and the associated complexities in practice.

The rationale for the structure of this chapter is as follows. *The origins of mentoring* to provide the social context; *definition and meaning* of mentoring to contextualise what is meant by mentoring; *mentoring relationship building - phases of the mentoring process* to highlight the interactive and complex nature

of mentoring relationships which is the primary focus of the investigation and to present the conceptual theories proffered by Kram (1983) and Clutterbuck (2004); *developmental vs career sponsorship* forms of mentoring to present two distinct types of relationship and to highlight the potentially confusing noise and influence this has on interpreting the differing perspectives and purpose of mentoring; *role and engagement of the mentor and mentee with a relationship*, to the process of building a mentoring relationship, is discussed to highlight the interactive nature and interdependency of the participants in the building of a mentoring relationship; *negative and positive* aspects of mentoring are considered to emphasize the complexity and unique nature of mentoring relationships and the potential benefits or disbenefits of mentoring; *Mentoring within the Higher Education environment, in the UK*, to provide context to the setting in which the research is undertaken.

Much has been written about mentoring, particularly over the last 30 years and as a result there is a significant body of literature relating to the subject and process. Bouquillon (2005 p239) states that '*mentoring relationships are dynamic phenomena that evolve over time and in distinct phases*'. Garvey (2009 p26), confirms this view and describes mentoring as '*essentially a human interaction, a dynamic relationship which develops through time where learning takes place and as a consequence is a complex subject area*'. Megginson (2006 p14) further identifies the complexity of the phenomena. Each relationship is unique and the impacts, influences and outcomes are personal to the individuals concerned, (Turban, in Ragins & Kram 2007 p21). Scandura (1998 p464) observes that mentoring relationships are as fragile as any personal relationship and as result are complex in nature. Ragins (2007 p6) states that, '*there are significant variations in the range and degree of mentoring functions within and across relationships and importantly, that like other relationships, no two mentoring relationships are alike*'. These observations and views raise pertinent questions for this research investigation: What are the determinants within a relationship which promote effective and positive outcomes to the mentoring process? Can these be identified? How does the interaction of the participants affect the outcome? These aspects will be considered in this investigation.



Positive relationships can provide significant benefits for the mentee, mentor and organisation (Ragins 2007, Klasen 2002), but there is the potential for drawbacks and dis-benefits of the process (Douglas 1997). Long (1997 p115) discusses the *dark side of mentoring* and states that under various conditions mentoring relationships can be detrimental to the mentor, mentee or both. Clutterbuck (2004) discusses the potential toxicity of mentoring resulting in dysfunctional relationships and McAuley (2003) refers to issues relating to transference and counter-transference between the mentor and mentee leading to power issues within the dynamics of the relationship. The dynamics of the relationships are influenced by the individuals involved, their goals, aspirations, environment, culture and their motivations. These raise questions as to whether factors which influence the positive or negative aspects of mentoring can be identified within mentoring relationships and as a result inform future practice, planning and implementation of mentoring schemes.

Mentoring by its very nature, which is a developmental interactive relationship, takes place in many guises be it formal or informal (Hansman 2002 p23), across all sectors of human society, globally (Cullingford 2006 p210). The opportunities to undertake research in this dynamic arena are therefore boundless. Although there is significant literature on the subject it is relatively embryonic in terms of the scale and complexity. There appears to be a reliance on a relatively small number of key authors, a lack of empirical critical research and a tendency towards anecdotal evidence, particularly in the contemporary business environment. Much of the literature on mentoring appears to be written by academics for academics (Garvey 2009 p50) and is circular in nature. There is a body of research which embraces a broad range of aspects relating to mentoring and the mentoring process, however, there is a scarcity of in-depth empirical research and investigation and insight into developmental mentoring relationship building and interactions in practice and this reinforces the significance of this research in contributing to knowledge.

The research literature covers a broad spectrum of issues and those referenced below are included within this literature review and represent key authors in the field of mentoring, for example:

- Definitions (Megginson & Clutterbuck 1995, Shea 1997, Garvey 2007, Ragins & Kram 2007, Parsloe 2012, EMCC 2014, CIPD 2014)
- Mentor/mentee relationships (Clutterbuck 2005, Straus 2009);
- Frameworks (Ragins 2007)
- Process (Kram 1985, Morton 2003)
- Skills (Hay 1995, Megginson et al 2006)
- Attributes (Gray 2000)
- Conversations (Edwards-Groves 2014)
- Benefits and dis-benefits (Douglas 1997, Long 1997, Ehrich 1999, Scandura 1999, 1996, Eby 2000, Klasen & Clutterbuck 2002, Kammeyer-Mueller 2008)
- Phases (Levinson et al 1978, Kram 1983, Holloway 1994, Armitage 1994, Hay 1995, Clutterbuck 2004)
- Gender (Ragins 1999, Colley 2005, Darling 2006, De Vries 2011)
- Culture (Zachary 2005)
- Psychology (Karcher 2008)
- Power (Garvey 2014, Hanson 2002)
- Knowledge (Alred 2000, Fleig-Palmer 2009)
- Transference (McAuley 2003)
- Psychosocial dynamics (Kram 1983, 1985, Beech 1999)
- Roles and engagement (Lucas 2001, Walkington 2005, Clutterbuck 2005, Freeman 2008, Ambrosetti 2010, Paris 2010)

These illustrate a range of aspects related to mentoring, since each relationship, individual and set of circumstances is unique, there is considerable opportunity for empirical research exploration into gaining greater understanding of what the determinants are which contribute to building successful mentoring relationships.

## 2.02 The Origins of Mentoring

The purpose of this section is to establish the origins and essence of mentoring and how the concept and our understanding have developed over time, such that the focus of the thesis is contextualised. The origins of mentoring are set in a social context where the focus is on personal development through human relationship interaction and is a process through which learning takes place and therefore maybe described as learning relationships, (Connor 2012 p8). The thesis investigates the mentoring relationship interaction, the building of mentoring relationships and refers to phases within the process which builds between a more experienced researcher supporting the development of a less experienced researcher to develop perceived 'gaps' in their knowledge.

The origins of mentoring relate to the passing down of knowledge and wisdom from one person to another and is likely to have always been prevalent and accounted for the gradual dominance and development of modern humans over the millennia (Shea 2002, Clutterbuck 2009). As a starting point, this proposition would seem reasonable and reliable, capturing the essence of learning both inter-generationally and from one generation to another and therefore points to progressive and dynamic developmental potential.

There is general consensus that the term *mentor* is derived from Greek mythology and is referred to in a number of publications, (Yirci 2010 p2, Ragins 2007 p3, Beech 1999 p7, Ehrich 1999 p1, Chao 1997 p15, Clawson 1996 p6). Odysseus's son Telemachus is entrusted to Mentor, a trusted friend. In the story Zeus was concerned about holding the kingdom together and sends his daughter Athena, goddess of wisdom and strategy, to provide advice and guidance to Telemachus. She achieves this by disguising herself as Mentor. Essentially the term, *mentor* in the English language, has become synonymous with the concept of sharing wisdom and knowledge with someone less experienced. In Homer's epic poem, *The Odyssey* (800 BC), the essence of the role of a mentor is someone who provides support, guidance and counsel. Ragins (2007 p4) states that, '*while the roots of mentoring can be traced to mythology, mentoring is no myth; it is a real relationship that has been an integral part of social life and the world of work for thousands of years*'. Garvey

(2009 p12), refers to Fenelon's writings of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, where he rewrote *The Odyssey* as an educational treatise to demonstrate how to engage in mentoring and views this as the model of modern mentoring.

Mentor, is perceived as being older, wiser and paternal, a trusted advisor with knowledge, experience and wisdom. Klasen (2004) suggests that mentors do not need to be older than the mentee and what a younger mentor may lack in life experience may be compensated by competence in other skills, for example, in new technology. Gibb (1994 p39) argues that mentors do not need to be, *'all-wise and wonderfully patient individuals; however negotiation between the mentor and the mentee appears to be a central attribute of a successful outcome'*. This reinforces the view that mentoring is a relationship that is unique to the participants involved, since negotiation relates to the individual mentee's particular needs and the skill set, ability, knowledge and experience of the mentor to support the mentee's development. These are derived from their unique personal profile and that as a consequence no two relationships are the same. This raises the question, are there particular qualities, factors and determinants in a mentoring relationship which promote and support positive outcomes for the participants to enable effective development and effective mentoring relationship building?

It is really only since the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, since the late 1970s, that mentoring has been the subject of academic investigation and empirical research and in the early 1980s moved towards a business and organisational context. At this time mentoring became more formalised (Clutterbuck 2009). When considering the literature it is evident that the use of the term 'mentoring' is perceived differently in different cultures and that over time there has been an evolutionary development through greater understanding of the use and potential benefits of the mentoring process. It is important to recognise when reviewing the literature that in the US, since the 1980s, the term was and still is widely used to describe career sponsorship with emphasis on the mentors power and influence on behalf of the protégé to support the career progression of an individual (Kram 1983, 1985). In the UK, however, mentoring is synonymous with developing the individual. The model focuses on the individual



taking control and responsibility for their own career development and concentrates on self-development through learning and reflection, (Clutterbuck 2009). Since the mid-late 1990s there has been a noticeable change in the US perspective and greater academic interest in the developmental mentoring model. Ragins and Kram (2007 p4), both leading academics in the US, state that *'scholars continue to struggle with understanding the complexity of this pivotal, life altering relationship. In a nutshell we know it works; we are still grappling with the why, when and how'*, they are referring here more towards the developmental model. This quotation supports the focus of this thesis which through focussing on the development and building of mentoring relationships over time may provide further useful insight into our understanding of what characteristics and traits maybe identified which determine and support the success in building more effective mentoring relationships.

Bennetts (2001 p272) states that, *'mentoring should be considered as valuable as more formal teaching, as it promotes sustainable learning by means of reflection and reflexivity, and appears to be self-perpetuating'*. What this implies is that mentoring potentially develops the ability in individuals to become more self-reliant. Humans would not have evolved so successfully if it were just the case of receiving passed on information and knowledge. It is the prospect of developing independent thinking, self-development and critical analysis through the mentoring process which is intriguing.

In summary the origins of mentoring are embedded in a social context, centring on human relationships each of which are unique and individual. As one would expect from this scenario, understanding the human condition and interaction is extremely complex since the variables are subtle and require careful comprehension and interpretation. Disagreements as to how exactly the process translates into successful mentoring relationships is inevitable. What can be studied are individual cases to glean insight into the process and whether determinants, characteristics and traits within a relationship can be identified which may lead to successful mentoring relationship development. This thesis explores this phenomena; mentoring relationship building over time.

## 2.03 Definition and Meaning

Within this section consideration is given to the definition and meaning of the term mentoring and how it might be interpreted. It contextualises the developmental mentoring approach related to this study. The origins of mentoring have been discussed and inform the definition and meaning debate since the phenomena has developed over time in a number of settings. Mentoring as Connor (2012) describes, is focussed on personal development, set in a social context where human relationship interaction leads to a process through which learning takes place.

Wittgenstein (1953) suggests that it is not always possible or necessary to state a definition for a word and that one simply comes to understand the use of the term, he describes this as a *family resemblance*. In the case of mentoring, individuals hear the term and attach different meaning determined by the culture and context in which it is used. Garvey (1999 p195) supports this, stating that, '*mentoring is an elusive concept that does not lend itself to a neat definition, and, it appears in a variety of guises and in a variety of settings. Above all it is a very ordinary and normal human activity*'. Roberts (2000) describes mentoring as a complex, social and psychological activity and concludes that it does not lend itself to a universal definition. Daloz (1986) affirms the complexity by stating that, definitions vary with respect to varying dimensions such as hierarchy, intensity, duration and partnership and Gibson (2004) identifies the differences in national and cultural traditions. Colley (2003 p13), states that mentoring is '*a practice that remains ill-defined, poorly conceptualised, and weakly theorised, leading to confusion in policy and practice*'. This emphasises the importance of identifying a meaning which is relevant to the circumstance and context in which the mentoring takes place. It is consider important, therefore, to ask the participants engaged in this study what their understanding is of the term mentoring, the process and their roles and responsibilities within the relationship.

There has been a proliferation of research and studies on mentoring within different organisations, work place environments, social and cultural settings and each attempt to describe what mentoring is and this approach would

appear reasonable such that the participants can relate to the purpose and process of developing and building a mentoring relationship. As a result there is no universal definition of the term mentoring, but there is evidence that the concept is evolving and there are common terms used in describing contemporary mentoring. The term mentoring, therefore, lends itself more towards a description rather than a universal definition relative to the purpose and circumstance in which it is being used. That there is no universal definition of *mentoring* is not necessarily a concern and results from the plethora of circumstances and situations in which mentoring interventions are instigated. It means different things to different people; it is a personal interaction and relationship. For example, as previously highlighted, in a broader cultural context two models operate; one emanating from the US, the other from Europe. The emphasis of the two models is very different - with *sponsorship* being the US focus and *development* being the European (Hamilton 1993, Clutterbuck 2009).

Taking this point further, Blackwell (1996) observes that in the 1980s, the view of the mentoring process was very much of *managerial tutelage* but this view has become inappropriate as organizations become flatter and individuals become more self-reliant. The context within which mentoring takes place has evolved as focus has shifted to create the opportunities to develop life-long learners where the responsibility for learning lies with the individual and developmental learning is supported by the mentoring process. Braimoh (2008 p5) states, '*that as organizational hierarchical structures are changing' towards flatter and leaner systems of operation; contemporary organizations tend to operate where the individuals participate in, co-operative, coordinated and interconnected ways*'. As a consequence mentors seek to be; '*transformational rather than directional, democratic rather than dictatorial, flexible rather than coercive, forward looking rather than conservative leaders. This will facilitate the growth of a mentee rather than for the mentors to pass on the lessons from their own experiences, for wholesale consumption by the mentee as if he/she is a zombie!*'. As modern organisations have evolved from hierarchical to flatter structures the meaning of *mentoring* appears to have changed in emphasis, Rawlings (2002). The management of people has also evolved from

transactional to transformational and individuals have become more self-reliant. Hay (1995 p19) describes this transformational mentoring as a *developmental alliance*, a relationship between equals in which someone is helped to develop themselves and suggests that this is by far the model that sits more comfortably within the Higher Education sector.

Garvey (2009 p25) states that, '*the objectivists' tradition favours definition over description but by their very nature definitions seek to simplify and condense*'. He suggests, '*that a definition alone cannot adequately reflect the complexity of meaning*' and that, '*mentoring is fundamentally determined by the social context*'. This view also has resonance in the debate where the social context and application of the term, mean different things in different sectors. Garvey (2009 p26) concludes that, '*there is no one best way in mentoring and therefore no one definition and is dependent upon the environment in which it operates*'. It is evident that definitions, descriptions and meaning relating to the term mentoring vary with context and culture. This raises the issue of culture and environment within an organisation and it is consider important, therefore, to ask the participants engaged in this study what their perception of their organisation is in terms of supporting personal development.

To provide context for this thesis it is considered appropriate to identify a number of characteristics, *family resemblances*, with reference to stated descriptions focussing on the developmental approach to mentoring which are pertinent to this study – Table (02): Family resemblances for the term mentoring.

Author	Description	Features / Characteristics
Garvey (2007)	<i>Mentoring is a learning relationship between two people. It requires trust, commitment and emotional engagement. It involves listening, questioning, challenge and support. It has a timescale.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning relationship</li> <li>• Two people</li> <li>• Trust</li> <li>• Commitment</li> <li>• Emotional engagement</li> <li>• Listening</li> <li>• Questioning</li> <li>• Challenge</li> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Timescale</li> </ul>



Eric Parsloe (2012)	<i>Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Encourage</li> <li>• Manage own learning</li> <li>• Maximise potential</li> <li>• Develop skills</li> <li>• Improve performance</li> </ul>
Meggison & Clutterbuck (1995)	<i>Off-line help by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Off-line help</li> <li>• One person to another</li> <li>• Transition in knowledge, work or thinking</li> </ul>
Shea (1997)	<i>Mentoring is seen as a process whereby mentor and mentee work together to discover and develop the mentee's latent abilities.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work together</li> <li>• Discover and develop mentee's latent abilities</li> </ul>
EMCC (2013)	<i>Mentoring is a developmental process in which a more experienced person shares their knowledge with a less experienced person in a specific context through a series of conversations.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developmental process</li> <li>• More experienced person shares knowledge</li> <li>• In specific context through a series of conversations</li> </ul>
CIPD (2014)	<i>Within the confidential relationship the mentor will act as an experienced and trusted guide. The intent is not to teach, judge or necessarily to offer solutions, but to provide a sounding board which will help steer the mentee in the right direction, and help them develop their own professional and personal skills and resources.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidential relationship</li> <li>• Experienced and trusted guide</li> <li>• Not to teach</li> <li>• Non-judgemental</li> <li>• Provide a sounding board</li> <li>• Help steer the mentee</li> <li>• Help mentee develop own professional and personal skills</li> </ul>
The Industrial Society (1995)	<i>A confidential, one-to-one relationship in which an individual uses a more experienced, usually more senior person as a sounding board and for guidance. It is a protected, non-judgmental relationship which facilitates a wide range of learning, experimentation and development.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidential</li> <li>• One-to-one relationship</li> <li>• Mentor experience</li> <li>• Sounding board</li> <li>• Guidance</li> <li>• Protected</li> <li>• Non-judgmental relationship</li> <li>• Facilitates – learning, experimentation and development</li> </ul>

Ambrosetti (2010)	<i>Mentoring is a non-hierarchical, reciprocal relationship between mentors and mentees who work towards specific professional and personal outcomes for the mentee. The relationship usually follows a developmental pattern within a specified timeframe and roles are defined, expectations are outlined and a purpose is (ideally) clearly delineated.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-hierarchical, reciprocal relationship</li> <li>• Toward specific professional and personal outcomes</li> <li>• Developmental pattern</li> <li>• Timeframe, roles defined, expectations outlined</li> <li>• Purpose delineated</li> </ul>
Blackwell (1994)	<i>The relationship between the mentor and mentee is viewed as a collaborative partnership between equals designed to promote dialogue and critical reflection.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative partnership</li> <li>• Between equals</li> <li>• Promotes dialogue and critical reflection</li> </ul>

**Table (02): Family resemblances for the term ‘mentoring’:**

The features and characteristics of *developmental mentoring*, for the purposes of this thesis, relate to creating a transformational developmental alliance between the mentor and mentee supported by building effective relationships. The key features and characteristics of the dyadic mentoring relationship maybe described, from the definitions above, as confidential, collaborative, non-hierarchical, non-judgemental and based on trust. The roles of the mentor and mentee are defined and expectations outline. The mentor is an experienced and trusted guide, who shares knowledge, listens, questions, challenges and encourages the mentee through the process. The process facilitates learning through dialogue, a series of conversations which allow critical reflection and experimentation. The mentor provides guidance, acts as a sounding board to help the mentee to develop their own learning. The process is two-way and both the mentor and mentee can derive benefit from the process. The relationship has a timescale.

To conclude, the definition debate is clouded by the different uses of the word *mentoring* to describe mentoring relationships, purpose and context. The nature and application of mentoring does not readily lend itself to a universal definition. There are too many variations to neatly define the phenomenon but it does

have a *family resemblance*. The use of the term *mentoring* has evolved over time and through different eras closely mirroring changes in the development of modern culture and society, contemporary organisations and attitudes. There are certain elements at the core of mentoring and mentoring relationships which remain constant; the essence of mentoring as a personal interaction supported by developmental dialogue. Other elements change in relation to the culture and context of the activity and are variable and situational. It is not unsurprising that a single universally agreed definition has not been derived, nor is it ever likely to be. What appears to be important, therefore, is that the terminology and description of what is meant by mentoring is understood in the context in which it is used. Garvey (2009 p27), suggests that, '*localised understanding is important and perhaps that is the best that can be done in a social practice that has such variation of purpose, scope and application*'. For the purposes of this thesis the focus will be towards the developmental approach as this would seem most appropriate for the UK HE sector and aligns with the culture within such organisations. There are a number of similarities in the UK centric definitions provided above, principally: that the mentee takes responsibility for managing their own learning, that they are supported through the process by someone more expert in what they are trying to achieve, that the process supports individual development and understanding and that the process aims to be transformational. It is considered important, therefore, to gain an insight from the individual participants engaged in this research as to what their understanding is of the meaning of mentoring in the context of their organisational environment within Higher Education.

## **2.04 Mentoring Relationship Building - Phases**

This section is of primary relevance to the research as it explores the concept of different *phases* within the mentoring relationship building process. Relationship building within these phases is a core focus of this study and for this reason it is covered in some detail to set the context for this research.

Levinson (1978), *The Seasons of a Man's Life*, published findings base on a 10 year study, which started in 1967 into '*man's development*' and makes



reference to the importance of mentoring in the development process. Levinson described a mentor as a *transitional figure in a man's life*. A number of *eras* (phases) in the male life cycle and four major tasks to be accomplished were identified which included; forming a *dream*, finding a mentor, establishing an occupation and developing intimate relationships to include marriage and a family. The study was based on intensive biographical interviews, a qualitative interpretive investigation, reconstructing the lives of 40 men aged between 35 and 45, from a range of occupations. The research proffers a model of the complex process of personal developmental growth and points to phases through the life of an individual. Levinson's developmental theory is important because it went beyond theories at the time identifying the concept that development continues throughout adult life. Levinson believed that the presence of a mentor or older teacher is a great influence in guiding the person through the obstacles in their career paths. Although Levinson's developmental model was focused on an investigation into male development, in the US, Kozlak recognized that for a *professional woman* the developmental phases are recognizable and relevant (Kozlak 1980 p177).

Levinson's work provided the catalyst for researchers to investigate further the interactive and developmental process of mentoring which has resulted in a proliferation of research that covers a wide range of disciplines, professions and continents (Ragins 2007 p4). Mentoring as a research area continues to develop through practical application within organisations as a process to enable transformational change.

An important reference point for this thesis is the pivotal work by Kram, *Phases of the mentor relationship* (1983), and *Mentoring at Work* (1985), which presented a theoretical underpinning and framework from which to gain a greater understanding of the mentoring process and mentoring relationship development and building. Kram (1983, 1985), Ragins (2007 p6) and Bouquillon (2005), affirm that mentoring relationships are not static and that they evolve through phases. The methodology, relating to Kram's study was a qualitative interpretive approach and reflective on the participant's experience. These phases reflect different, *functions, experiences and patterns of interaction*. This



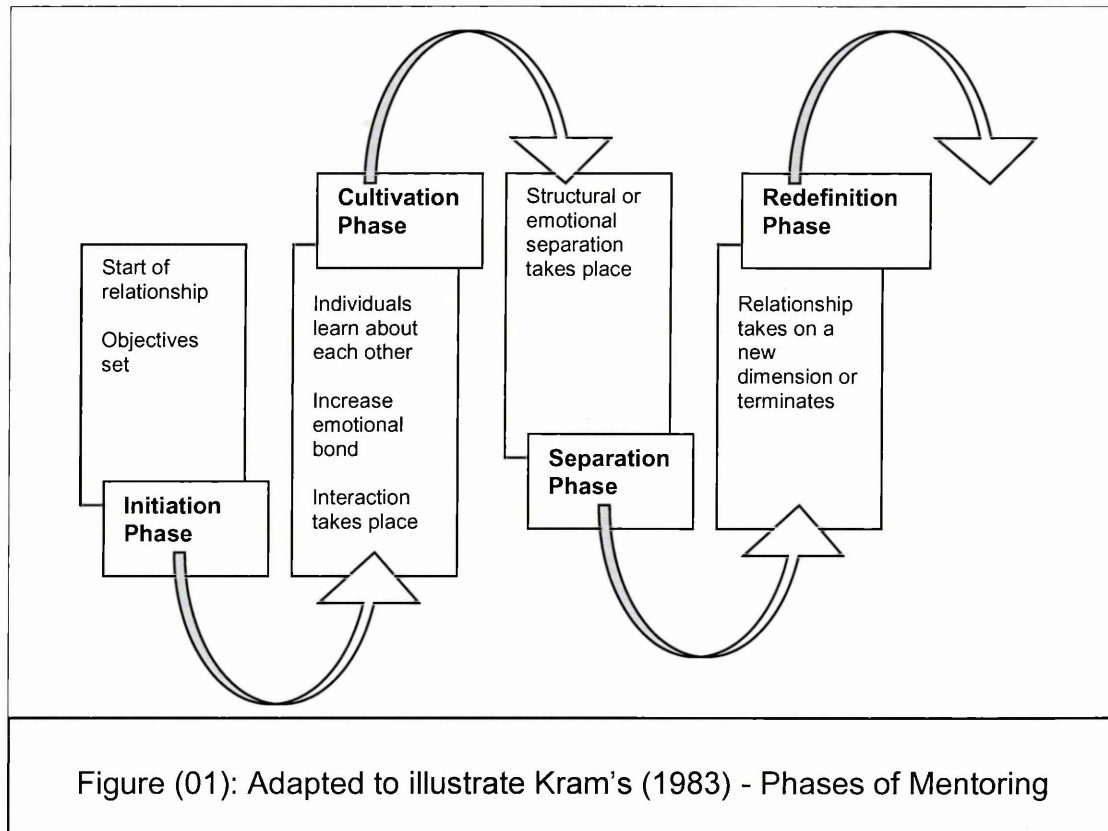
represents an interactive and transformational process which is the focus of investigation for this thesis and reinforces the need for a longitudinal research profile to analyse the phase interactions and relationship development in more detail, not on a retrospective basis but at points in time, as the participants are 'living' the experience. The original study in 1983 was undertaken by Kram and was based on a sample of 18 relationships within an organisation. The environment and culture in which the study was undertaken relates to that of career sponsorship and should be seen in that context since although the importance of the study relates to the phases of relationship development, the aspects relating to psychosocial and career development do not directly translate over to the developmental model. The sample group comprised 15 junior and 16 more senior managers. Kram (2003 p4) chose not to use the term *mentoring* because of its potential associations, possibly with Levinson, and used the term '*developmental relationships*' for her research, which in itself is potentially misleading in the context in which the study was undertaken. Within the sample Kram identified only 3 relationships which she described as developmental. The participants were all managers in an organisational hierarchy and in 10 instances the mentor was the mentee's direct line manager. Direct line managers as mentors can be detrimental to the openness of the relationship since the mentee might not wish to admit to their inadequacies and jeopardise their career ambitions (Ragins 1997, Megginson 2006). The mentees were in the early part of their career (26-34 yrs) and the mentors older. None of the male mentees had female mentors. One can be critical of the sampling but the theoretical model that evolved related to the observation that mentoring relationships develop and build through distinct phases. The model has been fundamental to mentoring research for the last 30 years.

Kram's theoretical framework identified four phases of the mentoring relationship and these are illustrated in Figure 1, and are described as:

- *Initiation phase*: at the start of the relationship where objectives are set.
- *Cultivation phase*: in which the individuals learn more about each other.

There is an increase in the emotional bond and meaningful interaction takes place.

- *Separation phase*: happens when a structural or emotional separation occurs. The mentee becomes more autonomous.
- *Redefinition phase*: the relationship takes on a new dimension or terminates.



The differentiation of the phase descriptors conveys a process that is progressive and suggests that relationships build and develop over time. 'Mentoring relationships are not static, but evolve through phases that reflect different functions, experiences, and patterns of interactions', (Ragins & Kram 2007 p6). In the theory, two types of mentoring functions were identified and can be categorized as *career* and *psychosocial* (Kram 1983). Mentor career functions include a range of behaviours to help protégés (mentees) to *learn the ropes* and prepare them for hierarchical advancement within the organisation. These behaviours include: sponsoring of professional advancements and overseeing career preparation, presenting challenging assignments, increasing the protégé's exposure and visibility. Psychosocial mentoring functions include; helping the protégé (mentee) develop a sense of self through acceptance and affirmation, providing counselling, establishing friendly rapport, serving as a role

model. There is an emphasis on *professional and personal growth, identity, self-worth and self-efficacy* (Ragins & Kram 2007). The emphasis placed on fulfilling each of these functions varies by mentoring relationship and may vary across the phases of the relationship (Kram 1983). This further emphasises the interactive nature of the mentoring process in building relationships.

Kram (1983) proffers that career functions maybe offered in the *initiation phase* and that as the mentoring relationship develops both career and psychosocial functions intensify and peak in the *cultivation phase*. Chao (1997 p23), suggested that the cultivation phase failed to show higher levels of psychosocial and career-related support over the separation or redefinition phases. There are potential flaws in the methods of data capture in Chao's research, since the respondents may not have differentiated the phases sufficiently in their feedback. However, during this phase interpersonal bonds are strengthened and there is a greater two-way interaction, supporting mutual exchange and reciprocity. This phase, Kram suggests, ends when, changes in the individual needs or organisational environment disrupt the equilibrium of the relationship and moves to a separation phase. The reasons identified for this are related to psychological, (outgrowing the relationship – functional or dysfunctional) or physical factors, (leaving the organisation) which impact the relationship. The final phase is a *redefinition phase* where the relationship is redefined as a peer relationship or friendship. Kram's research is set in the US context of the early 1980s and therefore has a bias which relates to the concept of mentoring in that environment at that time. The US focus was and still is to some extent predominately career focussed, a mentor supporting a protégé's (mentee's) career advancement.

The importance of Kram's work, however, relates to the identification and differentiation of the phases of a mentoring relationship and stands the test of time. Others, (Armitage 1984, Holloway 1994, Fletcher 1997, Hay 1999), to some extent, tried to build upon and refine Kram's work, but in essence have only repackaged her findings. For example, Parker Armitage (1994): build trust / set contract, reframe, transference, transmute, transform. Holloway (1994): getting together, getting to know each other, working together, learning

together, saying goodbye. Fletcher (1997): setting boundaries, personal survival, alignment, consolidation, moving-on. Hay (1999): alliance, assessment, analysis, alternatives, action planning, application, appraisal (of the process). These emphasise the progressive and interactive nature of mentoring as the relationship builds and develops through distinct phases.

Morton (2003) presents a guidance paper which identifies issues relating to mentoring in the Higher Education sector and is based on her research experience as a practitioner within a university where formal mentoring programmes have been implemented. The paper does not reveal much in terms of the underpinning research but does present insights which are pertinent to this thesis. She suggests that the mentoring process is a continuum of progressive developmental stages or phases over time (Morton 2003 p10) and often the emphasis is on the mentee's development, further, that *'the role of the mentor will change during the period of the mentoring relationship if, as is anticipated, the mentee is learning and developing'*. This is an important insight suggesting that change may occur for both the mentor and mentee during the development and building of the mentoring relationship. This aspect will be explored within the data analysis since the implication is that for the relationship to evolve successfully the participants will need to adapt and present reciprocal progressive behaviours and engagement.

Morton describes the process, which commences with the establishment of the relationship. During this time the clarification of the purpose of the relationship is established, setting boundaries, developing an understanding of what the relationship is and is not, determining what the mentee wants to gain, what the mentor has to offer and agreeing a framework in which to work. The next phase of the relationship relates to sharing experiences and the mentor providing specific content input to develop the mentee to support their learning development. The mentor and mentee get to know each other and the contexts in which both can work. During this relationship phase of working together, she suggests, the mentor encourages the mentee to be reflective, to evaluate their existing skills, prior experience and knowledge and align this to identify the gaps to meet objectives. The mentor's role is to facilitate learning through asking



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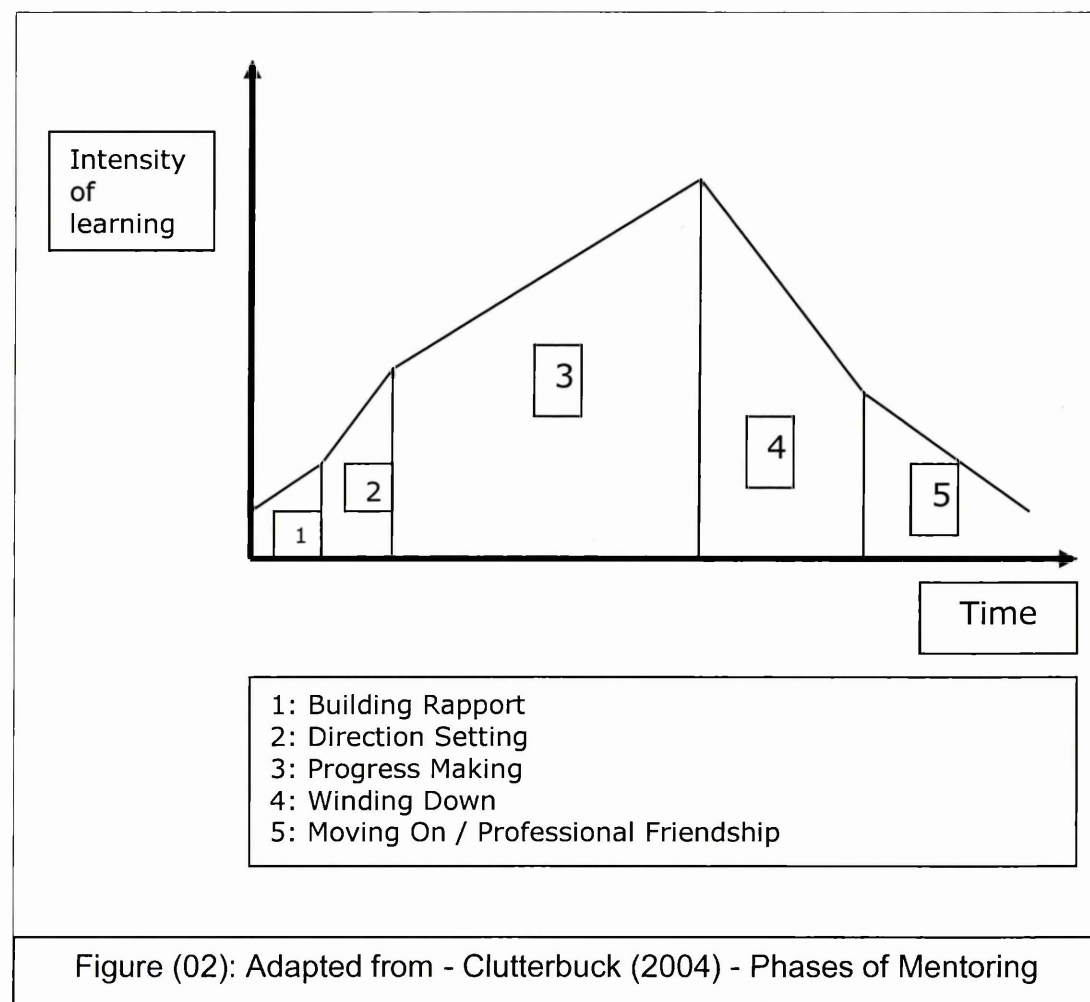
challenging questions which should lead to defined actions based upon informed reflection. Morton (2003) suggests that the mentor may also gain significantly from the relationship at this stage. The *separation, saying goodbye, winding-down* phase, occurs when the mentee becomes more autonomous and has grown and developed and feels more comfortable and confident with the actions they take when the desired and professional growth of the mentee, as determined at the beginning of the relationship, have been achieved. These perceptions will be considered in the findings of this thesis.

Hay (1999) and Morton (2003), point to the importance of time in the process of developing and building a relationship and that personal development cannot be forced to happen in a fixed period. Each relationship, they argue, will evolve at a different pace and that formal mentoring schemes should ensure that there is sufficient time to accommodate the development phase.

Clutterbuck (2004 p30-34) described a four stage relationship model and then added a further – *winding-down* stage which was based on 44 respondents relating their experience of mentoring relationships. Clutterbuck (2005) in *Establishing and Maintaining Mentoring Relationships: An overview of Mentor and Mentee Competencies*, identifies the five phases of relationship development: *Rapport-building; Direction-setting; Progress-making; Winding-down; Moving-on/professional friendship*. This model was derived from what Clutterbuck describes as *extensive field experience* (2005 p3) and therefore the rigour of the research base is uncertain. This thesis will consider whether these phases of a mentoring relationship can be affirmed.



Clutterbuck's relationship building phases are illustrated below, Figure (02).



These five relationship phases map on to Kram's four phases, since the *initiation phase* can be compared to Clutterbuck's, *rapport-building* and *direction-setting* phases. Kram's *cultivation phase* maps onto Clutterbuck's *progress-making*. The *separation phase* maps to *winding-down* and *redefinition phase* maps to *moving-on/professional friendship*. The fundamental difference is that Clutterbuck's relationship phase descriptions relate to the developmental learning model of mentoring as opposed to Kram's findings which were set in the environment of career sponsorship.

In Landale (1999), Clutterbuck (2004 p269) states that, '*successful relationships go through several phases. At first the pair need to establish rapport, which may take a few meetings, or simply happen, depending on how naturally fitting they*

are. Then they begin to set goals and direction. Before long they have moved into the most productive phase where learning flows both ways and the mentee experiments with ideas and advice gained from the dialogue with the mentor. Finally, as the pace of the learning begins to flag, the two have to consider how to wind-down'. Clutterbuck (2004) considers that the end and the beginning of a relationship are the most sensitive phases. If there is not the rapport the relationship 'will not get off the ground' and if the relationship runs its natural course there may be issues of dependency on one side or both with feelings of abandonment or feelings entrapment (Clutterbuck & Megginson 2004, p191).

A number of areas requiring further exploration arise from the literature which are explored within the findings and conclusions of this research. For example: to what extent does the theoretical framework correspond to 'lived' experiences; do all relationships follow this pattern; what are the implications to inform mentoring practice; what are the determinants which support successful mentoring outcomes.

This reinforces the need for more in-depth and focussed investigation and highlights the potential value of point-in-time longitudinal research to ascertain the experiences of both the mentor and mentee involved in a mentoring relationship.

Ragins (2007 p8) states that, '*while we have focussed on mentoring behaviours and mentee outcomes, we have not explored the dynamic and interactive processes underlying mentoring relationships*', this further adds to the identified need for research into developing our understanding of what happens within mentoring relationships.

Cullingford (2006 p210) makes the point that the success of mentoring as a process depends on the motivation of the individuals engagement, he states that, '*those who genuinely have the best interests of their colleagues at heart will make the system work; those who use it as a short cut or for their own ends will find it does not succeed*'. Brockbank (1998 p255), argues that where colleagues may be mentoring each other in Higher Education an understanding

of the phases of mentoring may enable progress and realisation that the relationship is not required to continue for life. Where relationships develop informally and develop naturally over time there may not be a recognised end point.

To conclude, it is evident that phases in a mentoring relationship may be identified, refined and defined, as Kram (1983) and Clutterbuck (2004) have proffered. It is clear that each mentoring relationship is unique and will evolve through the phases in varying time scales and with varying degrees of success. The interaction and therefore relationship between the mentor and mentee is critical to the progression through the phases and the outcomes of the process will be particular to the individuals concerned. The process is interactive and progressive but can falter in any phase of the relationship.

## **2.05 Developmental Approach (UK) vs Career Sponsorship (US)**

This section distinguishes two dominant paradigms or models of mentoring which exist and permeate the literature and have a bearing on the type of mentoring relationship under consideration. The differing contexts influence our understanding and the outcomes of research studies. Kram's (1983) work on the phases of mentoring relationships was derived from the US and that of Clutterbuck (2004) from the UK. The concern here is with regard to equivocation in that there is one word, mentoring, which is used in two different contexts. They are not perfectly separated, but separated enough, suggesting that mentoring is not a cohesive body of research. There are different traditions to be considered when taking the findings from one context and applying it to the other.

The UK model of mentoring tends towards a *developmental approach* as opposed to the US model which tends to focus on *career sponsorship*, Clutterbuck (2004). This difference in emphasis is critically significant in establishing the context within which this investigation is set. The developmental approach focuses on the mentee's personal development and is a more supportive relationship as opposed to the *career sponsorship* which

appears to be potentially more exploitative, concentrating on career advancement (Edy 2008, Feldman 1999, Scandura 1998). The potential for exploitation relates to power relationships which exist in organisational structures particularly where the mentor is the mentee's line-manager. This is an important distinction to be recognised when considering the research outcomes generated in the respective countries since the focus of mentoring is differentiated by different cultures. Hu, Pellegrini and Scandura (2011 p274), consider that, '*culture is important when examining close relationships such as mentoring, since relationship expectations and acceptable patterns of interaction may vary considerably across culture*', this relates to organisational culture as well as national culture and links to the variance and clarity in defining and reporting findings relating to *mentoring*. It is worth noting that Kram & Chandler (2005) suggest that a more developmental approach is gaining recognition in the US and this is reinforced by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (2008), which provides a guide to best practices in mentoring which is focussed on the developmental model.

Meggison (2006 p17) provides a contrast to the two relationship models of mentoring and as a consequence the differences highlight the varying perspectives. The primary focus of sponsorship relates to, *career success of the protégé*, whereas the developmental model concentrates on the, *personal development of the mentee*. In sponsorship the mentor is, *more influential and senior*, but in the developmental approach the mentor is, *more experienced* than the mentee in *relevant issues*. In sponsorship the mentor *champions and promotes the cause of the protégé* but in the developmental approach the mentor, *helps the mentee do things for themselves*. In sponsorship the mentor, *gives and the protégé receives organisational benefits and, gives the benefit of their wisdom*, in the developmental model there is, *mutual growth* and the mentor, *helps the mentee develop their own wisdom*. In sponsorship the mentor, *steers the protégé through acquisition of skills, experience and knowledge*, and, *gives advice*, whereas in the developmental approach the mentor, *helps the mentee towards personal insights to steer their own development*, and, *good questions*, are central to the process. In sponsorship,



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*social exchange emphasises loyalty, but in the developmental model it emphasises learning.*

These two approaches to mentoring are fundamentally different and can lead to confusion and contribute to the discrepancies over definition and meaning. Within the Higher Education sector in the UK Fullerton (1996) argues that the developmental model lends itself to UK HE environment. This is the context in which the thesis is set.

## **2.06 Mentor & Mentee Roles - within a relationship**

The purpose of this section is to further highlight the fundamental features of developmental mentoring and in particular the roles and engagement of the mentor and mentee. The aim is to draw out the key features and characteristics to inform the data analysis within this investigation since these may influence relationship building and progression through the phases of the relationship.

Clutterbuck (2005 p2), states that, *'a weakness in the academic literature is the lack of longitudinal research on mentor and mentee competences and considers it logical that the competences required of a mentor and mentee would evolve with the process of the relationship'*. This observation is relevant for this thesis since if the range of competences of an individual are not present in one or both parties it raises the question what effect does this have on the process, how does this translate to the progression through the phases, and what are the determinants to promote successful relationship development?

As has been identified all mentoring relationships are unique, influenced by the individuals involved, the context and the intended purpose for which the mentoring intervention is taking place. It is suggested that, the mentor's role is to respond to the mentee's needs but each individual will respond differently (Clutterbuck 2005), and what is the role of the mentee in enabling the relationship to develop?

A mentoring relationship is interactive, complementary and two-way, the success or otherwise of the outcome is potentially dependent upon both parties. There is relatively limited research regarding the role of mentees in a mentoring relationship and the focus is often on the mentor's role, (Ambrosetti 2010 p49). Walkington (2005) considers that the mentee's role is one of an active participant since mentoring is a mutual relationship; the mentee has an equally important role to that of the mentor (Kamvounias 2007, Freeman 2008, Paris, 2010). Ambrosetti discusses the connectedness between the role of a mentee and mentor and the interdependence of these roles. She suggests each role of the mentor has corresponding mentee role. The implication of this is that if the roles and responsibilities do not coincide the relationship may falter. There are limited studies reviewing the interdependence of the two roles and this aspect will be considered through the analysis of the mentoring relationship development within this study.

Norman (2005 p8) believes, *'that the expectations that both the mentor and mentee hold about the task at hand will determine how the mentoring relationship is approached and how each interacts with the other'*, and by implication how successful or otherwise the outcome is. Lucas (2001 p46) states that, *'time, experience together, and the perceptions and interpretations of each person continually redefine the roles of the mentor and the mentee'*. Ambrosetti (2010 p47) states that, *'mentoring is an interactive process in which the mentor and mentee react according to the role being performed'*, and that, *'the roles of both participants are interconnected'*. Bullough (2004 p14), considers, *'the roles undertaken by both the mentor and mentee are influenced by the interactions they are engaged in'*.

The mentoring literature reflects the viewpoint that mentoring roles change as the relationship evolves, (Bullough 2003, Clutterbuck 2005, Kostovich 2006, Lai 2005, Le Maistre 2006; Rajuan 2007). Ambrossetti (2010 p48) states that, *'the stage of the mentoring relationship will influence how the relationship functions, the roles each participant undertakes and what mentoring occurs within the relationship'*. Le Maistre (2006 p8) illustrates this by suggesting that, *'a mentee*

*who has just begun that learning journey will need more support than one who is near the end of their journey’.*

Clutterbuck (2005), frames mentor competences through the different phases of a mentoring relationship, as Tabled 03:

Mentorship relationship Phase	Suggested competence
Rapport Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Active listening</li><li>• Empathising</li><li>• Giving positive regard</li><li>• Offering openness and trust to elicit reciprocal behaviour</li><li>• Identifying and valuing both common ground and differences</li></ul>
Setting-Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Goal identification, clarification and management</li><li>• Personal project planning</li><li>• Testing mentee's levels of commitment to specific goals</li><li>• Reality testing-helping the mentee focus on a few achievable goals</li></ul>
Progress-Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sustaining commitment</li><li>• Ensuring sufficient challenge in the mentoring dialogue</li><li>• Helping the mentee take increasing responsibility for managing the relationship</li><li>• Being available and understanding in helping the mentee cope with set-backs</li></ul>
Winding-Down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Manage the dissolution process</li></ul>
Moving-on / Professional Friendship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to redefine the relationship when it has run its formal course</li></ul>

**Table (03): Suggested Mentor Competences for each Phase of the Mentoring Relationship - Clutterbuck & Lane (2005)**

Clutterbuck (2005 p7) further considers a framework of mentee competencies. These relate to: relationship initiation competences, relationship management competences, learning maturity and disengagement. Clutterbuck, also suggests that one of the core measurements of a successful relationship is when a mentee wishes to become a mentor.

Insights into mentor and mentee competences are considered in the review of the mentoring relationships cases within the findings of this thesis through the phases of the mentoring process. The implication of the above to the

investigation of the thesis is significant since the progression through the phases of the relationship will likely to be dependent upon the effectiveness of both the mentor and mentee in undertaking their complementary roles and responsibilities.

## **2.07 Positive and negative aspects of mentoring relationships**

The purpose of this section is to identify potential *negative and positive* aspects of mentoring which may feature within and be resultant of mentoring relationships.

Scandura (1999 p464) highlights the point, '*that mentoring relationships are as fragile as any personal relationship that one enters into. Relational difficulties may cause a great deal of distress for the parties involved. Given such difficulty, it is fortunate that dysfunctional mentoring relationships don't occur as often as good ones*'. Scandura (1998 p461) concludes that most literature discusses dysfunction within mentoring in terms of negative personal interaction but considers that the *relationships can also be considered dysfunctional in terms of lack of goal attainment for one or both parties*.

The general consensus is that mentoring in its variety of forms can be beneficial to both the mentee and mentor in terms of personal and career development, but the experience is not always positive and the extent to which it is beneficial is questioned (Ragins 2007). Kammeyer-Mueller (2008 p277) suggests that '*the benefits of mentoring are modest*', in terms of career outcomes and that there are a number of other factors outside of mentoring that determine a person's success, such as, '*core self-evaluation, tenure and education*'. They state that the claims for the benefits of mentoring, in relation to career outcomes maybe over emphasised through qualitative research. This paper focuses on the US perspective of career sponsorship; however, the results do substantiate the beneficial effects on job satisfaction and career satisfaction which is supportive of the personal developmental approach, where the focus is to enrich the individual. De Vries (2005) argues that mentoring develops increased confidence in both the mentor and mentee and Ehrich (2004) that formal



mentoring promotes personal satisfaction and growth indicating that there are potential benefits for both parties (Clutterbuck 2004).

Eby (2000) provides insight to negative issues which might occur in a mentoring relationship which include mentor: prejudices, values, differences in philosophy, personality, distancing behaviours, self-absorption, lack of feedback, manipulation, intimidation, lack of expertise. These aspects may influence the relationship development through the phases of the mentoring process. Eby (2008 p369) further identifies three distinct potential negative experiences which the mentor might encounter and these relate to protégé performance, interpersonal problems and destructive relational issues.

Ismail (2009 p608), studied the outcomes of a mentoring programme within a Malaysian public university and undertook a regression analysis based on 153 respondents. They concluded that, *'properly implemented mentoring programmes provide an effective mechanism to support individual advancement and may strongly increase positive subsequent attitudinal and behavioural outcomes'*.

Klasen and Clutterbuck (2002), claim the following benefits (Table 04), and Douglas (1997) drawbacks (Table 05), of mentoring for the mentor, mentee and the organisation.

**Table (04): Benefits of Mentoring: Klasen & Clutterbuck (2002)**

For the Mentor	For the Mentee	For the Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value and satisfaction</li> <li>• Learning experience</li> <li>• Credit</li> <li>• Own reflection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competence</li> <li>• Goal setting</li> <li>• Motivation and satisfaction</li> <li>• Psychological support</li> <li>• Creativity</li> <li>• Communication skills</li> <li>• Organisational change</li> <li>• Personal change</li> <li>• Time effectiveness</li> <li>• Employability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational effectiveness</li> <li>• Motivation and job satisfaction</li> <li>• Recruitment</li> <li>• Retention</li> <li>• High flyers</li> <li>• Organisational learning</li> <li>• Organisational culture</li> <li>• Cost effectiveness</li> <li>• Time efficiency</li> <li>• Development</li> <li>• Strategic success planning</li> </ul>

**Table (05): Drawbacks of Mentoring Programmes: Douglas (1997)**

For the Mentor	For the Mentee	For the Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of time</li><li>• Lack of perceived benefits</li><li>• Lack of skills needed for the mentoring role</li><li>• Pressure to take on mentoring role</li><li>• Resentment of mentees</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Neglect of core job</li><li>• Negative experiences</li><li>• Unrealistic experiences</li><li>• Over dependence on the mentoring relationship</li><li>• Role conflict between boss and mentor</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of organisational support</li><li>• Creation of a climate of dependency</li><li>• Difficulties in coordinating programs with organisational initiatives</li><li>• Costs and resources associated with overseeing and administering programs</li></ul>

Each of the concerns identified by Douglas (1997) has support from empirical studies conducted on formal mentoring programmes. The benefits (Klasen 2002) and drawbacks (Douglas 1997), identified above, will inform the data analysis. Ehrich (1999 p15) states that organisations, *'must be aware that mentoring is not an organisational panacea'* and that, *'there are concerns regarding the outcomes of mentoring, but it is our opinion that these can be minimised by careful implementation planning. Mentoring is a complex and sensitive organisational process and there is little doubt it can be a destructive force for organisations, the mentors and the mentees'*.

McAuley (2003) considers challenges in the mentoring process relating to transference, counter-transference between the mentor, mentee and organisation. The paper concludes that the process of mentoring can yield benefits to the mentee and mentor particularly but the third party in the relationship is the organisation. This implies that the organisational culture has a bearing on the relationship. Understanding the cultural context within which the mentoring intervention is set is therefore of significance. The paper also considers the potential for narcissism and altruism to be present in a mentoring relationship, McAuley (2003 p20) concludes on this point *'that understanding the transference process would assist development of both positive and*

*negative aspects of these emotional states as they occur in mentoring relationships*'. This to some extent is supported by Hansman (2002 p45) who argues that *'mentoring relationships can be characterized as socially constructed power relationships that are designed to advantage certain groups while disadvantaging other groups'* and that, *'the biggest paradox surrounding mentoring relationships is that although mentors seek to empower their protégés, the relationships themselves are entrenched with power issues'*. These issues may manifest themselves very subtly and as suggested are difficult to reveal but it is important to acknowledge their presence. Ragins (1997) identifies concerns where the mentor and mentee have different backgrounds and, or, attitudes, values and beliefs and where the mentor is a direct line manager. There are also issues relating to dependence developing within relationships. These aspects can be potentially reduced by removing line-management from the mentoring relationship, as suggested by Megginson (1995), in terms of providing off-line help and support.

Kanter (1977) in her book, *Men & Women of the Corporation*, points to the potential of mentoring to support career development within an organisation where a protégé is given insider support and knowledge to potentially gain career advancement. This is the US perspective of mentoring and her focus was on considering the difficulties women might face within an organisation and how mentoring might be seen as covert preferentialism to individuals in the workforce. Kanter (1977), argued a bias towards male career progression, her view may have changed overtime to the present day within modern organisation structures, but is still the subject of debate.

There are issues relating to cross-gender mentoring as highlighted by Hurley (1996), and the difficulties perceived in women gaining a mentor, Ragins & McFarlin (1990). More recently, Gardiner (2007 p425) undertook a longitudinal study of women academics and the outcomes indicated that mentoring was beneficial. That they were more likely to stay in the organisation, receive more grant income and achieve high levels of promotion. De Vries (2011 p13) concludes that there are still a number of issues relating to the mentoring of women. De Vries suggests that there are opportunities to critically review and

improve mentoring practice with an increased emphasis on theoretical foundations and design of programs to reduce gender concerns.

Kram (1985 p10) refers to one of the relationships in her study of eighteen as being dissatisfying, even if the relationship begins productively, she suggests, it can change over time. Kirkpatrick (2008) concludes that, *'while these mentoring relationships can produce positive developmental and organizational outcomes, both mentoring programs and relationships sometimes fail due to a variety of causes and problems (e.g., lack of participation, no leadership involvement, poor planning, unrealistic expectations, and 'fuzzy' goals). Successful mentoring programs require proper understanding, planning, implementation and evaluation'*. These aspects further support the relevance of this thesis which provides further insight into the mentoring process, relationship develop and relationship building and will identify both positive and negative influences.

Eby & McManus (2004 p273) conclude, *'that future research is needed to further understand the antecedents, correlates, and consequences of the wide variety of difficult mentoring experiences'* and that *'consideration of both the positive and negative aspects of mentoring leads to a more balanced and realistic perspective on the promises, as well as the potential pitfalls, of organizational mentoring'*.

It is important to note that there are potentially negative and destructive outcomes and the matching of the mentor with the mentee is an important element of formal mentoring programmes (Cox 2005).

In conclusion it is important to gain an understanding of both the perceived benefits and dis-benefits of the mentoring process, for both the mentor and mentee and to consider the potential negative and positive influences and determinants on mentoring relationships, which may influence the outcomes. As the relationships develop there are a number of complex factors and determinants which impact on the success or otherwise of the mentoring relationship.



## **2.08 Mentoring within the Higher Education environment (UK)**

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the sector within which the research is undertaken and to consider the scale, environment and the context of mentoring within Higher Education, in the UK.

To provide an indication of scale the number of staff employed in UK Higher Education Institutions (HESA 2012/13) totals 382,514 of which 185,585 are described as having academic roles. Of the academics, 122,500 are full-time and 63,085 are part-time. Based on 2012/13 statistics there are 82,670 female academic staff of which 3,870 are professors and this compares with 102,915 male academic staff of which 14,010 are professors.

The THE (Nov. 2012) suggests that the overall level of doctoral qualifications within the British academic workforce seems rather low and therefore there are opportunities to support career academics through mentoring and develop their research capabilities. Part of the reason for this is that for a number of vocational disciplines practitioners enter Higher Education with industry relevant and professional qualifications, a first degree but not higher academic qualifications. A number of these lecturing staff then embark on developing their academic credentials and mentoring programmes may support this process and support their further research development. The importance of the sector, the size of the population, resource and the apparent need to develop academics new to Higher Education, particularly from practice add further relevance to this thesis. The findings from this study may provide insights to inform mentoring practice in supporting and guiding less experienced academics / lecturers in developing their research capabilities.

Silverman (2003) identifies the importance of organisational enabling structures and culture to foster a learning environment. He argues that without these employees learning development are stifled. It is therefore important to understand the culture, context and environment within which a mentoring intervention is being undertaken. Silverman (2003 p16) states that for a healthy learning environment, that fosters developmental growth, employees should feel

free and eager to ask questions, share their information and feel that their requests are received positively.

Within Higher Education developmental mentoring is part of the process of supporting students and staff through reflective dialogue and practice and that much of it is informal and voluntary (Brockbank 1998). The term developmental mentoring relationships are formed as part of the learning process, for example; supporting newly appointed staff, supporting researcher development, student dissertation supervision. As a consequence, academics are generally familiar with the concept of mentoring and supporting individuals on a daily basis. These relationships occur in many guises within universities be it formal or informal and relate to both personal and academic issues. Brockbank argues (1998 p252) that the informality of these relationships often conceals the significance for the development of both students and staff and remains unacknowledged by organisations. When academic staff are mentoring students, Brockbank (1998 p255) suggests the phases of the mentoring process are contained within the timeframe of the students entry and exit from higher education and there are specific aims in the process to be realised. Where staff are mentoring each other, particularly in informal settings, there is often a lack of understanding of the phases of mentoring process and as such there is often a lack of realisation that the relationship is not required to continue indefinitely; there is a process and structure if tangible progress is made.

Within Higher Education there is a growing expectation that academics need to develop their research skill, competence and knowledge. This is highlighted by the Research Excellence Framework (2014), the outcomes of which are used as key performance indicators as to the health and quality of the research outputs, environment and impact of a Higher Education Institution within the UK. A number of universities have recently introduced more formal mentoring schemes, for example, the University of Leeds, Faculty of Engineering. The purpose of which was aimed at matching research staff (mentees) with academic staff (mentors). Imperial College London developed a scheme linking less experienced researchers (mentees) with those of similar experience but further along the career path, (VITAE 2014). This adds further relevance to this

thesis since institutions are introducing mentoring programmes as a means to develop staff and the findings from this study may inform the implementation of such schemes.

A Concordat to support the career development of researchers (2011) sets out an agreement between the funders and employers of researchers in the UK. The document sets out 7 Principles and makes reference to mentoring. Principle 4, (p11), states the importance of researchers personal and career development and life-long learning is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of the career. Clause 14 clearly identifies mentoring arrangements as a key mechanism for development and enhancement. Principle 5 (p12), clause 6, also makes reference to mentoring and states that, researchers should ensure that their career development requirements and activities are regularly discussed, monitored and evaluated with their research manager and mentor.

These references to mentoring are a clear statement as to the potential perceived benefits of mentoring interventions within Higher Education and supports the timeliness of this thesis in contributing to our understanding of mentoring relationships, mentoring relationship building and gaining greater understanding of what the determinants are which may lead to successful mentoring relationships.

## **2.09 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the literature review reveals the origins of the term 'mentoring' and establishes that the concept of mentoring, in its many guises. It suggests that mentoring supports human development and learning and is embedded in a social context. Human relationships by their very nature are conceived as complex and the interactions unique. There are disagreements as to how effective mentoring relationships are and how the process translates to outcomes. There is, however, recognition that the process of mentoring is interactive and developmental, progressing through phases or stages which are characterised and identifiable, although there is no consensus as to a unified model. Each mentoring relationship will develop through each phase differently

and not necessarily through all, since there are a multitude of influences and factors which determine the success of otherwise of the mentoring relationship.

Two dominant paradigms or models of contemporary mentoring within organisations exist and permeate the literature, those of *career sponsorship* and the *developmental* approach. The differing contexts influence the outcomes of research studies and can lead to confusions as to the benefits or otherwise of the mentoring relationships. The context within which this thesis is set relates to the developmental approach to mentoring since it is appropriate to the Higher Education learning environment within which it is set.

Seminal works by Levinson (1978) and Kram (1983) refer to the stages and phases of human development. Kram's work is particularly relevant to this thesis as it focuses on the mentoring process and relationship building. Further work by Clutterbuck (2004) developed insights to the phases of mentoring within the context of the developmental approach to mentoring. The thesis explores the interactive nature of the mentoring process and aims to provide further insights into the building of mentoring relationships and the determinants which influence the outcomes. The reference to stages and phases further reinforced the decision to undertake a longitudinal study, to access the phenomenon in order to access change in the participants' experiences over time.

It has been established that there is no universal definition for the term mentoring since there are too many variables to neatly define the phenomenon. The types of relationship, purpose and context vary. Further the use of the term has evolved over time and through different eras closely mirroring changes in the development of modern culture and society, contemporary organisations and attitudes. The term does however have meaning which is locally understood and is determined by the purpose, scope and application. There is a *family resemblance*, variations on a theme, and there are similarities when considering the developmental approach to mentoring, which is the context of this investigation. The characteristics are that: the mentee takes responsibility for managing their own learning, the mentee is supported through the process



by someone more expert in what they are trying to achieve, that the process encourages individual development and understanding and that the process aims to be transformational.

For the purposes of this research consideration is given to the dyadic approach, referring to a mentor and mentee relationship pairing. Since each relationship is unique the success or otherwise of the mentoring relationship and subsequent outcomes will to some extent be dependent upon the engagement of the two parties and their ability and competence in progressing and developing the relationship.

It has been identified that mentoring can have both positive and negative impacts on the parties involved and has consequences for the organisation. It is recognised that mentoring is not an organisational panacea for developing staff and that careful implementation and planning are important in mitigating negative aspects and supporting positive outcomes. There is potential for dysfunctional mentoring relationships which may be influenced by a wide range of factors, ranging from: prejudices, values, difference in philosophies, lack of feedback, lack of engagement, lack of expertise, unrealistic expectations, fuzzy goals, poor time management, inadequate planning, power play, gender issues, dependence, capability issues, competences and skills to manage the process. These aspects, where appropriate, will be considered within the data analysis. It is recognised that mentoring relationships are as fragile as any personal relationship and that difficulties may arise.

The Higher Education sector in the UK is described in terms of scale which is significant. The importance of the organisational learning environment has been noted. Any insights into the relationship phases of the mentoring process may inform practice within such organisations to support academic / lecturing staff in developing their knowledge, confidence and independence through a developmental mentoring intervention.

The literature review, draws on a range of different sources and reference points revealing a number of potential interconnected influences which may

impact on how mentoring relationships build over time. These appear to be often considered in isolation but there is an apparent interconnectedness which will be explored through a longitudinal data analysis, tracking the participants' experiences over time. These potentially interconnected themes include the: organisational learning culture and support networks; participant matching; mentor and mentee knowledge, skills and competences; operational processes within the relationship, mentor and mentee engagement and motivations; phases and stages of the mentoring relationship. This further reinforces the importance of this research in undertaking an in-depth applied study, over time, into mentoring relationship building and the identification of potential determinants and influences which may impact on the success or otherwise of the mentoring intervention.

The literature review revealed gaps in empirical research and, therefore, raised questions which informed the research design. The gaps exist around our understanding of what happens 'within' mentoring relationships, how the relationships build over time and whether distinguishing features, characteristics and traits which differentiate successful and unsuccessful mentoring relationships can be identified. What factors contribute to building a successful mentoring relationship? There appears to be a lack of in-depth understanding as to what constitutes a successful mentoring relationship; what does it look like and how is it achieved. When a mentor or mentee is engaged in the mentoring process what are the indicators which suggest that the relationship is building successfully. What tools can a mentor or mentee refer to in practice to reflect upon and gauge how well a relationship is building? Can the participants identify what stage they are at and what the milestones are ahead? Are there indicators, determinants, which can be drawn to the participant's attention such that the relationship may be enhanced? Are there different types of relationship that can be identified and is there a framework which represents the process of building successful mentoring relationships?

Having raised these questions and identified these gaps in knowledge, these aspects informed the research design. My contribution to knowledge and practice will be: the development of a mentoring relationship building

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framework, based on a longitudinal analysis of the 'lived' experiences of the participants; a typology for recognising mentoring relationship types; a conceptual framework offering new insights, new ways of thinking about how the complexities of mentoring relationships interplay.

The next chapter, research methodology, describes how these aspects are to be investigated.

## Chapter 3: Research Methodology

### 3.01 Introduction

The previous chapter presented a review of the literature pertaining to the phenomenon of mentoring and focussed on dyadic mentoring identifying the complexities associated with building mentoring relationships. The literature review revealed a number of potential influences on the mentoring relationship building process which included: the learning culture within the organisation; mentoring, roles and responsibilities; the process of mentoring; relationship building; the phases and stages of the mentoring process; positive and negative aspects of mentoring. Pivotal conceptual theories relating to different stages and phases of the mentoring process, proffered by Kram (1983) and Clutterbuck (2004), illustrate the interactive nature of the process of building a mentoring relationship, between the mentor and mentee, which incrementally builds over time. The research focus is, therefore, to gain an insight and understanding of what happens within a mentoring relationship and whether key determinants, characteristics and traits could be identified which may influence the process of building a successful mentoring relationship. It was considered key to the research design to gain access to the participants *lived* experiences, their experience of being part of a mentoring relationship. A longitudinal approach to data gathering and ultimately analysis and sense-making of same is presented in this chapter.

This chapter discusses the nature of the investigation, the general inductive approach (Thomas 2006), set within the methodological paradigm of neo-positivism (Johnson & Duberley 2000 p181), the research design and strategy, the mentoring scheme and it identifies the participant population and mentor-mentee pairings which represent individual cases under investigation. The rationale for the longitudinal nature of the investigation and how the semi-structured interviews were constructed and conducted are discussed. Consideration of ethics, protocols, anonymity and confidentiality are outlined with regard the research design, and methodological reflexivity (Johnson & Duberley 2003), is acknowledged. A systematic approach to data collection,



data reduction and data analysis is presented setting out a step-by-step description of the process leading to the resulting conceptual framework.

The next section considers the nature of the investigation and the methodological approach to the research.

### **3.02 Methodological Approach**

The focus of this research concerns gaining an understanding of the experience of humans who are engaged in a mentoring relationship and to make sense of these experiences. Mentoring is a human interaction, two individuals creating a unique relationship pairing and it is the purpose of this investigation to provide insight into identifying what happens within these relationships to support successful mentoring relationship building. To determine an appropriate methodology the research domain requires consideration.

The literature review established that mentoring is a human activity and is socially constructed. Garvey (1999 p195) argues that mentoring is a '*very ordinary and normal human activity and that this presents a challenge to some for its sheer normalness, simplicity and inherent humanity...*'. The implication of this is that the research centres on people and their experiences and points towards an approach which can gain access to these and gain an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

For the purposes of this research, my position is that, the origin of knowledge is primarily through sense experience, empiricism. This places emphasis on the role of experience and evidence, especially sensory perception, in the formation of ideas and that the knowledge humans have is based on experience. There is a 'reality' out there and, therefore, I believe that the experiences of the participants involved in the mentoring process can be accessed. From a neo-positivist view point it is argued that the researcher needs to gain access to the 'actors' lived experience, in this case the participants (mentors and mentees), in order to access the subjective interpretations of their reality so as to understand

human behaviours and start to make sense of what is happening with the mentoring relationships.

This research investigates why and how some mentoring relationships build successfully by gaining an understanding of what the determinants are which enable mentoring relationships to develop and build over time based on the human experience. Access to this phenomenon is through the experiences of the participants. Greenhalgh (1997 p742) and Fekede (2010 p106) argue that if the objective of the research is to explore, interpret or obtain a deeper understanding of a particular issue based upon qualitative data then interpretive inductive methods are almost certainly the most appropriate ones to use. Gill & Johnson (2010) argue that the participants have subjective abilities, both emotional and cognitive, which influence how they consciously make choices about how to behave, where and when. How people behave, therefore, is based on their perceptions and interpretations of their own experiences set in a social context. The question is what happens 'inside' successful and unsuccessful mentoring relationships. The insider knowledge is gained through the participants revealing their experiences which are then interpreted. Starting with the 'lived' experiences of the participants and then using interpretive techniques (coding of the interview data, deriving emergent themes and analysing the cases to develop theory). The aim being to gain a deep understanding of the participants' experiences within their relationships and to focus on their perceptions, therefore, focusing on an understanding of human behaviour i.e. *Verstehen*, called '*qualitative positivist*' or *neo-positivist*, (Gill & Johnson 2010), how people make sense of their worlds.

People are constantly involved in interpreting and reinterpreting their world - social situations, other people's actions, their own actions, and natural and humanly created objects (Blaikie, 2007). Hence the individual participants within a mentoring relationship may view their mentoring experiences and relationships differently since, for example, they are from different backgrounds, have different perceptions, assume different roles in the relationship and have different experiences of their relationships. For this reason, each participant, mentor and mentee, is interviewed separately over time to gain insight to their

own individual 'lived' experience. The research methodology is focussed on gaining access to this knowledge and making sense of the resultant data through an inductive, iterative approach utilising interpretive techniques. The starting point is therefore the 'lived' experiences of the participants from which to develop understanding through the use of interpretive techniques. These are described further in this chapter.

According to Bulmer (1969), meaning arises from social interactions. The reality, therefore, is different from each participant's point of view in this research, i.e. the interpretation of the participants is different because they have different experiences of their relationship and they perceive the reality based on their understanding. Thus, the reality about the relationship between the mentor and mentee is out there, the researcher gaining access to participant's reality is by exploring their views and then giving understanding to participant's thinking by interpreting their views of the relationship. Thomas (2006) outlines a much-used strategy in qualitative data analysis which he refers to as the *general inductive approach*. This inductive analytical approach is considered appropriate for this research investigation since its primary purpose is to derive concepts, themes, or a model through interpretations made from the raw data, in this case the respondent interview transcripts. This understanding of inductive analysis is consistent with Strauss & Corbin (1998 p12), where theory emerges from the data. Thomas (2006) describes the general inductive approach as a systematic procedure for analysing qualitative data with the aim to:

- *condense extensive and varied raw text data into a brief, summary format;*
- *establish clear links between the research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data and to ensure that these links are both transparent (able to be demonstrated to others) and defensible (justifiable given the objectives of the research);*
- *develop a model or theory about the underlying structure of experiences or processes that are evident in the text data.*

The general inductive (analytical) approach refers to analysing the raw data and this informs the identification of themes through coding and interpretation derived from the data, the process should be transparent and systematic. This is the method adopted and presented for this research investigation

In approaching this investigation in this way the researcher is in a position to separate themselves from the participant's perceptions and consider them objectively. The knower and the known, Johnson & Duberley (2000 p181), are essentially separated and thus the researcher does not influence the participants' views but interprets them removing an element of bias.

In conclusion to the above, the methodological inquiry paradigm within which the research is to be undertaken, is that of neo-positivism. The method of analysis follows the general inductive analytic approach. The subject of investigation is centred on the belief that the most interesting questions are concerned with people's interpretations of *reality* and is based on the belief that human phenomenon are socially constructed (Guba & Lincoln 1994, Weber 1909) and it is believed that these can be accessed. The methods of accessing the participants reality rely on interviews to develop a dialogue with the participants at different stages of the mentoring intervention to access '*lived*' experiences, providing longitudinal reference points to elicit the experience and reflections from the participants which are then subject to systematic data analysis adopting the general inductive approach.

Having set out the methodological approach, the next section describes the research design and strategy adopted.

### **3.03 Research Design & Strategy**

The research design describes the ways which data will be collected and analysed in order to meet the aim of the research and so provide a framework for undertaking the research, Bryman (2008 p32). The purpose of the research methodology is to outline the process of enquiry and investigation which will set out a systematic and logical process appropriate for the research question and



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to meet the aims and objectives of the research proposal (Naoum 1998). Le Compte (1994 p160) states that *'qualitative research design, [places] the emphasis on description, on recording the flow of experience from the participant's point of view is the epitome of empirical inquiry'*. It addresses the question, what is happening here? It provides the information that makes it possible to proceed to the issues of how these things happen, why they happen and to what end? This approach relates to the central question of this investigation, what happens 'inside', within, successful and unsuccessful (cases of) mentoring relationships?

The literature review of the subject domain, mentoring and mentoring relationships, identified potential areas for investigation and exploration and provided background to the semi-structured interview questions for data collection. The specific investigation is related to a specific circumstance, into which detailed examination is made. The method utilised to generate the raw data, to enable the investigation into the *reality* associated within the phenomenon, is via semi-structured interviews undertaken longitudinally. The purpose was to gain more in-depth knowledge and understanding at different points in time. The reason for the semi-structured nature of the interview is to allow the interviewer to explore areas in greater depth without being overly prescriptive. This allows greater flexibility to explore phenomenon which might be unexpected and unpredictable from the outset.

The analytical process is associated with the general inductive approach, categorising and drawing information into themes through an iterative, interpretive process enabling sense-making.

There are a number of key characteristics which emerge from the literature in relation to qualitative data analysis which are taken into account within this research design and strategy, as identified by Zhang (2009), Denzin (2005), and Silverman (2000). These may be described in the sense that the process and method is: transparent and reliable, the participant population identified is considered to be representative, clarity is provided as to the process of data collection and the method by which the data is recorded, the method of data

management and data reduction is conveyed, the criteria for data selection is described, and consideration of reflexivity (in this case methodological reflexivity) on the process is acknowledged.

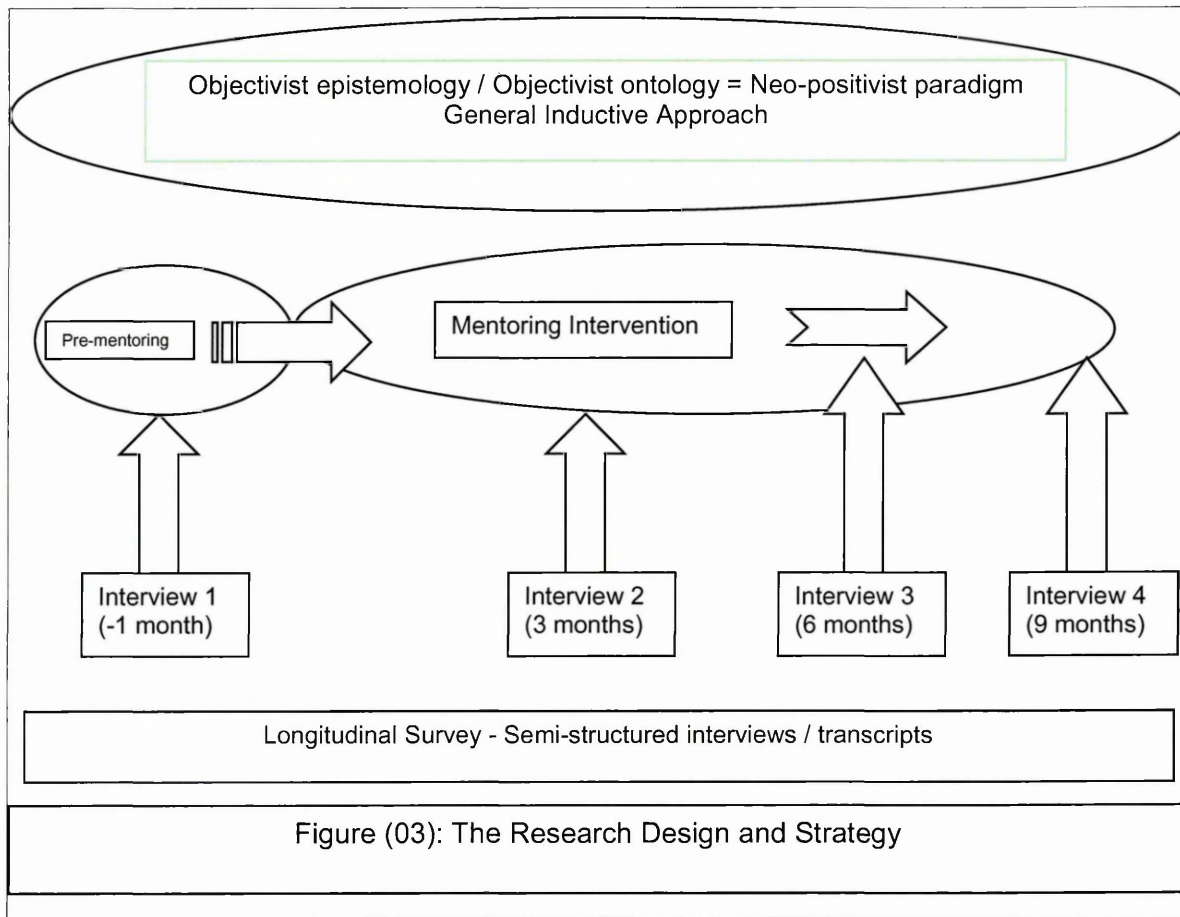
Central to the research design and strategy is the verification strategy for establishing reliability and validity. Morse et al (2002 p18) outlines the importance of ensuring that verification strategies are explicit within the undertaking of the research inquiry and should include: *activities such as ensuring methodological coherence, sampling sufficiency, developing a dynamic relationship between sampling, data collection and analysis, thinking theoretically, and theory development* and conclude that, *together, these verification strategies incrementally and interactively contribute to and build reliability and validity, thus ensuring rigor*. These aspects are now considered since they have implications for how the research is undertaken and described. Methodological coherence is maintained throughout this investigation through providing consistency between the research aim and the components of the method. Morse (2002 p18) argues that, *the interdependence of qualitative research demands that the question match the method, which matches the data and the analytic procedures. As the research unfolds, the process may not be linear. Data may demand to be treated differently*. In this research the data is consistently referred back to the research aim and objectives, and the inductive iterative approach requires analytical sense making which resulted in the development of illustrative models, in this case; thematic development, mapping of relationship building and the development of a relationship building framework to convey the process of analysis, these were not predetermined but emergent from the data. The question of *sample sufficiency*, in this study, relates to the appropriateness of the participants and their knowledge, through their experiences of the mentoring process in representing the research topic and the range of potential outcomes from the mentoring intervention. The outcomes presented examples, cases of both successful and unsuccessful mentoring relationship building and a rich data set providing both depth and quality. The saturation of data ensured replication in categories, typologies and the replication verifies and ensures comprehension and completeness.

The process of *developing a dynamic relationship between sampling, data collection and analysis*, was achieved through an iterative process, undertaking an initial analysis of the data as it was derived from the interview transcripts on an ongoing basis to inform subsequent rounds of questioning. Morse (2002), suggests that this pacing and the iterative interaction between data and analysis is the essence of attaining reliability and validity. Establishing validity and reliability occurred when repetition from the emerging data was reconfirmed in new data; in this instance the participants' experiences and the associated building of their relationships. This consistency provided the opportunity to develop a theoretical basis and present new ideas which contribute to knowledge and understanding.

The methods, therefore, comprise a detailed literature review to ensure an understanding of the current body of knowledge and a longitudinal exploratory series of semi-structured interviews, aiming to find out what is happening; to seek insights and to access the phenomenon. The nature of the research philosophy has guided the study towards an inductive research approach, whereby a fundamental part of the study is to gain an understanding of individuals' experiences and perceptions of the mentoring process thereby providing insight to mentoring relationship building.

The participants (academics / lecturing staff), all volunteers, made up 11 mentor-mentee pairings (cases) from across the University. A simple gap analysis was undertaken matching the mentors, who were identified as being more experienced in specific research areas, with the mentees wishing to develop complementary aspects. The mentoring scheme, the participant sample population and matching process are described further in this chapter. The participants were interviewed on 4 occasions: prior to the mentoring intervention, **Interview 1**, (-1 month); **Interview 2**, (+3 months); **Interview 3**, (+6 months); **Interview 4**, (+9 months). It was considered that this approach would provide the necessary depth and breadth of information, data, to enable a detailed analysis to conclude meaningful insight to establish what happens within mentoring relationships and whether distinguishing features, characteristics and traits which differentiate successful and unsuccessful relationships can be

identified. Understanding these determinants is the focus of this research. The model, Figure (03), illustrates the research design and strategy.



The data is qualitative, based upon views and perceptions of the participant's experience. There is an interaction between the researcher and subject which is minimised through remote interviewing. The relationship between theory/concepts and research will be emergent and iterative. These are the characteristics of inductive, qualitative research and reflect the descriptors identified by Bryman (2008), Thomas (2006) and Naoum (1998).

Having identified the research design and strategy the next section introduces the mentoring scheme which is the vehicle to enable the mentoring relationships to be investigated.



### **3.04 The Mentoring Scheme**

This section describes the mentoring scheme which was used as the vehicle for this research investigation into investigating what happens 'inside' mentoring relationships. The mentoring scheme was introduced by the University to provide support and guidance to academic / lecturing staff interested in developing their research. The aim for the University was to focus on bringing academics together from across the institution such that more experienced researchers (mentors) could support and guide less experienced academics (mentees) wishing to develop and enhance their research skills, competences and knowledge.

The scheme was initiated by the University's Centre for Personal Learning and Development (CPLD). This research focuses on studying the mentor and mentee relationships within the scheme. The University did not have a formal mentoring programme which was considered advantageous to this research investigation since the participants would be less likely to carry experiences from previous schemes which may have influenced their responses. The Higher Education context within which the research is undertaken is important in terms of providing context to this study but is considered purely as a vehicle to enable the primary focus of this investigation which relates to understanding what happens within mentoring relationships and whether distinguishing features, characteristics and traits which differentiate successful and unsuccessful relationships can be identified.

The initial discussions to consider the proposal for implementing a scheme mentoring took place with the management team on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2011 and subsequent meetings on the 14<sup>th</sup> March, 7<sup>th</sup> April, 21<sup>st</sup> April and 19<sup>th</sup> May 2011. I was an observer to these initial concept discussions and deliberations as the scheme was framed and developed. I recorded these meetings with the permission of the parties involved. This proved useful in gaining understanding and provided contextual information in relation to the project. The scheme was developed and introduced by the University and was rolled out in October 2011. The programme commenced with an introductory half-day session to set the context for the scheme to the participants and provided basic information. There

are ethical reasons for this, as well as good practice, since it is possible for a mentoring process to be damaging to those involved if the intervention is not clearly structured, (Garvey 2009). The project owners comprised an academic member of staff and a member of CPLD.

I chose, as part of my research method, not to attend the introductory session as I was aware that my presence may have influence over the attendees and wanted to remain at a distance. The rationale for this being that I am very aware of the potential bias related to researcher interaction and I wanted to remain in the background and be objective in accordance with the interpretive approach which has been adopted (Johnson & Clark 2006). The participants were informed that I would be contacting them over the period of the mentoring intervention to undertake semi-structured telephone interviews over the length of the programme and that it was voluntary for them to participate. Once the initial programme was setup there is very little involvement of the project owners as the mentors and mentees managed their own meetings and interactions.

The project owners considered that the scheme would run for approximately six months from inception to completion, such that there was as perceived end-point but realised that some mentees may want support for a more limited or extended period dependent upon their needs.

Having outlined the mentoring scheme, the next section describes the participants.

### **3.05 Mentors and Mentees: Participants**

This section describes the participant population, identifies that they volunteered to be part of the scheme, and outlines their roles in the organisation, gender and age range. The matching process is described and the pairings identified which form the cases for this research investigation.

The participants, all volunteers, made up 11 mentor-mentee pairings (cases) from across the University. These pairings provided the focus of the

investigation, each representing a case for study (unit of analysis). A simple gap analysis was undertaken matching the mentors, who were identified as being more experienced in specific research areas, with the mentees wishing to develop complementary aspects. To re-emphasise, this research investigation is to explore mentoring relationship building and develop our understanding of what happens within mentoring relationships.

The matching process of mentors with mentees is highlighted as a critical factor in formal mentoring programmes (Cox 2005). The volunteers were asked to identify three areas of expertise and three areas where they considered they would like support and guidance. The outcome was a paper based matching process undertaken by the project owners, looking simply at a gap analysis, matching more experienced academics with less experienced in particular areas where the mentee had themselves identified gaps. This exercise resulted in eleven mentor / mentee pairings (cases).

It should be noted that none of the pairings were from the same School and therefore all the relationships were off-line, meaning that there was no line management connection or association. There were ten women and twelve men in the pairings, four women were mentors, and there were three women pairings, three men pairings, one pairing where the woman is the mentor in a mixed pairing and four pairing where the man is the mentor in a mixed pairing. The sample population was balanced in terms of participant experience, gender, time in education and role and responsibility within the organisation. The sample was of sufficient size to develop a meaningful set of data and allowing for any pairings to dissolve over the course of the study. *Sample sufficiency*, in this study, relates to the appropriateness of the participants and their knowledge, through their experiences of the mentoring process in representing the research topic and the range of potential outcomes from the mentoring intervention. I observed the pairing process to gain understanding and context but had no influence over the process.

The mentor and mentee pairs are highlighted in Table 06, (page 63), these pairings ultimately represent the cases for analysis. The table identifies the

pairings (**P1, P2, P3..... P11**). The mentors and mentees are identified by a number to provide anonymity for the participants i.e. **Mentor 1, Mentee 2, Mentor 3...** the mentoring pairs which form the relationships are therefore, **M1 / M2, M3 / M4, M5 / M6.....M21 / M22**, the mentors being the odd numbers and the mentees even. The table further identifies the participants; gender, age range, length of time in the organisation and their main role and responsibility within the organisation. The first column also gives an early indication of how the mentoring relationships ultimately built overtime, following detailed analysis. Relationships which built progressively through the phases / stages of the mentoring process, those which faltered, those which failed and terminated – this research labels these as: Progressive, Flat-lining, Break-down (respectively). These classifications and typology are explained fully through the analysis.

The participant's experience of mentoring and their understanding of the mentoring process are examined further in the data analysis of the cases, since these aspects may represent contributory factors, determinants, which support the building of the mentoring relationships.



**Table (06): Mentoring Relationship Matched Pairings (units of analysis)**

Pairing / cases Reference (P)	Mentor/ Mentee Reference (M)	Mentor/ Mentee	Gender F/M	Age	Time in organisation	Main role and responsibility
P1	M1	Mentor	F	40-49	19	Professor
Progressive	M2	Mentee	F	30-39	5	Senior Lecturer
P2	M3	Mentor	M	40-49	23	Professor
Progressive	M4	Mentee	M	40-49	7	Senior Lecturer
P3	M5	Mentor	F	50-59	14	Principal Lecturer
Break-down	M6	Mentee	M	40-49	6	Senior Lecturer
P4	M7	Mentor	M	40-49	6	Principal Lecturer
Progressive	M8	Mentee	F	40-49	2	Senior Lecturer
P5	M9	Mentor	M	50-59	15	Principal Lecturer
Break-down	M10	Mentee	M	60+	3	Senior Lecturer
P6	M11	Mentor	M	50-59	4	Professor
Progressive	M12	Mentee	M	40-49	2	Senior Lecturer
P7	M13	Mentor	F	40-49	12	Reader
Flat-lining	M14	Mentee	F	40-49	10	Principal Lecturer
P8	M15	Mentor	M	40-49	20	Reader
Progressive	M16	Mentee	F	40-49	12	Principal Lecturer
P9	M17	Mentor	M	40-49	17	Professor
Withdrew	M18	Mentee	F	40-49	16	Senior Lecturer
P10	M19	Mentor	F	50-59	21	Professor
Break-down	M20	Mentee	F	50-59	14	Principal Lecturer
P11	M21	Mentor	M	40-49	17	Professor
Flat-lining	M22	Mentee	F	40-49	15	Principal Lecturer

The mentor group comprised of more experienced researchers and included professors and readers. The mentee group was comprised mainly of senior and principal lecturers. There were a broad range of research development needs identified by the mentees which included: understanding appropriate methodologies and methods, support in writing, analysing data, bidding for funding. The population sample is considered to be representative of what one might expect within Higher Education in terms of experience, gender, age and main role and responsibility within the organisation. The sample size, eleven pairings (cases), was considered to be appropriate to enable sufficient insight to be gained through the research to establish meaningful findings. Even if some of the mentors or mentees did drop-out of the mentoring programme and their relationships falter, understanding the reasons why the relationships might be terminated was considered to be an important element of the investigation.

Having identified the participant population the next section outlines the rationale for the longitudinal approach to data collection.

### **3.06 Why Longitudinal Investigation?**

This section outlines the rationale for using a longitudinal approach to gather data which was captured *live* and not retrospectively overtime. The use of longitudinal designs as a research method permits exploration of phenomena which develop over time such as learning and adaptation, Gill (2002 p86), and it therefore is seen as appropriate to gain insight into the mentoring relationships as they progress overtime. Clutterbuck in Garvey (2009 p29 & 51), identifies a scarcity of longitudinal studies in mentoring. The *live* dimension to the data gathering means that the experiences expressed are those that the interviewees are feeling at that moment in time and are therefore not reflections on past events or speculations about the future. This is an important aspect of this research, gaining insight at differing points in time as the mentoring relationships build. The aim of the research is to investigate what happens within mentoring relationships and whether distinguishing features, characteristics and traits which differentiate successful and unsuccessful

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relationships can be identified. It is based on the participant's perceptions of their relationship and how they experience the interaction.

The longitudinal approach was designed to capture data at four points in the mentoring process from each participant to enable insight into each of the mentoring relationships, these points in time may be described as: prior to the mentoring intervention (-1 month), +3 months, +6 months and +9 months at the end of the mentoring when the programme was due to complete. Each mentoring relationship (pairing – case) will be analysed and mapped through the mentoring process as the relationships develop.

Having identified the rationale for the longitudinal approach to the investigation the next section outlines ethical considerations, protocols and anonymity.

### **3.07 Ethics, Protocols and Anonymity**

This section outlines the approach to ethical issues, protocols and participant anonymity.

Research ethics are an important consideration for this study and great care has been taken to protect the participants engaged in this study. At the research proposal stage a research ethics submission was made to the research ethics committee of the examining University for consideration and approval prior to the commencement of the research outlining the scope of the research and the engagement of the participants. To protect the participants the following considerations have been incorporated into the research design: that the participants were free not to participate; that they could withdraw at any time; that the participants were provided with prior information as to the nature of the study and the purpose and aim of the research; that the participants provided written consent to participate; that confidentiality was assured; anonymity is maintained throughout the reporting of the research findings. Prior to the commencement of the research I wrote to each mentor and mentee requesting their consent to take part in the study which I referred to as a *participation agreement*. I also drew reference to the point that the interviews would be

recorded and transcribed to enable data analysis. The participants volunteered to take part in the pilot mentoring scheme and those that gave their consent, 21 in total, are included in the study. To note, one of the mentors declined involvement in the study as he was concerned about the time commitment. I outlined the purpose and nature of the research and that I would ensure anonymity in presenting the results. Since the number of respondents is relatively small in number there was the possibility that individuals may be identified. Each mentor and mentee is therefore assigned a number reference and all personal data which could identify a participant has been omitted from the written analysis and findings.

Having outlined the approach to ethical issues, protocols and anonymity the next section considers methodological reflexivity in order to describe the potential influence on the process of data gathering and interpretation of the data by the researcher and how these have been mitigated.

### **3.08 Methodological Reflexivity**

This section considers methodological reflexivity (Johnson & Duberley 2003), in other words, consideration as to how I may potentially limit my influence in the process of data collection, data reduction and data analysis. In undertaking this investigation I am in a position to separate from the participants' perceptions about their relationship during the data collection although it could be argued that there is a degree of reflexivity in the methodological approach. The knower and the known (Johnson & Duberley, 2003) are essentially separated and thus the researcher was considerate of the need to minimise influence over the participants' views.

However, I recognise that in this type of research the manner in which the research is undertaken will have *values* which will be imposed on the research by the researcher. Alvesson (2009 p273) outlines four critical areas to be considered: the interaction with the empirical material accounts in interviews; interpretation of the underlying meaning; critical interpretation in relation to ideology, power and social reproduction; reflection on text, selectivity of voices



represented in the text. It is also recognised that the researcher may have an impact on the social situation under investigation. These areas are taken into account through adopting the general inductive approach, systematic clarity and presenting the data openly and transparently.

A limitation on any research of this nature is acknowledged through reflexivity and potential researcher bias. My own experience of mentoring has been positive, both as a mentor and mentee and therefore there is a potential that this personal bias may have influence on aspects in undertaking the research. Being aware of this I have tried to mitigate this influence, by for example, basing the interview questions on issues derived from contemporary literature, but I am aware that I select the literature to reinforce the arguments. My influence on the research is clear since, I formulated the interview questions; I present them in a particular order to the participants. I encourage the participants to develop their answers on particular points that they raise during the interview. I interpret the findings and select particular quotations to make the case and develop the discussion. I have influence over the participants by engaging them in conversation about their experiences, without my intervention they would not have been thinking about the particular issues I was raising with them at that point in time.

I chose to conduct the interviews over the phone so as to reduce the personal physical interaction of the interviewer and interviewee, mindful that I was senior in the organisation to the participants and to concentrate on the questions and answers relating to the participants experiences. This reinforced my objective approach. This was the only point of contact I had with the interviewees during the information gathering process. The physical space from which the interviewees chose to answer the questions was down to them, where they felt more comfortable. This was an attempt to reduce location environment bias.

I was mindful of the importance of undertaking a rigorous and methodical approach to data analysis working systematically through the interview transcripts and cases identifying emergent themes and sub-themes and

grouping the responses to identify consensus and divergence. I realise that even with the most rigorous and transparent of processes bias can creep in.

I acknowledge this situational reflexivity as the interaction of myself on the respondents may have a bearing on the outcomes. I am aware of these aspects in determining the appropriate methodology and the potential impact on data analysis and derived conclusions. To reduce my influence, the data has been rigorously analysed following the process discussed by Thomas (2006) and the method and process is made transparent within this thesis, with an emphasis on presenting the participant's 'voice', through extensive use of quotations within the data analysis.

Having highlighted potential methodological reflexivity the next section illustrates the process of data collection, data management and data analysis in the form of a flow diagram, prior to describing the process and methods in detail.

### **3.09 Data: Collection, Management and Analysis Flowchart**

This section provides a flowchart, Figure (04) on pages 72-73, to guide the reader through the stages of the data collection, data management and data analysis adopted for this research investigation. The flowchart outlines the sequence of data collection and analysis presenting transparency of process. The method by which data is collected, managed and analysed is described and examples given in the next sections in this chapter. The following Chapter 4: Data Analysis, provides the in-depth analysis of the mentoring relationships (cases) which are clustered into three similar types: **progressive, flat-lining, break-down**.

To reiterate, the central argument of the thesis to be explored is that there are potentially key characteristics within dyadic mentoring relationships which may be identified and considered as determinants and contributory factors which influence the success or otherwise of the intervention. The aim is to determine traits and characteristics which contribute to successful mentoring relationship

development and outcomes and conversely factors which may inhibit the process. Through following the mentor-mentee relationship pairings over time, longitudinally, the aim is to identify if there are factors which influence relationship development and thus provide insight into what happens inside successful and unsuccessful relationships.

The data was collected via semi-structured interviews undertaken with each participant at four points in time, longitudinally, over the period of the mentoring intervention. The output is a set of interview transcripts which represent the raw data to be analysed.

The data was analysed from two perspectives; the first to develop a theoretical conceptual framework to gain insight into emerging themes which influence mentoring relationship building and secondly to consider how each of the relationships built over time to understand why the relationships developed the way they did to analyse the determinants, characteristic and traits which may lead to successful mentoring relationship building or otherwise.

### **Developing a Theoretical Framework (from which to effectively analyse mentoring relationship building)**

**Objective 1** of this research investigation is to:

**Identify** characteristics, traits and determinants within a mentoring relationship which may influence relationship building.

**Objective 2** of this research is to:

**Develop** a conceptual framework to gain understanding of the process of mentoring relationship building.

This stage involved the thematic examination of the raw qualitative data through a process of open coding and labelling words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs within the transcripts and ultimately identifying those aspects which

related to mentoring relationships and mentoring relationship building. The principal objective was to gain an understanding of what is going on, what the participants are saying about their experiences within their mentoring relationship and interpreting these to provide analytical sense-making. A systematic method of analysis, the *general inductive approach* (following Thomas 2006) was adopted; the process of open coding generated a large number of codes, these were further reduced and collated by grouping into axial codes and themes emerged. The descriptions assigned to the themes are more analytic to enable interpretation of the phenomena and allow connections to be made within the data and to gain an understanding of what is emerging from the data. The emergent themes have been labelled by this research as: **perspicacity, capacity, modus operandi, ingredients**. The coding method is inductive and iterative and these aspects are further developed in this chapter and fully explored for each of the mentoring relationships in Chapter 4, Data Analysis.

#### **Analysis of how successfully the mentoring relationships built over time**

This analysis was to meet **Objective 3** of this research investigation which is to: **Analyse** the 'lived' experience of each mentoring relationship pair (case) over time to determine how successfully the relationships built.

This process involved analysing the transcripts of each mentoring pairing (case) and assigning a code / label which indicated how the relationship was building over time. An example of this process is provided within this chapter and all eleven cases are presented in detail within the following chapter, Chapter 4, Data Analysis. To support the analysis of each relationship pairing a simple relationship mapping template was devised to map each relationship longitudinally, with the purpose of illustrating how the mentoring relationships built and developed over time. There was not an attempt at this point to analyse why, this came later within the full data analysis of each mentoring relationship. This process resulted in the identification of different types of relationships, those which developed successfully, those which faltered and those which failed to build and terminated.



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## **Emerging Typology**

**Objective 3** of this research investigation is to: present a typology of mentoring relationships. The outcome, presented in the data analysis of each case, Chapter 4, presents a typology of three classifications, representing clusters of types of relationship which follow a similar pattern:

1. Relationships which build progressively through the phases of the mentoring process;
2. Those which falter;
3. Those which failed and were terminated

This research labels these as: **progressive, flat-lining, break-down**, respectively. These are fully explained and analysed in the next chapter, Data Analysis, where each mentoring relationship (case) is analysed in detail.

By gaining insight into the determinants which influence mentoring relationship building the outcomes may contribute to our knowledge and understanding which may inform future mentoring scheme design and implementation. These are considered in Chapter 5, Findings and Conclusions and Chapter 6, Contribution to Professional Knowledge and Practice.

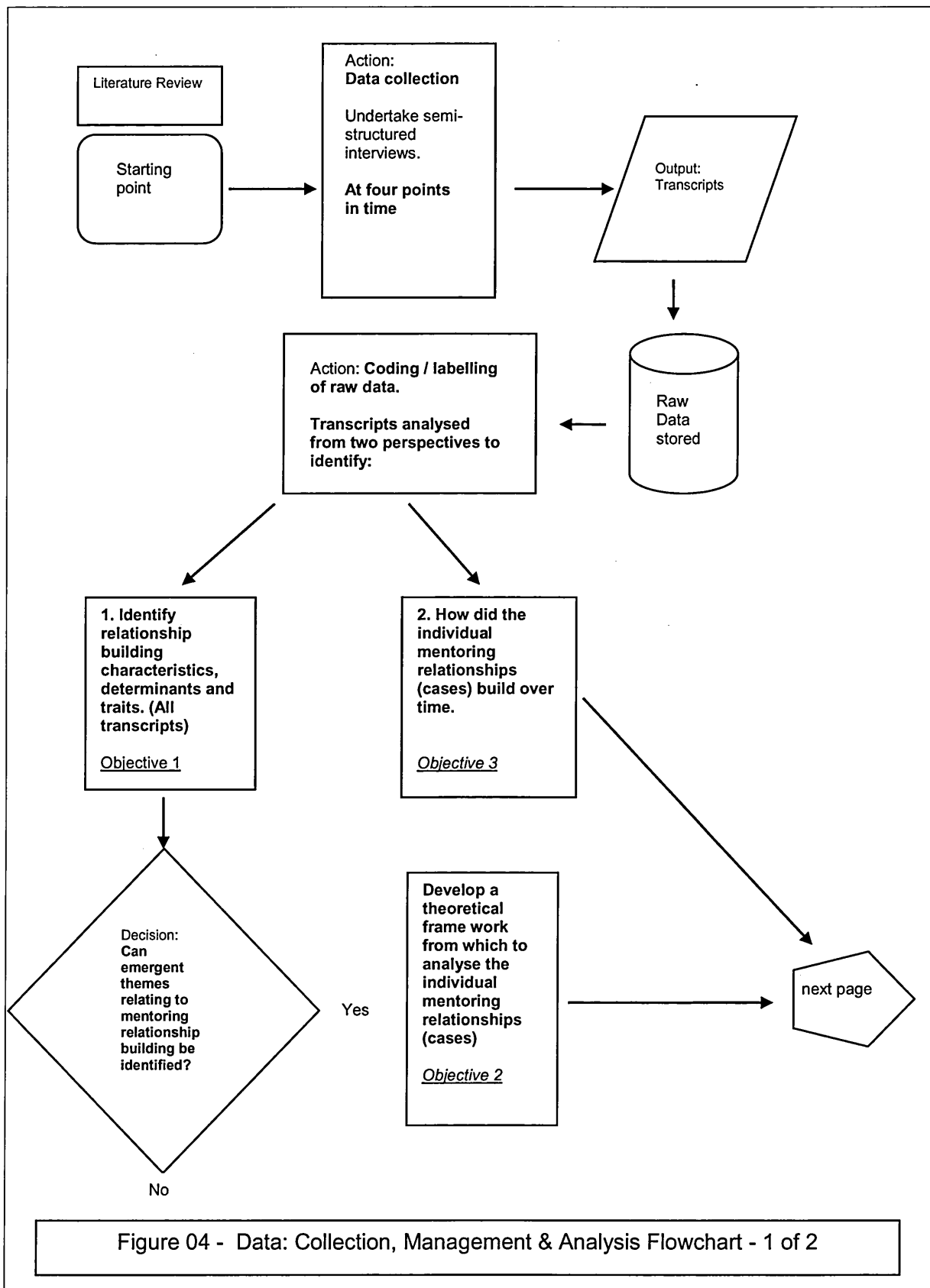
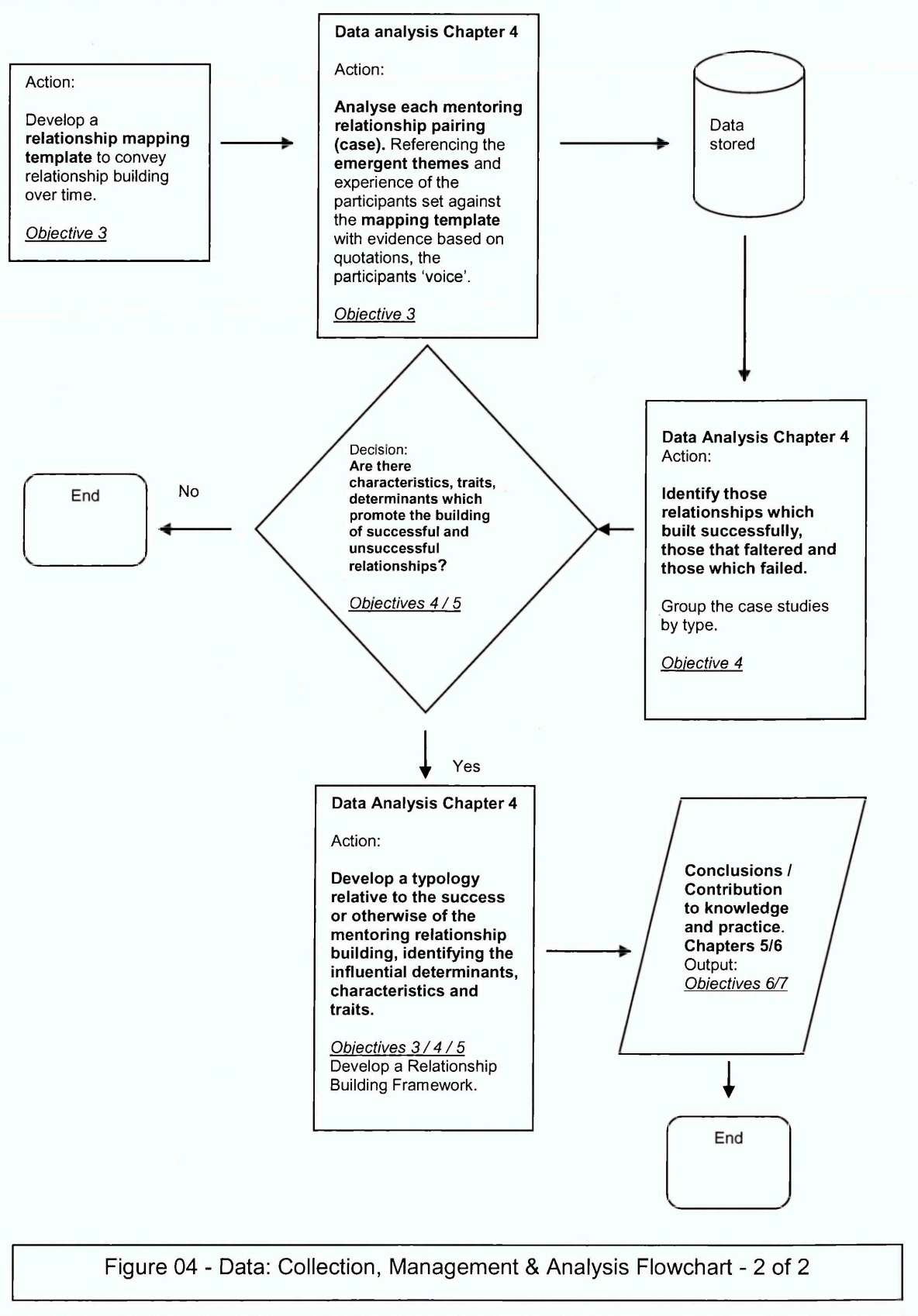


Figure 04 - Data: Collection, Management & Analysis Flowchart - 1 of 2



### **3.10 Method of Data Collection**

The previous sections have described: the methodological approach, the research methodology and design; the mentoring scheme; identified the participants; the longitudinal nature of the study; ethical issues and protocols; methodological reflexivity; a flowchart to illustrate the stages of the data collection, management and analysis.

This section outlines the process and method of data collection and how the semi-structured interviews were constructed and undertaken to gather the data at four points in time, longitudinally, from each participant. Hennick (2010 p2) describes the primary focus of applied research as collecting and generating data to further our understanding of real-world issues.

The interviews are semi-structured in their format and are designed to have a core of repetitive questions to be asked at different points in time, so that any changes in the interviewees' responses as relationships build can be considered and mapped longitudinally. The questions reflect the research aim and objectives and complement key themes derived from the literature review. Interviews remain the most common data collection method in generating qualitative data and are a familiar and flexible way of asking people about their opinions and experiences, (Moriarty 2011 p8).

I piloted the semi-structured questionnaire prior to undertaking the actual interviews, as suggested by Naoum (1998), to gauge the level of response and to gain an understanding of the time required to undertake each interview. I made amendments to the initial questions as it appeared that I was asking too much.

The initial interview (pre-mentoring, -1 month) commenced with a standard statement setting out the purpose and rationale for the interviews and confirming that the information was to be treated with strict confidentiality and anonymity. The purpose here was to encourage the interviewee to be more open with their responses and protect them against any repercussions



associated with any comments they may make. This was thought to be of particular importance since the participants are in a relationship with another colleague and any negative comments about their partner or indeed the organisation which could be attributed to an individual could have adverse repercussions. The interviewees were informed that the interviews were to be digitally recorded so that transcripts could be produced thereby generating the raw data from which the data analysis is undertaken. Clearly if the interviewee objected to the interview being recorded then notes of their responses would be taken, but their comments would not be so accurately recorded for analytical purposes.

The semi-structured interviews were formatted as an aide-memoire to provide consistency in the approach and are outlined in Appendix A. The open questions, informed by generic themes from the literature review were focussed on gaining an insight into how the mentoring relationships were developing at each point in time and included for example:

- How is the mentoring progressing?
- Which aspects are working well and why?
- Which aspects are not working so well and why?
- How would you describe your relationship?
- What aspects are you exploring in the process?
- What are your perceptions of the process?

The sequencing provides the opportunity to capture the fluid nature of the mentoring process and mentoring relationship building. At each of the stages there is an open question, *'Is there anything else you would like to add?'* to capture additional information the participants may wish to convey which had not been covered within the interview. Since the interviews were conducted in conversation there were opportunities to explore additional aspects which the interviewee might refer to and provide an additional line of questioning to gain greater insight into the mentoring relationship. As the interviews were concluded an initial analysis of the transcripts provided an indication of the richness and

relevance of the data to meet the aim of the research and informed subsequent rounds of questioning.

The four points of interview are now described:

**Interview 1:** pre-mentoring (-1 month) interviews were aimed at gathering data with regard to: the participants' views as to the learning culture within the organisation, previous experience of mentoring, understanding of the mentoring process, their potential role in the process, feelings prior to undertaking the programme, what they perceived as positive and negative aspects of mentoring, what they hoped to benefit from the process.

**Interview 2:** +3 months interviews were aimed at gathering data with regard to: the participants' views as to how they perceived progress and engagement, relationship development and interaction, aspects that were working well, aspects not working well, their feelings, mentor benefits, mentee outcomes.

**Interview 3:** +6 months interviews were aimed at gathering data with regard: the participants' views as how they perceived progress and engagement, relationship development and interaction, aspects that had worked well, aspects that had not worked so well, mentor benefits, mentee outcomes, views on the scheme overall.

**Interview 4:** final interviews, +9 months, were aimed at establishing the participants' views on the mentoring programme overall and their experience of engaging in mentoring relationships.

The interviews were conducted via telephone because as a senior member of staff I wanted to minimise my personal influence on the participants and partly for convenience for both parties, but principally to reduce distractions so as to concentrate on the questions and be objective. This proposal was considered appropriate since it overcame the issue as to where the interviews would take place and it reduced the potential of transference and counter-transference between the interviewer and the interviewee. In this type of research it is

important to be aware that respondents providing qualitative data are responding at a particular point in time, hence the longitudinal study approach, but their responses reflect potential bias based on their own realities and experiences. Respondents will have their own views and bias which they bring with them in answering the questions, Sekaran (2000).

### **Administering the interviews**

I wrote to each mentor and mentee outlining the purpose of the research and invited them to participate in the longitudinal study, assuring anonymity and the voluntary nature of their participation in the research and requested their permission for the interviews to be recorded. I undertook the pre-mentoring (-1 month) interviews at the start of November 2011, the +3 months interviews in February and March 2012, the +6 months interviews in June and July 2012 and the +9 months interviews in October and November 2012. By this time a number of relationships had completed, flourished or floundered and some were still ongoing. The interview log, showing the dates of the interviews is provided in Appendix B. The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed into Microsoft word files. This allowed me to immerse myself in the data, listening back to the interviews and repeating sections to gain a full understanding and hear the participant's 'voice'. Of the potential 88 interviews a total of 67 interviews were undertaken. The reduced number are accounted for since one participant did not wish to be interviewed, one left the organisation and one withdrew due to ill-health. A couple of relationships terminated prematurely and an analysis of these is included in the data analysis to understand what happened within these relationships.

Having described the process of gathering data longitudinally via semi-structured telephone interviews, the next step in the process was to start the process of data analysis, data reduction and interpretation.

### 3.11 General Inductive Approach and Data Analysis

The previous section described the method of data collection. This section explains the process and method by which the qualitative raw data is reduced and analysed, interpreted and transformed to provide a theoretical and conceptual framework, utilising the *general inductive approach*.

At the forefront of the method is the primary focus and aim of this investigation which relates to gaining an understanding of what happens within mentoring relationships and whether distinguishing features, characteristics and traits, which may be seen as determinants, can be identified to differentiate successful and unsuccessful relationships. The study, therefore, ultimately is concentrated on the pairings, which represent individual cases, eleven in total.

The first stage of analysis involved analysing all the data sets with the purpose of establishing themes and gain a theoretical conceptual understanding from which to analyse and investigate each of the mentoring relationship (cases). This research has labelled these themes as: **Perspicality** (participant understanding and insight); **Capacity** (ability to undertake the role of mentor / mentee); **Modus operandi** (approach, praxis); **Ingredients** (characteristics, factors). This Chapter establishes how these have been derived.

To further gain a full and complete understanding of the data the individual relationships (cases of) were analysed initially to assess how the relationships had built over time in order to differentiate those relationships which: build progressively through the phases of the mentoring process; those which falter; those which fail and were terminated. This research has labelled these as: **progressive; flat-lining; break-down**. To aid the process a simple **relationship mapping template** has been devised to simulate, for illustrative purposes, how the relationships built over time set against the simplified key indicators of relationship progression which are presented as codes/labels. The next chapter, Chapter 4: Data Analysis, presents the full data analysis of each of the mentoring relationships (units of analysis).



To reach the point by which the relationships could be effectively analysed required a process of analytical sense-making of the raw data through undertaking the general inductive method, informed by Strauss (1998), Thomas (2006), Gibbs (2007). This process is now described in detail.

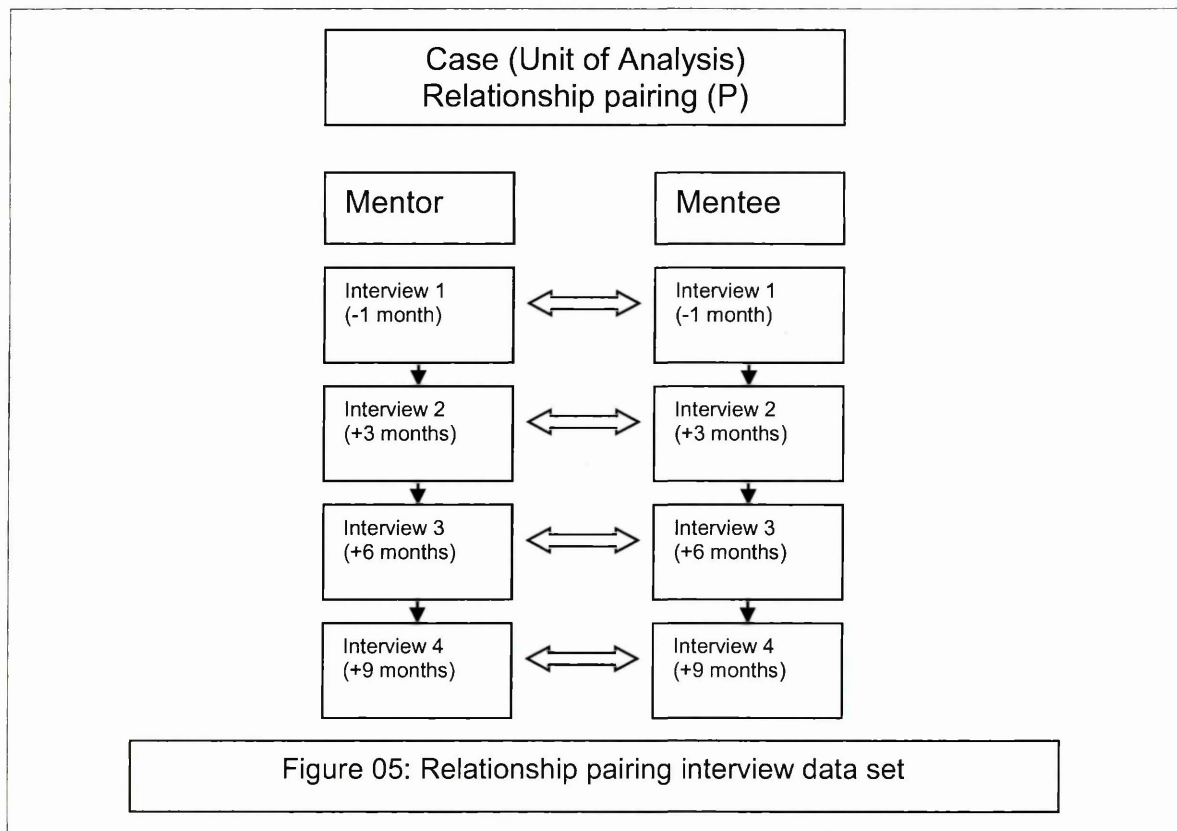
Thomas (2006) describes a general inductive approach to data analysis which has been adopted for this investigation. The initial stage of the process is familiarisation of the text, identifying specific text segments related to the research objectives, labelling the segments to enable themes and factors to emerge. Miles (1994) describes data reduction as a process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data that appears in transcriptions.

The 67 interview transcripts covering the four interview points: pre-mentoring (-1 month) and at points, +3, +6 and +9 months into the mentoring process, presented a body of rich data.

I knew from the outset that the volume of the data was going to be significantly large so I decided to approach the management of the data in stages. To aid the process the respondents were identified by a number to provide anonymity for the participants i.e. Mentor 1, Mentee 2, Mentor 3...became M1, M2, M3, and the mentoring pairs which form the relationships are therefore, M1 / M2, M3 / M4, M5 / M6.....M21 / M22, the mentors being the odd numbers and the mentees even. The pairings (P1, P2, P3..... P11), these pairings ultimately represent the cases for analysis, (as illustrated in Table 06, page 63). This identification was helpful and of primary importance for the latter stages of data analysis when comparing and contrasting the case analysis within and across the pairings. This enabled the quotes from each individual to be readily found.

I transcribed the interviews verbatim as soon as practicable after each interview was conducted. These ultimately presented a data set for each pairing, longitudinally over time, representing both the mentors' and mentees' views as to their experience of the mentoring process and their relationship. The

maximum data set for each pairing was eight interviews as illustrated below, figure 05.



The data was collated based upon the participants' responses whether relevant or not to the objectives of the research, one relating to the mentors comments and one for the mentees comments for each pairing. This resulted in data which could ultimately be labelled, coded and analysed on different levels by: individual participant; relationship pairing; each point of interview; longitudinally over time.

Having created and collated the raw data, the transcripts, for each mentoring relationship, the next stage in the process involved reading through each set of data a number of times in order to gain an in-depth understanding of what the participants were conveying with regard to their experiences and views. A second stage analysis was undertaken to identify and highlight only aspects which appeared relevant to mentoring relationship building. The process involved working through each transcript input, line by line, highlighting

sentences and paragraphs which identified a range of aspects relating to relationship building and these were given a descriptive label. This data was considered for each case study highlighting the participants experience within their relationship which would lead to the differentiation of more successful and less successful mentoring relationships.

### **3.12 Approach to Transcript Analysis**

The transcripts were analysed from two perspectives, firstly to **derive a theoretical conceptual framework** in order to make sense of the data and provide a basis from which to interpret the mentoring relationships to establish emergent themes and the secondly to analyse how each of the relationships built overtime aided by devising a **relationship mapping template**.

### **3.13 Deriving a theoretical conceptual framework**

This section describes and illustrates the process by which the theoretical and conceptual framework was developed to aid sense-making of what happens within individual mentoring relationships. Objective 1 of this research investigation is to: **Identify** characteristics, traits and determinants within a mentoring relationship which influence relationship building and Objective 2, **Develop** a conceptual framework to gain understanding of the process of mentoring relationship building.

The focus of the analysis was undertaken across all the data sets derived from the interview transcripts with the purpose to identifying and drawing out a broad range of relationship influencing factors and determinants which were consolidated into clusters and ultimately into themes to inform analysis of the cases. This stage involved the thematic examination of the raw qualitative data through a process of open coding and labelling of words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs within the transcripts and ultimately identifying those aspects which related to building mentoring relationships. An example of the initial process is provided below:

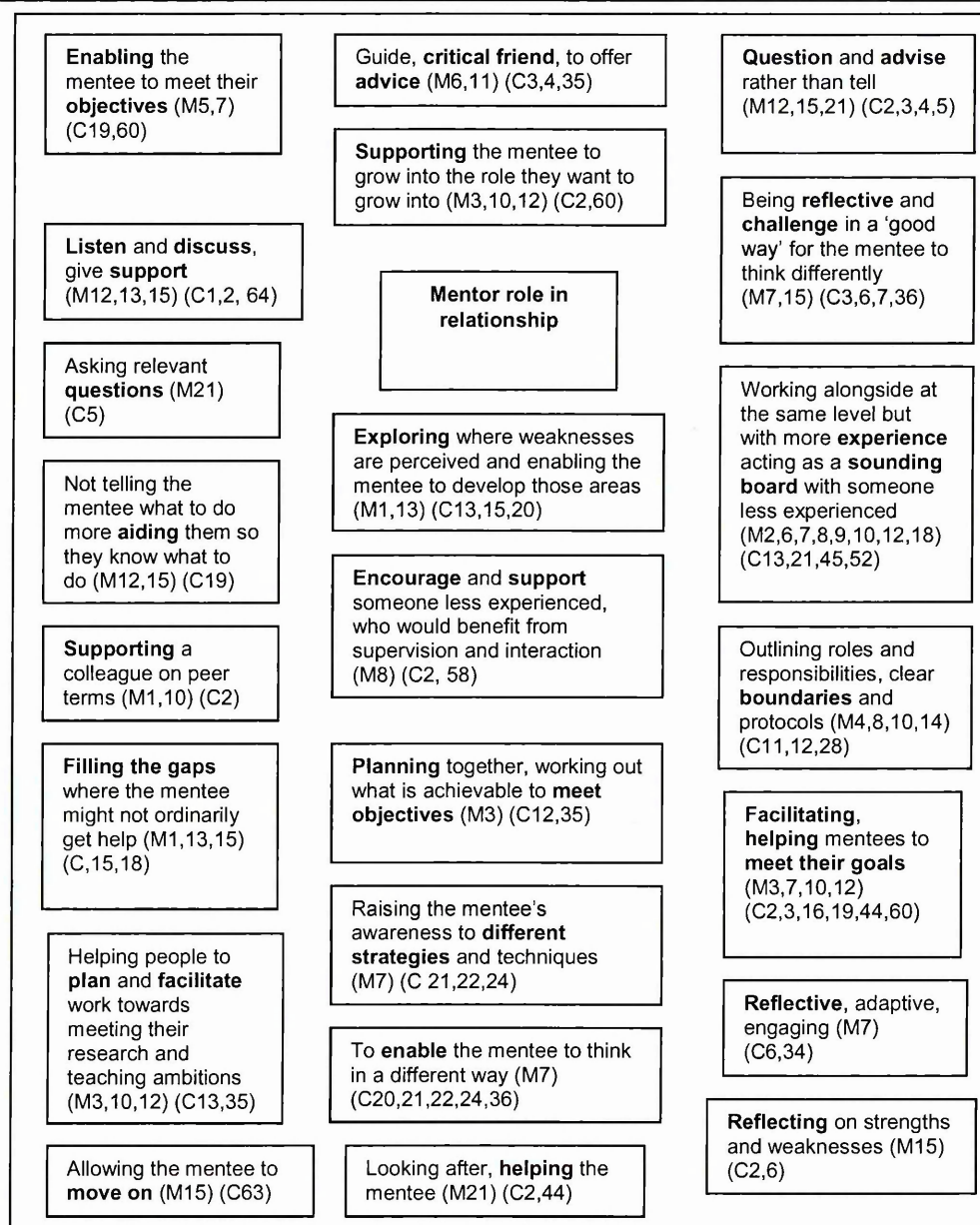
## Examples:

- Within this project it's about supporting a colleague on more peer terms, where the person one is mentoring has pockets of inexperience. Pockets about the formally researching or formally writing up educational research. How this manifests itself for individual people is going to be different.(M1)
- Helping people to facilitate work towards research and teaching ambitions... helping them to develop concrete plans for achieving outcomes... from a less formal point of view it's about sitting down with people and working out what it is they would really like to do and helping them think through plans for meeting those ambitions.(M3)
- Mentoring is using my knowledge base and experiences... I can enable other people to grow into the role they want to grow into... in this case pedagogic research... enabling people to further their career in that area.(M5)
- It is someone who is more experienced or knowledgeable in a particular subject domain or methods and who is able to pass on knowledge or encourage and support someone who is a little less experienced and benefit from that sort of supervision.(M7)
- It's facilitative not that directive... being reflective, being adaptive and engaging in reflection. Good mentors are probably those that engage in reflective practice on a regular basis... challenge in a good way for them to think in a different way.(M7)
- If it's all one way from a mentor I'm not sure that is beneficial, there need to be two-way interaction.(M7)
- A mentor to me is like the old folk tales... wise counsel in the corner giving pearls of wisdom... pearls that can be justified, based on experience and academic knowledge, having been there, having been through the process, informed judgement... wisdom sounds pompous but it's wisdom based on experience.(M9)
- To act as a guide, critical friend, to offer advice... but it's different from the teaching role because the mentee needs to drive where they want to be and the mentor then helps them to get there. In the teaching role we start with the end point and try to get the students to reach it, whereas mentees are coming with their own end point and we are then navigating to get there.(M11)
- Very much about supporting, exploring where weaknesses are perceived and helping to support and develop those areas... filling those gaps where you might not ordinarily get help.(M13)
- A process of helping people to reflect, getting people to as accurately as possible reflect where they are, strengths and weaknesses and to move on... it's not a process of telling people what to do, it's a process of aiding them so that they know how to do it... it's like going to the gym, your mentor on the side, you do more with a mentor than if you had gone by yourself.(M15)
- I would be looking after them... where necessary telling them what to do but that would be rare but more often advising them of what to do or sharing my practice with them... but most often asking them relevant questions... so it's close personal management.(M21)

The *general inductive approach* (Thomas 2006) was adopted; the process of open coding generated a large number of codes, (147 no.), and these were further reduced (66 no.) and collated by grouping into axial codes. The descriptions assigned to the themes are more conceptual to enable interpretation and analysis of the phenomena and allow connections to be made within the cases and to gain an understanding of what is emerging from the data. The highlighted elements were initially coded and separated out from the transcripts; this was an iterative inductive process. The codes were then simplified and the data codes were clustered into axial codes and further reduced creating manageable data sets from which key themes emerged. This clustering process is illustrated in Figure 06, (page 83).



Figure 06: For example - Clustering to create axial codes: Mentor role in relationship



Note: The number in brackets identifies the respondent, Mentor / Mentee (M) and the Code (C).

This clustering is an example of how the axial codes are derived. Axial coding is the process of relating codes (categories and properties) to each other (Strauss and Corbin 1990). Set out in Figure 07 (page 84), is an illustration of the process which has been undertaken to derive the overarching conceptual framework from which to further analyse the mentoring relationships which is the focus of the next chapter, data analysis.

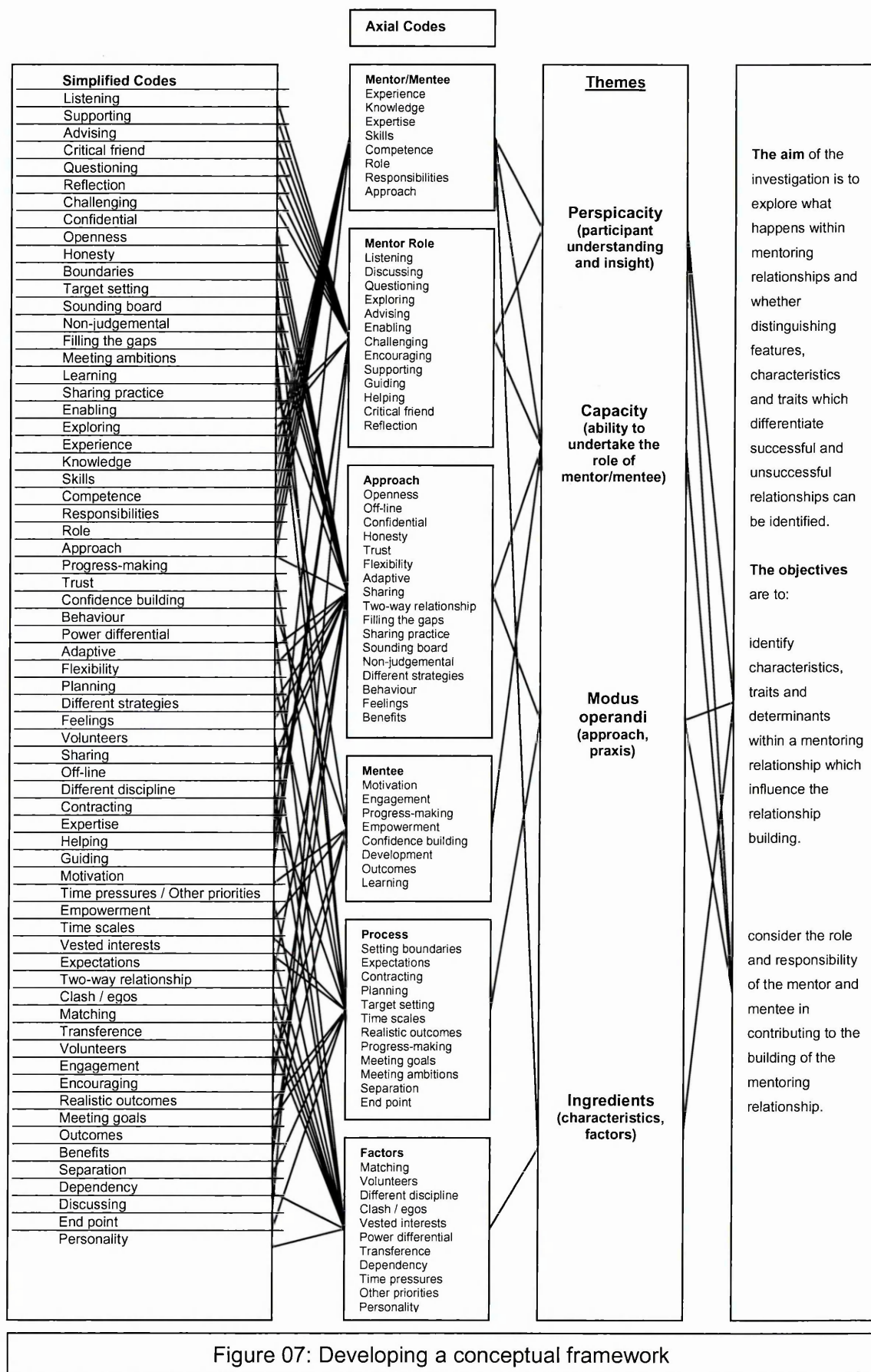


Figure 07: Developing a conceptual framework

Interpretation and analytical sense making led to differentiated clusters, axial codes, as illustrated, namely those associated with the mentor / mentee, the role of the mentor, the role of the mentee, the approach to mentoring, the process and identified factors. Further analysis led to identifiable conceptual emergent themes representing a theoretical framework from which to which appeared to support the process of mentoring relationship building and this research has labelled the themes as:

- **Perspiscacity** (participant understanding and insight)
- **Capacity** (ability to undertake the role of mentor / mentee)
- **Modus operandi** (approach, praxis)
- **Ingredients** (characteristics, factors)

These four themes represent a framework from which to provide a conceptual understanding of the cases and create a platform to analytically make sense of the data. This research labels these themes as: **perspicacity**, **capacity**, **modus operandi**, **ingredients** these are illustrated in Figure 08 and are now defined for the purposes of this research.

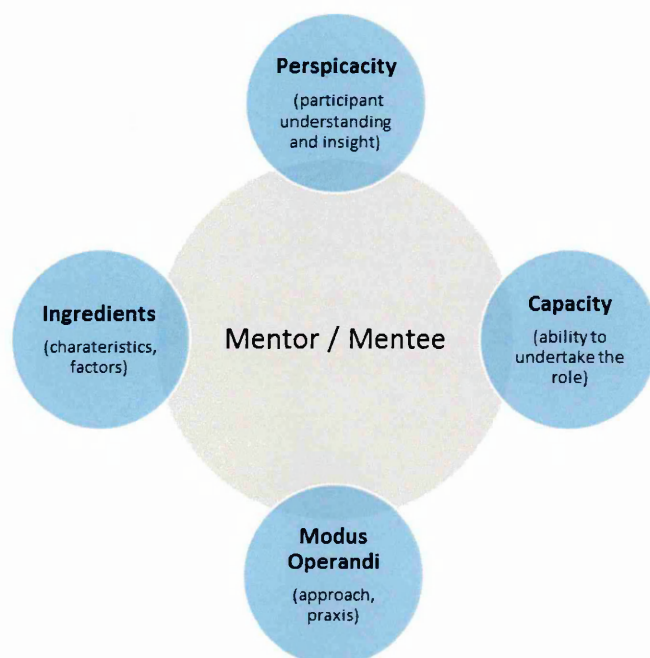


Figure 08: Key Themes – Analytical Sense-making

### **i. Perspicacity** (participant understanding and insight):

This label represents the ability of the participants, the mentor and or mentee in a mentoring relationship, to have an understanding and insight into the process of mentoring and have the ability to make sound judgements to enable the mentoring relationship to build over time. It is the ability to assess situations and circumstances and react appropriately. It is the ability to draw sound conclusions and move the relationship on in a progressive and constructive manner. For both the mentor and mentee it is based upon their experience, knowledge, expertise, skills, competence and approach to building the relationship. For the mentor it is having the understanding, judgement and insight of when to, for example: listen, discuss, question, advise, challenge, support, guide, act as critical friend, reflect; and it is therefore their capability to assess situations and circumstances and make the appropriate decisions to support the mentee and build the relationship. Similarly for the mentee it is their capability to judge how best to develop the relationship, how to respond, assess and judge the situation.

### **ii. Capacity** (ability to undertake the role of mentor / mentee):

This label represents the capacity and capability of the participants to undertake their complementary roles and responsibilities within the mentoring relationship in order that the mentoring relationship may progress and build. A dyadic mentoring relationship is essentially the interaction of two people, one acting as the mentor (more experienced in a particular area of expertise) and one acting as a mentee (less experienced), both have interconnect roles and responsibilities within the relationship which evolve to enable the relationship to build progressively overtime through the different phases of a relationship. The mentoring relationship is therefore a two-way relationship, complementary and inter-connected. The success or otherwise is dependent upon both parties since each role of the mentor has a corresponding mentee role and vice versa. If these roles and responsibilities do not coincide the relationship may falter. For both participants their ability to adapt to their roles is potentially a critical factor in relationship building and will be based on their experience, knowledge, skills and competence. The ability and capacity of the mentor to undertake their role



to support the mentee as the relationship builds through, for example: listening, guiding, advising, facilitating, building mentee confidence, supporting development of the mentee's learning. For the mentee it is their capacity and possession of qualities to: engage, remain motivated, make progress, ability to learn, understand, accomplish, develop, gain empowerment, gain independence.

### **iii. Modus operandi** (approach, praxis):

This label represents the mode of operation, the praxis of building a mentoring relationship and developing a plan of action to be agreed and adopted by the participants to achieve the longer-term aims of the relationship. Each relationship is unique and will develop differently over time. Each mentoring relationship will develop a different strategy in order to build the relationship. There are two aspects to be considered, one relates to the management of the process in terms of operational matters and the other to the personal approach adopted between the participants within the relationship. The management of the process relates to both participants developing a common understanding of what is to be achieved and how it is they are going to achieve the outcomes, the process is two-way. The process may include factors such as; setting boundaries, managing expectations, contracting, planning, setting targets, agreeing time scales, and meeting targets. The personal approach within the relationship between the mentor and mentee will also vary between pairings but consideration of factors such as confidentiality, trust, flexibility, off-line, honesty, sharing, being non-judgemental, for example, are to be considered.

### **iv. Ingredients** (characteristics, factors):

This label represents a broad range of factors which may impact on the ability of a mentoring relationship to build over time. These are many and varied and may include issues relating to the personalities of the individuals concerned and may manifest through a clash personalities, egos, power plays, vested or conflicts of interests, dependency, for example. Outside pressures may come to bear on the relationship, such as, conflicting priorities, other commitments and time pressures, both within the organisation and externally, and the ease and ability

to meet-up and communicate to enable the relationship to build. There may be issues created by gaps in knowledge and expertise in respect of the mentor and their ability to manage the process and support the mentee. There may be a mis-match both in terms of personality between the participants but also with regard subject disciplines and subject backgrounds, which may lead to difficulties in building a progressive relationship. The organisational culture and environment may also impact on the participants and their opportunity, through being supported, to engage and build an effective mentoring relationship.

This process generated a set of potential factors and determinates which could further support the analysis of each pairing (case – unit of analysis). This method and process enabled the data analysis to go beyond the raw data (Coffey 1996) and be transformed to inform the analysis of the cases. The process is essentially the general inductive approach analysing the participants' responses through coding; ultimately leading to emerging themes and providing a theoretical and conceptual framework. The purpose to explore what happens within mentoring relationships and whether key determinants, distinguishing features, characteristics and traits which contribute and differentiate successful and unsuccessful relationships can be identified.

### **3.14 Method of analysing individual mentoring relationships (case – unit of analysis)**

This process of analysis was to meet **Objective 3** of this research investigation which is to: analyse the 'lived' experience of each mentoring pairing (case) over time to determine how successfully the relationship built.

This process involved analysing the transcripts of each mentoring pairing (case – unit of analysis) and assigning a simple code / label as an interpretation of the factors, traits and determinants which were identified by the participants' responses as the mentoring relationship was building over time. An example of this process is provided below and all cases are presented in detail within the following chapter, Chapter 4, Data Analysis. To support the analysis of each relationship pairing (case - unit of analysis) a simple **relationship mapping**

**template** (Figure 09, page 96), was devised based on the transcript analysis to map each relationship longitudinally, with the purpose of illustrating ‘how’ the mentoring relationships built and developed over time and to differentiate the potential types of relationship as they emerged. A description of how the relationship mapping template was derived is discussed further in this chapter. This process resulted in the identification of different types of relationships, those which developed successfully, those which faltered and those which failed to build and terminated, this research labels these types of relationship as: **progressive, flat-lining, break-down** (respectively). There was no attempt at this stage to analyse ‘why’ the relationships developed the way they did, this is considered fully in Chapter 4, Data Analysis, where each mentoring relationship is analysed set against the theoretical framework derived from the first stage data analysis which was described earlier in this chapter.

### **Example:**

By way of illustration, the following represents a case: unit of analysis, for - **P1: (M1 / M2)**. The transcript data has been reduced to focus on the mentoring process and in particular ‘how’ the relationship built overtime. The purpose is to establish those relationships which appeared to develop progressively over time, those which faltered and those which failed and terminated. The focus here is to establish ‘how’ the relationships built over the four points of information gathering.

### **Pre-mentoring Stage**

**Interview 1**, pre-mentoring, the participants present their views prior to commencing the mentoring relationship. From a data analysis perspective, within the case pairing covered in Chapter 4, it provides insight into their expectations towards the mentoring process. The initial codes / labels inform both the individual unit of analysis and the development of conceptual themes which is presented further in this chapter.

Pre-mentoring transcript data	Initial Codes / Labels
<b>Mentor 1:</b> Mentoring is about supporting colleagues on more peers' terms, where the person being mentored has pockets of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Supporting</b></li> <li>• <b>Peers</b></li> </ul>

<p>inexperience.</p> <p>How it manifests itself for individuals will be different.</p> <p>Feel fine about the mentoring programme otherwise would not have volunteered.</p> <p>Different area of knowledge, different and very interesting.</p> <p>Could be personality dependent.</p> <p>Benefit for mentee, involvement with critical friend, to fill the gaps, to have someone who is supportive, have ideas, looks at things from a different perspective, asks different questions.</p> <p>Are the time scales long enough to get things done.</p> <p>Expect mentee to go into unfamiliar areas, challenge and would learn from this.</p> <p>Risks the relationship could breakdown and go horribly wrong would just have to deal with it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience</li> <li>• Personality dependent</li> <li>• Volunteer</li> <li>• Knowledge</li> <li>• Approach</li> <li>• Personality</li> <li>• Filling gaps</li> <li>• Supportive</li> <li>• Questioning</li> <li>• Time scales</li> <li>• Challenging</li> <li>• Learning</li> <li>• Relationship</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mentee 2:</b></p> <p>Mentoring is about, guidance, supervision, teamwork...positive, very useful for mentee.</p> <p>All positive, help and support and use the experience and knowledge of mentor.</p> <p>Only disadvantage, on top of everything else one has to do.</p> <p>To improve own research which will ultimately impact on students.</p> <p>I can have different conversations and it helps being with an expert. I think I will be able to explore anything.</p> <p>It helps not having a team member as a mentor, easier to be open.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance</li> <li>• Supervision</li> <li>• Working together</li> <li>• Help</li> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Mentor knowledge</li> <li>• Mentor experience</li> <li>• Priority</li> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Mentee benefit</li> <li>• Different conversations</li> <li>• Expertise</li> <li>• Exploring</li> <li>• Openness</li> <li>• Off-line</li> </ul>

This method is repeated for each transcript resulting in and generating a wide range of open codes. The process is described further in this chapter.

**Interview 2**, was undertaken +3 months from the commencement of the mentoring relationship. The following provides an insight into how the relationship was progressing from the perspective of the participants within the



pairing. The statements from the participants are interpreted and simply coded / labelled to present analytical sense-making. To note, these simplified codes further inform the development of a theoretical framework which is described further in this chapter. The labels convey a sense of the statements in order to create relationship building indicators from which the progression within the relationships is considered. The labelling where applicable relates to the phase descriptors proffered by Kram (1983); initiation, cultivation, separation, redefinition and Clutterbuck (2004); building rapport, direction-setting, progress-making, winding-down, moving-on / professional friendship. Other labels are interpreted from the literature review as being indicators for progression, such as, mentee motivation, building confidence, empowerment, advising, supporting, facilitating.

+3 months transcript data	Codes / Labels
<p><b>3 months: Mentor 1 - comments</b></p> <p><i>I'm always impressed by my mentee's progress because she just goes away and does things it's great.</i></p> <p><i>It's wonderful, I talk to her about something and by the time I've even breathed she's done it.</i></p> <p><i>I start to think what exactly my role is in this, possibly it's a sort of confidence building or I think where somebody is very self-motivated it's a kind of asking for permission.</i></p> <p><i>I think it's about building confidence, she feels quite confident with the idea of methodology and methods and this kind of thing so it's not like talking to somebody from scratch so it does allow confidence in moving sideways... taking some of the skills and knowledge that she has already got and moving them into a slightly different context.</i></p> <p><i>Well from my perspective I think everything is going fine. If somebody says they are going to do something in February and they haven't actually done things by February it doesn't matter because it isn't time constrained... I think she has got as far as she can, so that's absolutely fine.</i></p> <p><i>I think it is a slightly different relationship to the one you have with a student because you are talking to a colleague, it's supportive and it is a peer relationship and it just so happens there are things that I have done and that she hasn't done yet, but she's doing them now.</i></p> <p><i>I don't think I'm helping her I'm encouraging her to develop and she is gaining confidence... I did encourage her to get her paper through to a conference.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation, progress-making, confidence building, self-motivation</p> <p>Interpreted as - Building mentee confidence through advising, enabling, facilitating, supporting, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive, reflective</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor advising, mentee progress-making, building confidence</p>

<p><i>I am always fascinated by other people's research because I think you always learn something and there are things that she is dealing with that I never had to deal with...</i></p> <p><b>3 months: Mentee 2 - comments</b></p> <p><i>I'm afraid there hasn't been a lot happening because I don't have time, but she's always there for anything I need... she's very supportive... but I have made progress not on the project but on all the projects related to the main issue.</i></p> <p><i>She has always been very supportive, very approachable and available and she knows very well what we are talking about.</i></p> <p><i>Time, because the problem is that I want to do this project but the rest of my job has taken over.</i></p> <p><i>Very good, although she is my mentor she always talks on an equal basis and again very supportive, positive.</i></p> <p><i>I got the SPUR scholarship so I have already started the selection of students, support for success it's students getting a scholarship for doing some research with members of staff over the summer and this year there were only ten projects allowed throughout the whole university and I got one of them so that's good, so I will have a student working for me, one or two students doing some research... that was part of the monitoring because I applied for these... I also applied for the conference, the pedagogy conference later next month and I'm going to give a paper... and I have done the ethics for that and all the students have signed the forms as well... my mentor gave me quite a few titles for improving my methodologies which I got straight away and I just have to read them and create an appropriate methodology and that has to be done by the 26<sup>th</sup> March because that's when I present my findings... so I think I'm going to do a questionnaire, I have twenty-two students so it's just a case of getting a bit of data, so I think I have to be smart with the questionnaires... and perhaps then I will only interview a few of them otherwise I will not manage.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor reflection, new knowledge</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supporting</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation, confidence building, progress-making, learning new skills, new knowledge</b></p>
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**Interview 3**, was undertaken +6 months from the commencement of the mentoring relationship. The following provides an insight into how the relationship was progressing from the perspective of the participants within the pairing. The same analytical method, as above, for interpreting and sense-making of the participants' responses was undertaken.

+6 months transcript data	Codes / Label
<p><b>6 months: Mentor 1 - comments</b></p> <p><i>We decided that since she is in the middle of her project, that if everyone is happy we would keep going.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Progress-making</b></p>

<p><i>We are now into the more detailed logistics of the fieldwork which is where you would expect us to be I suppose.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Progress-making</b></p>
<p><i>I have gained; it's always good to speak to other people in a different discipline because you get a different perspective... I have gained a certain amount of confidence because I think it is particularly challenging working with a colleague who is in the field and has a particular level of qualification as you have and what you can add... so that's been a positive for me.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor reflection, new knowledge</b></p>
<p><i>Well my mentee is a highly competent person and challenging, coming into this at a high level... I am giving her a steer... she is moving sideways into a new areas because she is doing something new... but there a gaps, she's at a level but I can fill those gaps.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor facilitating</b></p>
<p><i>It's about giving her a bit more scaffolding... it's more like mentoring a junior colleague, I don't mean anything pejorative about that, it's more helping someone through a task, so there is more of an equality in it.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supporting</b></p>
<p><b><u>6 months: Mentee 2 - comments</u></b></p> <p><i>Officially we have finished but unofficially we are interested in keeping in touch. I think I have learnt a lot I think there were two possible topics I could improve on but we only focussed on one.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Redefinition, moving-on</b></p>
<p><i>I think that having the work planned helped me in terms of prioritising and also I had to get on with it because I had to do the work with the students before they disappeared, so that was a driver but at the same time knowing I was meeting with her so yes I was trying to get the work done... so from that point of view that was good because you had your deadlines.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Motivation, direction-planning</b></p>
<p><i>She is very flexible as well so I think that on a couple of occasions I had to cancel the meeting because I couldn't make it and she was always flexible and happy.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supporting</b></p>
<p><i>It's great having someone who is a genuine sounding board and genuinely wants to help.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supporting</b></p>

**Interview 4**, was undertaken +9 months from the commencement of the mentoring relationship. The following provides an insight into how the relationship was progressing from the perspective of the participants within the pairing. The same analytical method of interpreting and sense making of the participants' responses was undertaken.

+9 months transcript data	Codes / Labels
<p><b>9 months: Mentor 1 – comments</b></p> <p><i>We said we would carry on seeing each other, because the bits of the project I was talking her through were very much in the early stages and I would quite like to see where it goes after that.</i></p> <p><i>You potentially start working with somebody... as it becomes less scary to take the training wheels off and they start running.</i></p> <p><i>She has gone through the structural stuff and now has confidence.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Redefining</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor enabling</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee confidence, meeting aspirations</p>
<p><b>9 months: Mentee 2 – comments</b></p> <p><i>I think it has been very, very useful what she told me and taught me... how to do research with my students in a particular way and last year I couldn't do and this year I can, the way she suggested.</i></p> <p><i>Although the mentoring scheme is finished now we still meet up every now and then just to catch-up. I suppose mentoring is still on going and definitely in a positive way.</i></p> <p><i>She has just become a professor and she has been advising me how to become a reader. So it's more than just the project it's more on academic grounds which is really good.</i></p> <p><i>In the long term would like to be thought of as a potential mentor, not now but in the future, when I'm ready.</i></p> <p><i>It was a good pairing, we were both happy, we were having lunch just last week and just catching-up, so I think it was good for the two of us.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentee transformational development, meeting aspirations</p> <p>Interpreted as - Moving-on, redefinition</p> <p>Interpreted as - New goals, new relationship</p> <p>Interpreted as - Moving-on, new goals</p> <p>Interpreted as - Professional friendship</p>

Having undertaken a transcript analysis for each mentoring relationship and interpreted the potential factors and determinants which characterised the elements of the relationship the data was used to devise a simple relationship mapping template to aid further interpretation and illustration of what was happening within the relationship as it built over time. The next section describes how the relationship mapping template was derived.

### 3.15 Devising a Relationship Mapping Template

This initial method of analysis as described above was repeated for each of the relationship pairings (cases – units of analysis) to identify relationship building indicators within the relationships. The interpreted / labelled characteristics were grouped under **four headings** which enabled the **relationship mapping**



**template**, Figure 09, (page 96), to be derived from the data and included: those which related to **relationship** stages and phases (Clutterbuck 2004 and Kram 1983); those which related to the **mentor**; those which related to the **mentee**; those which were identified as process driven, **operational**, within the relationship and supported and enabled the relationship building process – *modus operandi*.

These identified strands within mentoring relationship building are characterised below and include, for example:

**The Mentor:**

Listening, discussing, advising, direction-setting, relationship building, enabling, facilitating, supporting, reflection (new skills / knowledge / experience), moving-on.

**The Mentee:**

Discussing, direction-planning, relationship building, motivation, empowerment, confidence, development, transformational development, meeting aspirations (new skills / knowledge / experience), independence, new relationship, new goals.

**Operational – (Modus Operandi):**

Objective / target setting, setting boundaries, contracting, progress-making, meeting objectives, completion, new objectives, moving-on / new contract.

These are labelled by this research as ***relationship building indicators*** and are utilised in developing the simplified relationship building template to inform the systematic analysis of each mentoring relationship (cases of). Having interpreted and made sense of the individual mentoring relationships the next section expands on the development of a simplified relationship mapping template.

The outcomes from this analysis informed the development of a simplified relationship mapping template to simulate mentoring relationship building. The

simple codes / label descriptors above maybe described as relationship building indicators and formed the basis for creating a simplified relationship mapping template to convey 'how' the relationships developed over time. The template is set under the headings of: relationship, operational, mentor, mentee. Under each of these headings are simplified descriptors derived from the literature, (Kram 1983, Clutterbuck 2004, 2005, Megginson 2004, Morton 2003, Klasen 2002), which provide reference points, indicators, to gauge and interpret the mentoring relationship building.

The simplified template, derived from the above, represent (for the purposes of this research) as **relationship building indicators**, was used to plot the progression of the mentoring relationship as it built over time and is illustrated below:

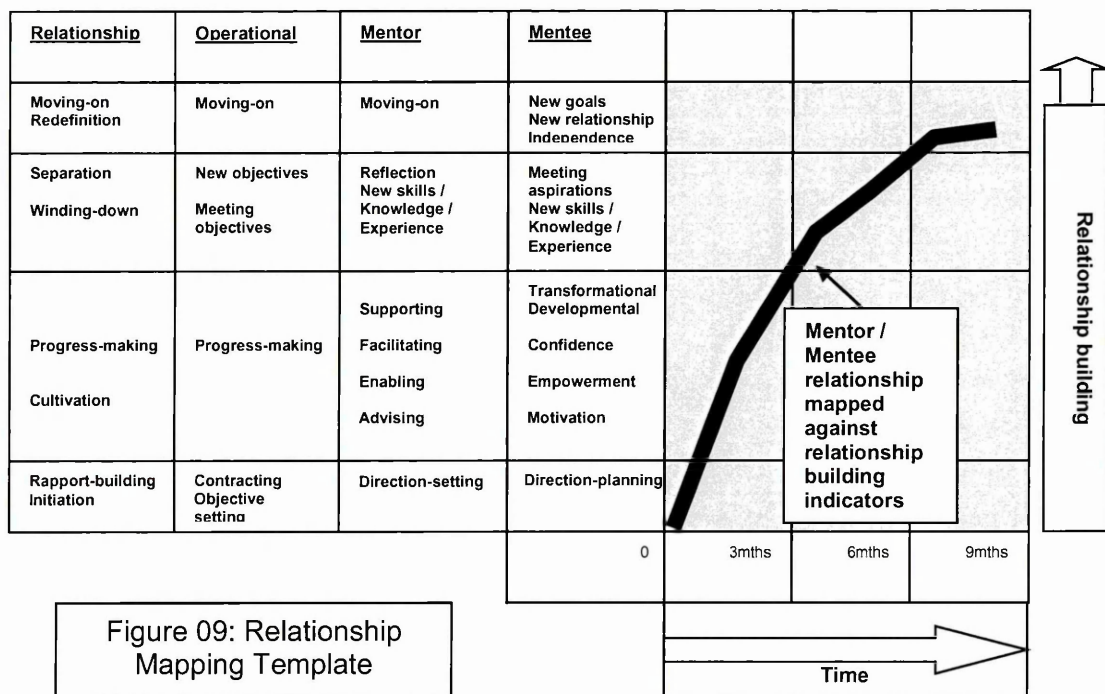


Figure 09: Relationship Mapping Template

The purpose of the template was to develop a simple method of mapping each mentoring relationship, longitudinally, to identify those relationships which built progressively over time successfully, and to identify those relationships which faltered and those which failed and terminated. This research labels these

relationships types as: **progressive**; **flat-lining**; **break-down** (respectively).  
These types are illustrated below.

Figure 10: Examples of Mapping 'Progressive' Relationships

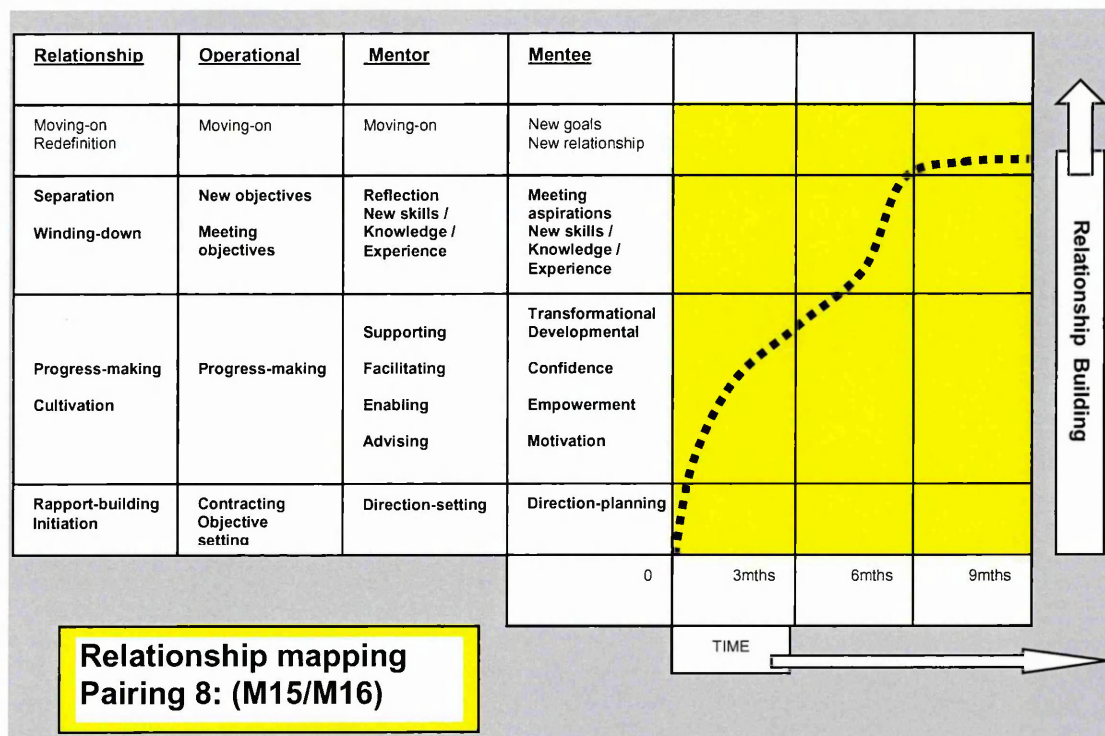
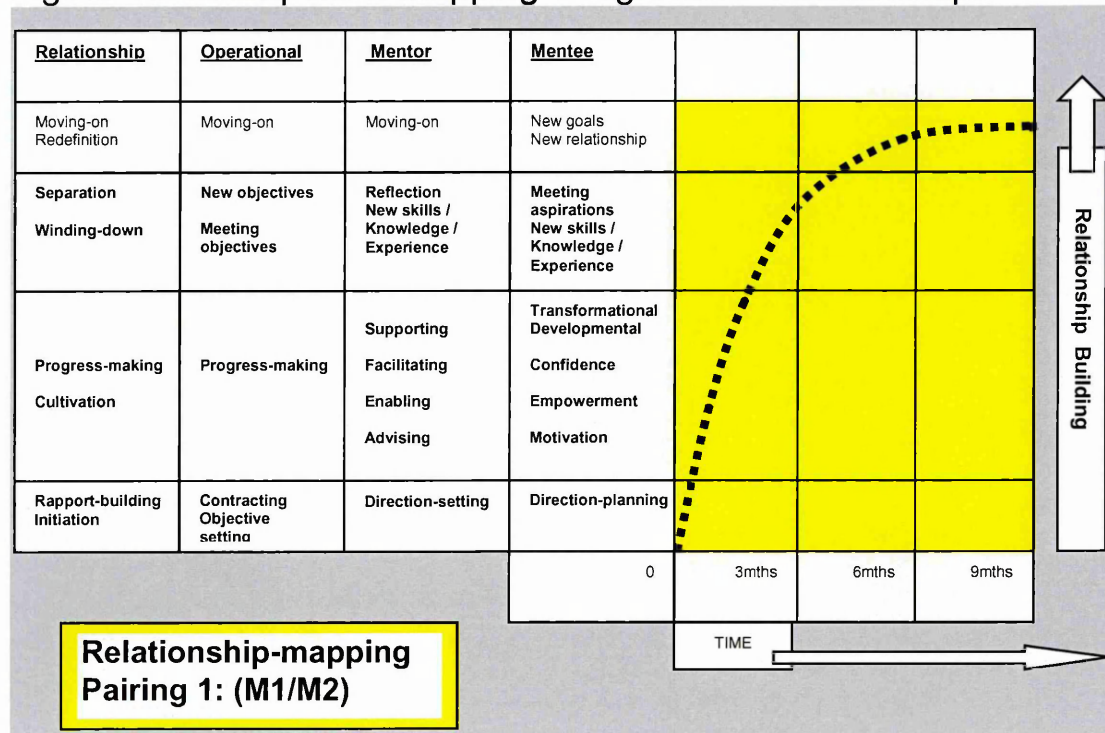


Figure 11: Examples of Mapping 'Flat-lining' Relationships

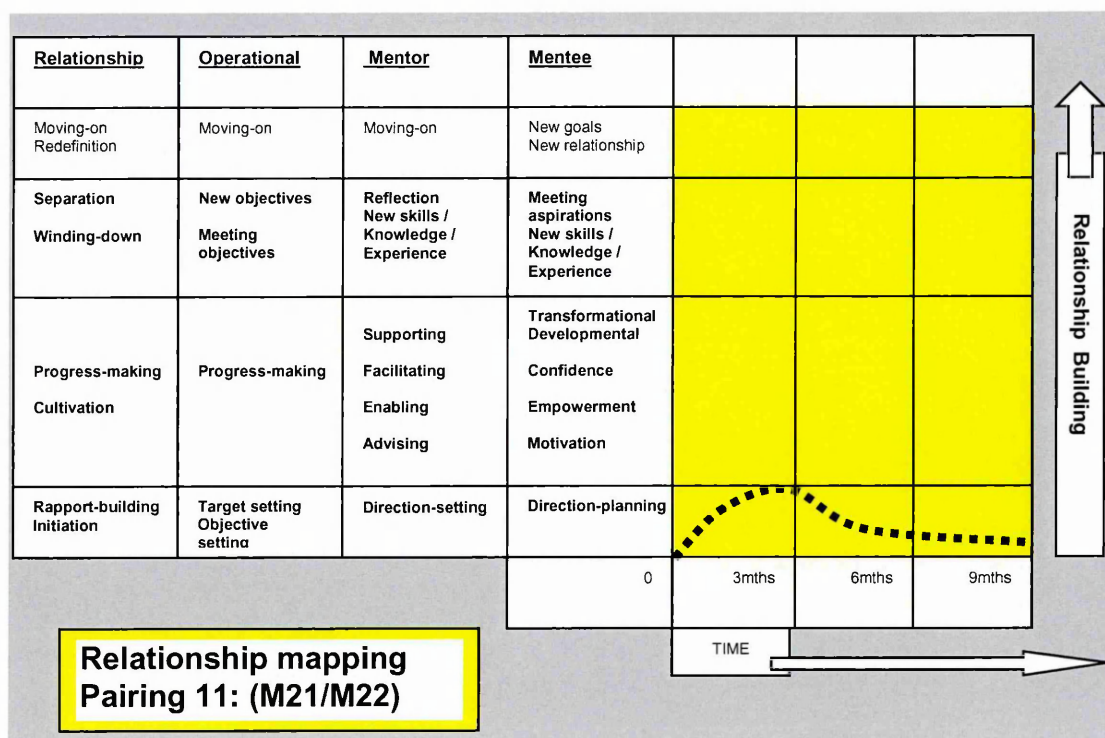
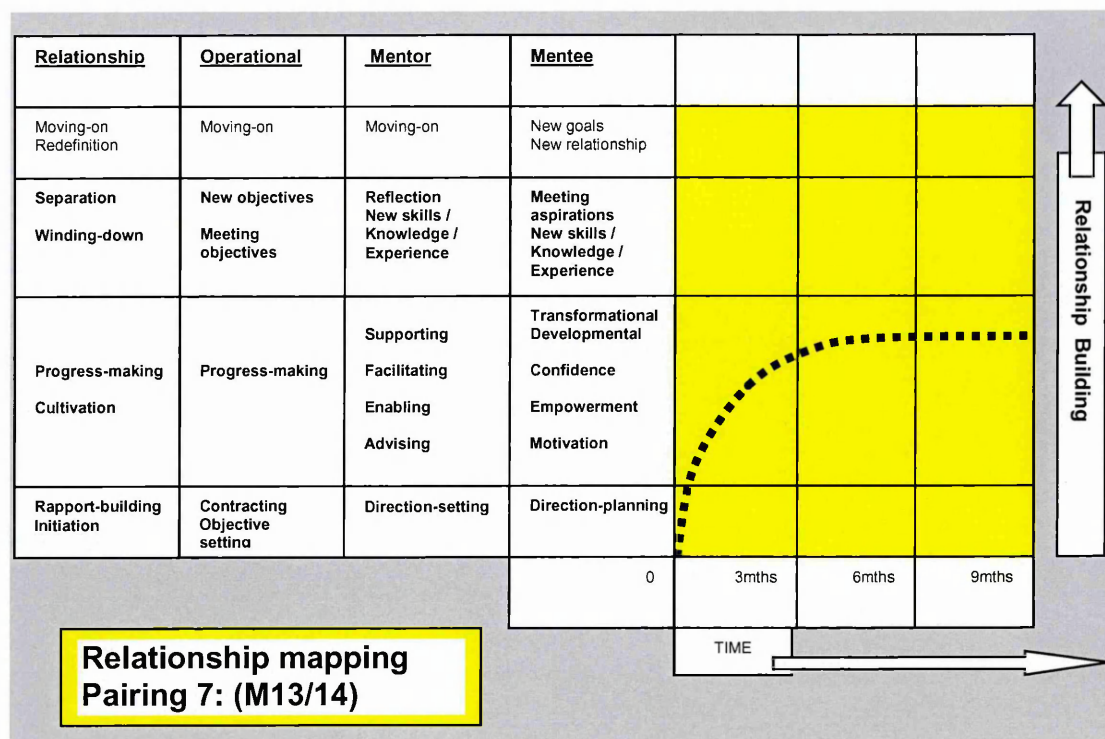
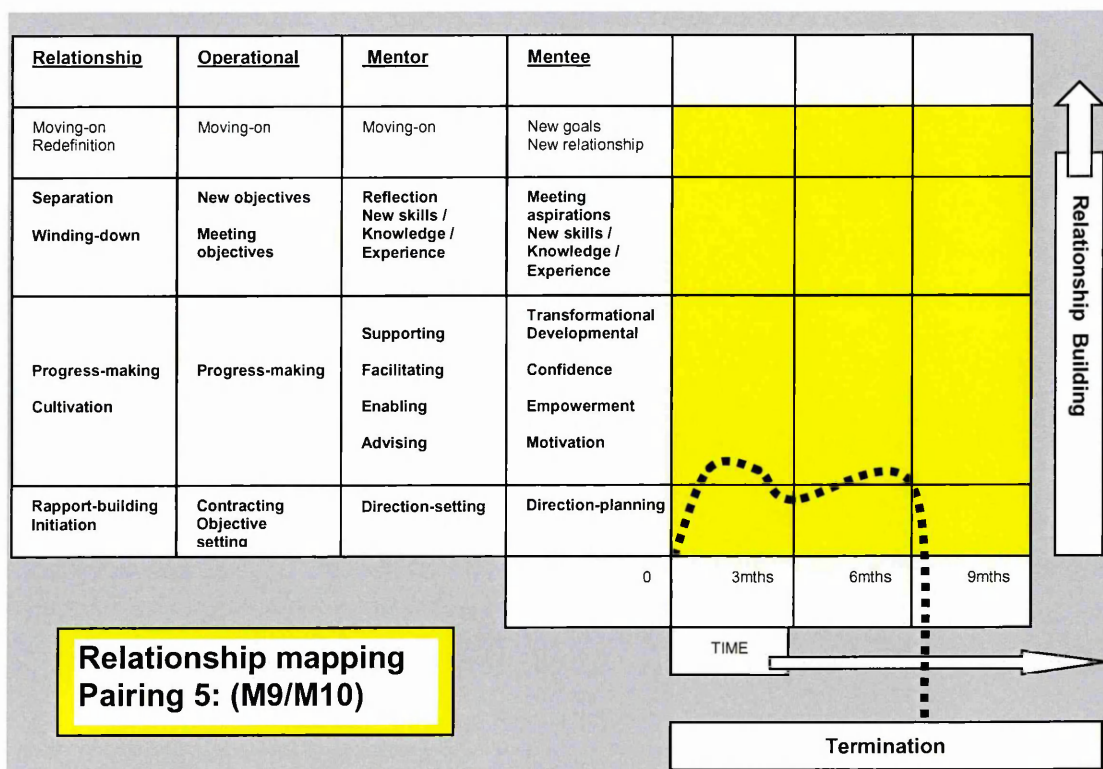
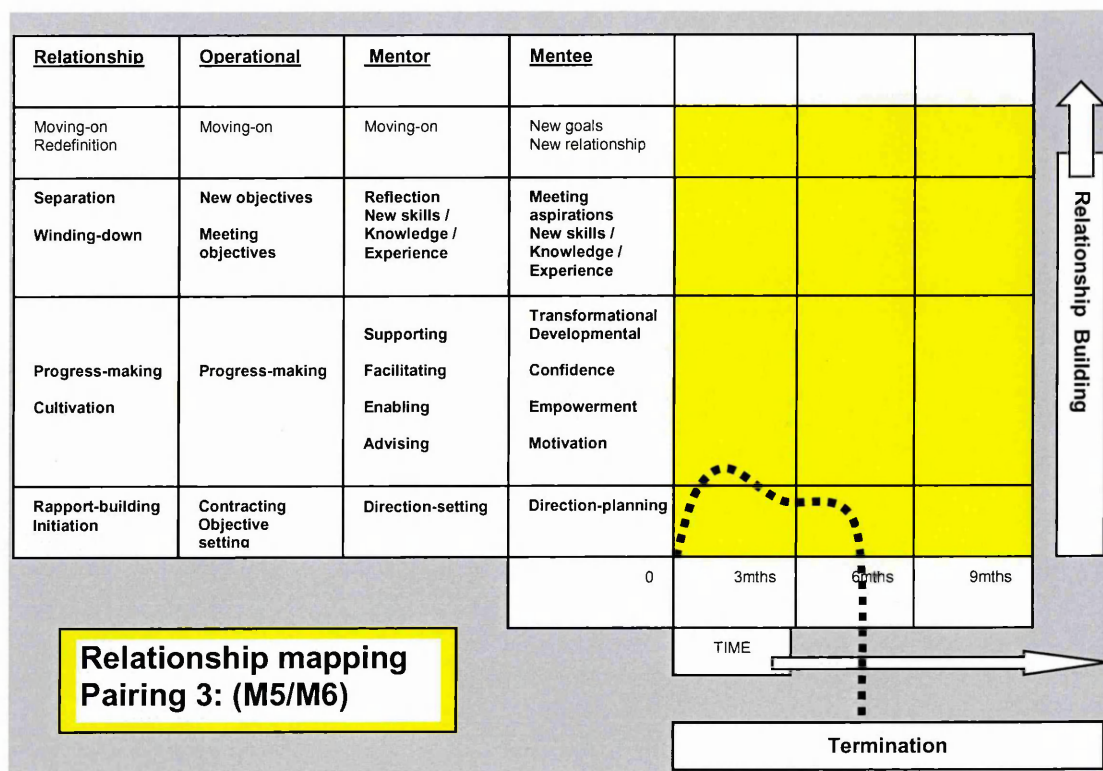




Figure 12: Examples of Mapping 'Break-down' Relationships



**Objective 4** of this research investigation is to: present a typology of mentoring relationships. The emerging typology presents three classifications, representing clusters of types of relationship which follow a similar pattern in relationship building: **progressive** (relationships which build progressively through the phases of the mentoring process); **flat-lining** (those which falter); **break-down** (those which failed and were terminated). These are fully explained and analysed in the next chapter, data analysis, where each mentoring relationship (case) is analysed in detail to consider if there are potentially determinants, characteristics and traits which may be identified which support effective mentoring relationship building and thereby contribute to knowledge and practice. Conversely, determinants, characteristics and traits which inhibit mentoring relationship building and maybe avoided or minimised are also identified.

### 3.16 Summary

This chapter has set out the research methodology and methods adopted to undertake the investigation to provide insights into the determinants of successful dyadic mentoring relationships. The methodological approach has been presented setting out an objectivist ontological and objectivist epistemological position representing a neo-positivist paradigm recognising the social nature of the enquiry. The approach to sense-making of the data is through the adoption of the general inductive approach as supported by Thomas (2006), commencing with the raw data collected from semi-structured interviews undertaken with each individual participant (mentor and mentee) at four points in time, -1 month, +3 months, +6 months and +9 months, longitudinally. The approach is qualitative positivist, Verstehen, meaning to understand in a deep way, with the aim to understand another person's experience, in this case the participant's experience of mentoring to gain greater insight into what happens within a mentoring relationship to support mentoring relationship building.

The mentoring scheme within which the participants engaged is described. The University introduced the scheme with the aim of bringing together academics

from across the institution such that more experienced academics (mentors) could support and guide less experienced academics (mentees) wishing to develop and enhance their research skills, competences. The participants were volunteers and were matched into their pairings through a simple gap analysis whereby the perceived strengths of the mentor in terms of knowledge and expertise were matched with the aspirations of the less experienced mentees. The participants are described in terms of their gender, age, time in the organisation and their main role and responsibility and the sample population were considered to be a representative of what one might expect with a Higher Education setting. The sample size is considered appropriate to enable sufficient insight to be gained through investigation to establish meaningful findings.

The longitudinal approach to the investigation is significant to this research since it has been identified that there is a scarcity of studies utilising this approach in the field of mentoring. The importance is that the method of data capture is *live* and not retrospective and permits exploration of phenomena which develops over time. The *live* dimension to the data gathering allows the experiences expressed by the participants to be captured at a moment in time and are therefore not reflections on past events or speculations of the future. The experiences of the participants are captured at four points in time through the duration of the mentoring intervention and this allows the process of mentoring relationship building to be apprehended.

Central to the research design and strategy is the verification strategy for establishing reliability and validity. The verification strategies are outlined and made explicit within the undertaking of the research inquiry and include: methodological coherence; sampling sufficiency; developing a dynamic relationship between sampling, data collection and analysis; conceptual development.

The method of data collection at each of the four points in time is via semi-structured telephone interviews. The purpose to gain raw data of the participants *lived* experiences as they progress through their mentoring



relationship to develop insight to the phenomena and present insight into the characteristics, traits and determinants which influence effective relationship building.

The method of data analysis is approached from two perspectives, the first data analysis perspective was derived from across all the data sets (transcripts) with the purpose of identifying a broad range of relationship influencing factors and determinants and develop a conceptual and theoretical frame work from which to further analyse the mentoring relationships. The method by which the data is reduced and analysed is clearly illustrated and described. The method centres on developing and analysing the raw data through an inductive, iterative approach (general inductive analytical approach). The principal object is to translate the raw transcript data in to meaningful higher order data to allow sense-making of the phenomena to establish what happens within mentoring relationships. The method is described in detail, presenting a step-by-step process. Each verbatim interview transcript is methodically read through and words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs, highlighted which convey a broad range of aspects of the participant's experience and these are open coded. This created a large number of codes which were then provided with simplified labels, simplified codes, and further categorised by grouping and clustering those which related to aspects which appeared relevant to mentoring relationship building creating axial codes. These axial codes clustered under the headings for example: mentor/mentee, mentor role, approach, mentee engagement, process, factors. Themes emerged and this research has labelled these as: **perspicacity** (participant understanding and insight); **capacity** (ability to undertake the role of mentor / mentee); **modus operandi** (approach, praxis); **ingredients** (characteristics and factors). These themes form the basis of interpreting and analysing the individual units of analysis, i.e. the mentor / mentee pairings and are presented in the next chapter.

The second focus of analysis from each individual relationship (case) to determine how their relationship built over time based upon the mentor and mentee experience within a relationship pairing. To support the process of data analysis for each case study, pairing, a simple **relationship mapping template**



has been derived to convey the progression and development of each mentoring relationship. The purpose to illustrate those relationships which successfully build over time, those that falter and those which fail to develop this research has categorised these as: **progressive, flat-lining, break-down**, respectively.

The research methodology and methods have been designed to investigate what happens 'within' mentoring relationships, how the relationships build over time and whether distinguishing features, characteristics and traits which differentiate successful and unsuccessful mentoring relationships can be identified. The methods outline in this chapter will enable an analysis of each mentoring relationship pairing (case - unit of analysis) and provide a view as to what constitutes a successful mentoring relationship; what it looks like and how is it achieved. The methods adopted will identify what the indicators are which suggest that the mentoring relationship is building successfully. The outcomes, following the inductive methods will provide insight into the process of mentoring and provide potential tools which a mentor or mentee may refer to in practice to reflect upon and gauge how well a relationship is building. The methodological approach will enable the presentation of indicators, determinants, based on the participants experience, which can be drawn to practitioners attention such that a relationship may be enhanced. Different types of relationship have been identified: progressive, flat-lining, break-down, and these are clustered to establish what is happening inside these relationships. The outcomes of this method of analysis will inform a framework which represents the process of building successful mentoring relationships.

These aspects are further developed and analysed in the next chapter, data analysis, where the cases are analysed in detail.

## **Chapter 4: Data Analysis – Mentoring Relationship Building**

### **4.01 Introduction**

The previous chapter outlined the research methodology and methods adopted to investigate what happens within mentoring relationships and whether distinguishing features, characteristics and traits which differentiate successful and unsuccessful relationships can be identified; the determinants, which is the focus of this research. The chapter described the nature of the inquiry, the approach, the research design and strategy, the mentoring scheme and identified the participant population and mentor-mentee pairings which represent individual cases, units of analysis. The rationale for the longitudinal nature of the investigation was outlined and how the semi-structured interviews were constructed and conducted. Consideration of ethics, protocols, anonymity and confidentiality were considered with regard the research design, and methodological reflexivity is acknowledged. The systematic approach to data collection, data reduction and data analysis was presented setting out a step-by-step description of the process.

This chapter presents the data analysis of each individual mentoring relationship (case – unit of analysis) and is structured into three main sections. The first section considers the participants' perceptions of the learning culture within the organisation where they work to provide context to the environment from which the data was collected and which may influence the findings of this research and be considered as a determinant in influencing the participant's ability to engage fully in the process of mentoring relationship building.

The second section presents the detailed analysis of each of the mentoring relationships, (cases of), which represent the units of analysis for this research. The participant's 'voice' is conveyed throughout by quotes to provide insight, to support the arguments and show transparency to the process. The pairings are presented in classifications of similar type representing a typology, to provide a focus on mentoring relationship building, identifying those factors, characteristics, traits and determinants which support more successful

relationships and conversely factors which inhibit the process of mentoring relationship building and may lead to dysfunctionality. The three types, as identified in the previous chapter, represent clusters of relationships which follow a similar pattern, typology: 1. Relationships which build progressively through the phases of the mentoring process; 2. those which falter; 3. those which failed and were terminated, this research labels these as: **progressive, flat-lining, break-down** (respectively). The section is subdivided to present three identified relationship classifications - typologies, which have been labelled by this research as:

- Progressive
- Flat-lining
- Break-down

Each mentoring relationship (case – unit of analysis) is analysed systematically in this chapter and considered within the context of the four emergent themes which represent the theoretical framework from which to analytically make sense of the individual cases which this research has labelled: **perspicacity, modus operandi, ingredients**, which were described in the previous chapter (pages 84-88).

The third section provides further analysis and sense making of the findings from the units of analysis (cases) and presents a **mentoring relationship building framework**, Figure 27 (page 183), a framework to support our understanding and knowledge of the process of mentoring relationship building in practice. The framework illustrates the intricacies and complexities of mentoring relationship building to enable progression through the phases of the mentoring process.

## **4.02 Learning culture within the organisation**

Having set out how this chapter is structured this next section considers the culture within an organisation, in this case higher education, since it was identified in the literature review as being influential on the learning process. Hu,

Pellegrini and Scandura (2011), McAuley (2003) and Silverman (2003) cite the potential influence of the organisational culture on relationship building, since expectations and acceptable patterns of interaction may vary as a result. As Silverman (2003) argues, culture, context and environment influence employee learning development and stresses the importance of supportive organisational enabling structures. Without appropriate support, learning and development may be stifled. It was therefore considered important to take the views of those participating in the mentoring intervention, since they were academics working in the same organisation, to gain an insight into their perception of the organisational environment within which the research was being undertaken as this may have a bearing on the success or otherwise of the mentoring relationship building. The participants generally described the culture of the organisation and how support is given to encourage shared learning practice.

The participants generally considered that the organisational culture as a whole did not encourage shared learning practice and was focussed upon outputs rather than supporting the process of achieving them.

*'rather dictatorial and directive', 'at the top of the organisation I have not noticed people asking me questions, helping me to achieve my goals', what he had noticed was, 'being told what to do and to get on with it', 'the culture of the organisation doesn't support a mentoring culture', it was a rather, 'do as I say, rather than do as I do'. Mentor 21*

*'locally research and research practice is becoming more highly valued', he felt that, 'support and help is not encouraged in a systemic way' and he considered this as, 'quite a serious defect on the part of the organisation'. Mentee 10*

*'the structures in which we operate discourage seeking help and support', 'the culture in the organisation is focussed on product, not the process of getting there'. Mentee 18*

The sense which came through from the participants was that within the University there was perceived to be local support from immediate colleagues but generally the University was thought to be distant in encouraging collegiate cross-university practice.



*'people are generally supportive and that there is sharing of information and support', 'most people are over worked', 'individuals are helpful and supportive, but not the organisation as such'. Mentee 14*

*'not sure that the culture is a sharing culture'. Mentor 5*

There appeared to be a frustration with how the organisation portrayed itself as a learning organisation and yet the employees, the participants, perceived that there was little support to encourage peer learning.

*'I had thirty brand new colleagues to the university there and I'm going to be talking to them about all the support that university provides and actually when you look at it there is very little... there is a little bit of smoke and mirrors that goes on...many have come from practice and have very little understanding of research and research methods or where to start or have the confidence to start putting anything on paper, there isn't anything there at all...' Mentor 13*

*'it's a way forward to have peer mentoring in this way for research and generally for teaching', 'I am surprised in education how little support people have', 'they are just expected to get on with it', 'for career developing researchers it is difficult for people when they come from practice into academia, it's new to them', 'it's straight into teaching and where do they have the time to think about and develop their research skills? Mentor 15*

The overview is that support is derived locally through local colleague networks and within subject specific domains and it was thought that the organisation as a whole had not proactively created an environment for cross-discipline interaction. The pilot mentoring intervention was perceived as a welcome intervention to encourage mentoring and support across the university. There was a sense that colleagues were under intense time pressures to produce outputs and that there was little space (time), therefore, for self-development, peer support, reflection and the sharing of ideas. There was a concern that the apparent lack of time and conflicting priorities encountered in the workload of the individuals may adversely influence the ability of the participants to fully engage in the mentoring programme and therefore influence how the relationships may build over time. This potentially reinforces the proposition of

Silverman (2003) who stresses the importance of organisational enabling structures to foster employee learning and development. By implication, if the organisation is serious about supporting staff to engage in, for example mentoring as a means of creating a learning culture, then investment in resource over time to facilitate such activity is required. Participation in this pilot mentoring scheme was voluntary and on top of individual's existing work commitments. A number of the participants in this study commented on the potential lack of time and other priorities which might adversely impacted on their ability to progress their mentoring relationships as they would have liked. The learning culture within an organisation and how the organisation resources, supports and values learning is potentially a key determinant in providing an environment conducive to mentoring, which may impact on the success or otherwise of such an intervention.

Having discussed the learning culture within the organisation, as perceived by the participants, and therefore describing the environment within which this research is undertaken, the next section provides an analysis of the cases of mentoring relationship building differentiated by type: progressive, flat-lining and break-down.

### 4.03 Analysis of Mentoring Relationship Building

This section presents the systematic analysis of each of the mentoring relationships, (cases of), which represent the units of analysis for this research. The section is subdivided to analyse those mentoring relationships which have been labelled by this research as **progressive, flat-lining, break-down**. The three types, represent clusters of relationships which follow a similar pattern: 1. Relationships which appear to build progressively through the phases of the mentoring process; 2. those which faltered; 3. those which failed and were terminated, (respectively). These have been clustered as follows:

Label:	Pairing (P)	Mentor (x) / Mentee (y)	Note:
<b>Progressive</b>	P1:	M1/M2	
	P2:	M3/M4	Progressive: until mentee personal circumstances
	P4:	M7/M8	Progressive: until mentee left organisation due to ill-health
	P6:	M11/M12	
	P8:	M15/M16	
<b>Flat-lining</b>	P7:	M13/M14	
	P11:	M21/M22	
<b>Break-down</b>	P3:	M5/M6	
	P5:	M9/M10	
	P10:	M19/M20	
Other	P9:	M17/M18	Mentee left organisation early in the programme

To reiterate, the central argument of the thesis to be explored - through analysis of the mentoring relationships (cases – units of analysis - is that there are potentially key characteristics, traits and factors within dyadic mentoring relationships which may be identified and considered as determinants and contributory factors which may influence and support the process of building successful mentoring relationships and conversely factors which may inhibit the process. The thesis explores dyadic mentoring relationships and the process of relationship building so that we can increase our knowledge and understanding

of the process. The participants' experiences are considered as cases of mentoring and reflect on the conceptual theoretical frameworks on the phases of mentoring relationship progression as proffered by Kram (1983) and Clutterbuck (2004).

The aim is to determine traits and characteristics which may contribute to successful mentoring relationship building through following the mentor-mentee relationship pairings overtime, longitudinally, to identify if there are factors which influence relationship building and thus provide insight into what happens inside successful and unsuccessful relationships.



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#### 4.04 'Progressive' Mentoring Relationships

This section presents an analysis of those relationships which this research labels as 'progressive' i.e. those relationships which build progressively through the phases of the mentoring process over time. Analysis of the full data set, across all transcripts, identified four themes which emerged from the data to provide a conceptual framework to support analytic sense-making of the cases. The inductive iterative process of theme derivation is described in the previous chapter. These themes have been labelled by this research as: **perspicacity, capacity, modus-operandi, ingredients**. These theme labels have been previously described and defined for the purposes of this research in the previous chapter.

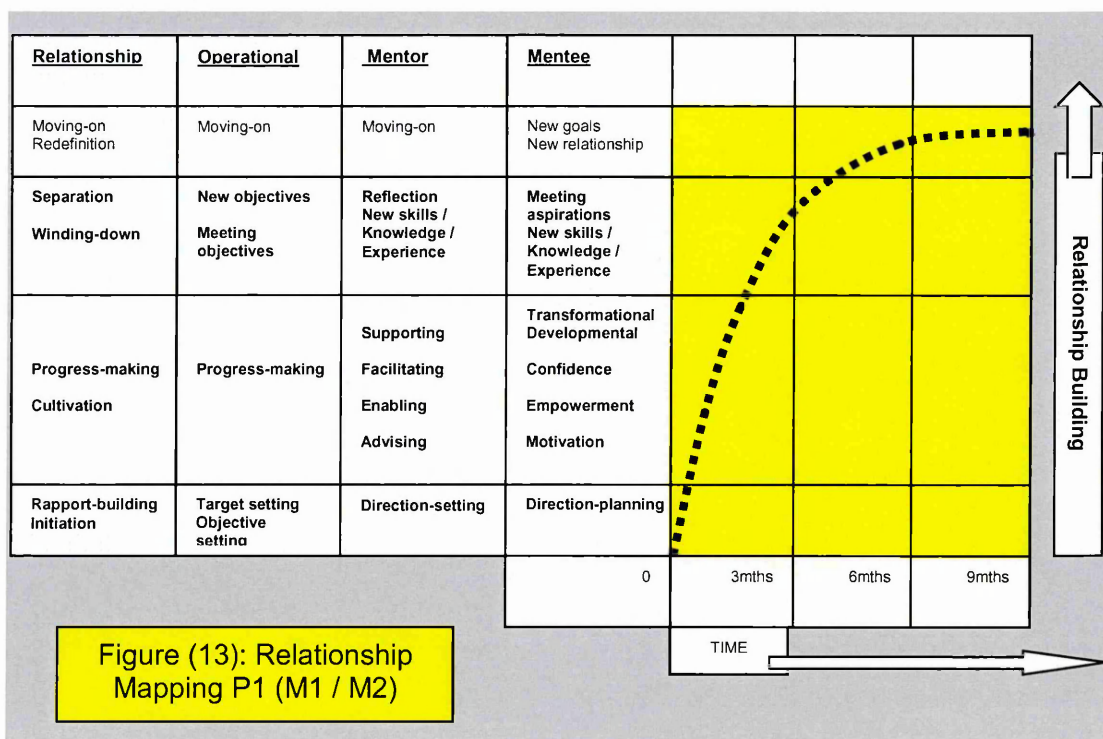
Through undertaking a systematic analysis of each relationship (as previously described in Chapter 3), utilising the method of analytical sense-making to interpret mentoring relationship building, with the aid of the relationship building template, five of the eleven relationships presented a profile of 'progressive' relationship building and these have been clustered together. Of the five relationships two have been included which although they were terminated due to, mentee personal circumstances (P2) and mentee ill-health (P4), up until the point of termination they displayed progressive relationship building characteristics. The rationale to include these two cases in this section is that the analysis focusses on relationship building characteristics, traits, factors and determinants to the point of termination. The five cases which have the clustered together for analysis in this section are:

<b>Progressive</b>	P1:	M1/M2	
	P2:	M3/M4	Progressive: until mentee personal circumstances
	P4:	M7/M8	Progressive: until mentee left organisation due to ill-health
	P6:	M11/M12	
	P8:	M15/M16	

Each of these mentoring relationships (cases of - units of analysis) are now presented individually and systematically and then compared and contrasted in order to interpret what happens within this type of relationship, 'progressive'.

#### 4.05 Relationship P1: M1/M2

This relationship built through all the identified relationship phases as proffered by Clutterbuck (2004) and Kram (1983) and resulted in a positive outcome for both participants and is therefore labelled as a **progressive** relationship. The **relationship mapping template** was used to plot the relationship as it built over time based upon interpretation, sense-making and analysis of the participants' comments. The resultant profile is presented below with the accompanying data as extracted from the semi-structured interviews at interview points, +3, +6 and +9 months.



## Interpreted as:

+3 months transcript data	Codes / Labels
<p><b>3 months: Mentor 1 - comments</b></p> <p><i>I'm always impressed by my mentee's progress because she just goes away and does things it's great.</i></p> <p><i>It's wonderful, I talk to her about something and by the time I've even breathed she's done it.</i></p> <p><i>I start to think what exactly my role is in this, possibly it's a sort of confidence building or I think where somebody is very self-motivated it's a kind of asking for permission.</i></p> <p><i>I think it's about building confidence, she feels quite confident with the idea of methodology and methods and this kind of thing so it's not like talking to somebody from scratch so it does allow confidence in moving sideways... taking some of the skills and knowledge that she has already got and moving them into a slightly different context.</i></p> <p><i>Well from my perspective I think everything is going fine. If somebody says they are going to do something in February and they haven't actually done things by February it doesn't matter because it isn't time constrained... I think she has got as far as she can, so that's absolutely fine.</i></p> <p><i>I think it is a slightly different relationship to the one you have with a student because you are talking to a colleague, it's supportive and it is a peer relationship and it just so happens there are things that I have done and that she hasn't done yet, but she's doing them now.</i></p> <p><i>I don't think I'm helping her I'm encouraging her to develop and she is gaining confidence... I did encourage her to get her paper through to a conference.</i></p> <p><i>I am always fascinated by other people's research because I think you always learn something and there are things that she is dealing with that I never had to deal with...</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation, progress-making, confidence building, self-motivation</p> <p>Interpreted as - Building mentee confidence through advising, enabling, facilitating, supporting, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive, reflective</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor advising, mentee progress-making, building confidence</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor reflection, new knowledge</p>
<p><b>3 months: Mentee 2 - comments</b></p> <p><i>I'm afraid there hasn't been a lot happening because I don't have time, but she's always there for anything I need... she's very supportive... but I have made progress not on the project but on all the projects related to the main issue.</i></p> <p><i>She has always been very supportive, very approachable and available and she knows very well what we are talking about.</i></p> <p><i>Time, because the problem is that I want to do this project but the rest of my job has taken over.</i></p> <p><i>Very good, although she is my mentor she always talks on an equal basis</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supporting</p>

<p>and again very supportive, positive.</p> <p>I got the SPUR scholarship so I have already started the selection of students, support for success it's students getting a scholarship for doing some research with members of staff over the summer and this year there were only ten projects allowed throughout the whole university and I got one of them so that's good, so I will have a student working for me, one or two students doing some research... that was part of the monitoring because I applied for these... I also applied for the conference, the pedagogy conference later next month and I'm going to give a paper... and I have done the ethics for that and all the students have signed the forms as well... my mentor gave me quite a few titles for improving my methodologies which I got straight away and I just have to read them and create an appropriate methodology and that has to be done by the 26<sup>th</sup> March because that's when I present my findings... so I think I'm going to do a questionnaire, I have twenty-two students so it's just a case of getting a bit of data, so I think I have to be smart with the questionnaires... and perhaps then I will only interview a few of them otherwise I will not manage.</p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation, confidence building, progress-making, learning new skills, new knowledge</p>
<b>+6 months transcript data</b>	<b>Codes / Labels</b>
<p><b>6 months: Mentor 1 - comments</b></p> <p>We decided that since she is in the middle of her project, that if everyone is happy we would keep going.</p> <p>We are now into the more detailed logistics of the fieldwork which is where you would expect us to be I suppose.</p> <p>I have gained; it's always good to speak to other people in a different discipline because you get a different perspective... I have gained a certain amount of confidence because I think it is particularly challenging working with a colleague who is in the field and has a particular level of qualification as you have and what you can add... so that's been a positive for me.</p> <p>Well my mentee is a highly competent person and challenging, coming into this at a high level... I am giving her a steer... she is moving sideways into a new areas because she is doing something new... but there a gaps, she's at a level but I can fill those gaps.</p> <p>It's about giving her a bit more scaffolding... it's more like mentoring a junior colleague, I don't mean anything pejorative about that, it's more helping someone through a task, so there is more of an equality in it.</p> <p><b>6 months: Mentee 2 - comments</b></p> <p>Officially we have finished but unofficially we are interested in keeping in touch. I think I have learnt a lot I think there were two possible topics I could improve on but we only focussed on one.</p> <p>I think that having the work planned helped me in terms of prioritising and also I had to get on with it because I had to do the work with the students</p>	<p>Interpreted as - Progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor reflection, new knowledge</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor facilitating</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supporting</p> <p>Interpreted as - Redefinition, moving-on</p> <p>Interpreted as - Motivation, direction-</p>



<p><i>before they disappeared, so that was a driver but at the same time knowing I was meeting with her so yes I was trying to get the work done... so from that point of view that was good because you had your deadlines.</i></p> <p><i>She is very flexible as well so I think that on a couple of occasions I had to cancel the meeting because I couldn't make it and she was always flexible and happy.</i></p> <p><i>It's great having someone who is a genuine sounding board and genuinely wants to help.</i></p>	<p><b>planning</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supporting</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supporting</b></p>
<b>+9 months transcript data</b>	<b>Codes / Labels</b>
<p><b><u>9 months: Mentor 1 – comments</u></b></p> <p><i>We said we would carry on seeing each other, because the bits of the project I was talking her through were very much in the early stages and I would quite like to see where it goes after that.</i></p> <p><i>You potentially start working with somebody... as it becomes less scary to take the training wheels off and they start running.</i></p> <p><i>She has gone through the structural stuff and now has confidence.</i></p> <p><b><u>9 months: Mentee 2 – comments</u></b></p> <p><i>I think it has been very, very useful what she told me and taught me... how to do research with my students in a particular way and last year I couldn't do and this year I can, the way she suggested.</i></p> <p><i>Although the mentoring scheme is finished now we still meet up every now and then just to catch-up. I suppose mentoring is still on going and definitely in a positive way.</i></p> <p><i>She has just become a professor and she has been advising me how to become a reader. So it's more than just the project it's more on academic grounds which is really good.</i></p> <p><i>In the long term would like to be thought of as a potential mentor, not now but in the future, when I'm ready.</i></p> <p><i>It was a good pairing, we were both happy, we were having lunch just last week and just catching-up, so I think it was good for the two of us.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Redefining</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor enabling</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentee confidence, meeting aspirations</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentee transformational development, meeting aspirations</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Moving-on, redefinition</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - New goals, new relationship</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Moving-on, new goals</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Professional friendship</b></p>

### **Analysis of P1: M1 / M2 – progression through the phases**

The mentor was a female academic (Professor) and the mentee was a female academic (Senior Lecturer) both experienced academics in their own field of expertise and both possessed doctoral qualifications. The mentor was 40-49 years of age and had been with the organisation for 19 years and the mentee

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was 30-39 years of age and had been with the organisation for 5 years. The mentor and mentee had previous positive experience of a mentoring process through their doctoral training and research supervision of others. This prior experience of undertaking the role of mentor and or mentee would appear to be an important factor in determining their expectations of how the mentoring and relationship building may develop over time in order to achieve a positive outcome.

Both the mentor and mentee presented a sound understanding of the term 'mentoring' prior to the intervention commencing, for example;

*'Mentoring is about supporting colleagues on more peers' terms, where the person being mentored has pockets of inexperience. How it manifests itself for individuals will be different. Benefit for mentee, involvement with critical friend, to fill the gaps, to have someone who is supportive, have ideas, looks at things from a different perspective, asks different questions'. Mentor 1*

*'Mentoring is about, guidance, supervision, teamwork...positive, very useful for mentee. I can have different conversations and it helps being with an expert. I think I will be able to explore anything, help and support and use the experience and knowledge of mentor'. Mentee 2*

The relationship developed in a short space of time in terms of building a positive working relationship in the *rapport-building* and *initiation* phases. Key factors and determinants in this relationship include the expert knowledge and experience of the mentor which aligned to the mentee's needs and aspirations. The mentor's ability to listen, engage and advise, to set a clear framework and direction with their mentee. The mentor's flexibility in the process and their ability to reflect on their mentee's learning and their own. The mentor was very aware of building the mentee's confidence through the process and enabling them to develop over time and to become more independent. Key determinants displayed by the mentee included having a clear objective and goal to achieve at the start of the process, the motivation to make progress and gain new knowledge and skills in order to achieve these.

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*'I'm impressed with mentee's progress, we discuss and the mentee progresses from one meeting to the next. A flexible approach allows needs to dictate meetings, building mentee confidence. My mentee is very self-motivated, more giving permission, mentee confident in own discipline but moving sideways. The relationship is supportive a peer relationship, very positive, a slight does she need me... but sometimes you just need someone to talk to, somebody to spur you on. I'm learning from the process experiencing new research areas'. Mentor 1*

The participants conveyed satisfaction as to their pairing / matching, which is an enabling factor as conveyed by Cox (2005) and benefitted from working off-line as proffered by Megginson (1995).

*'Working outside department makes it richer... line manager may question performance'. Mentee 2*

The mentor was experienced in mentoring and demonstrated a sound understanding of her role and the process. She was supportive, enabling and facilitated the process with a degree of flexibility.

*'I found my mentor very supportive, knowledgeable and experienced, good to bounce ideas off, good to support planning. The relationship was very good, talked on equal basis. I feel supported and positive, mentor genuine sounding board and wants to help, work planned, prioritising output'. Mentee 2*

These attributes align with Clutterbuck's (2005) suggested mentor competences. The mentor and mentee agreed clear targets and direction and they were focussed on achieving these, this aligns with Gibb (1994), where the negotiation of clear targets is considered a key factor in relationship building and enabling positive outcomes.

*'I've not progressed as I would like due to time pressures, progress made on minor projects, main concern is time as rest of job taken over, lack of time to progress most significant issue'. Mentee 2*

Although pressure on time for the mentee was apparent she managed to prioritise her key objectives and completed them. Douglas (1997) identifies lack

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of time for engagement in mentoring as a potential issue. The mentee was highly motivated and competent and valued the experience and knowledge of her mentor. She was empowered by the support and advice from her mentor. Motivation is perceived as a key enabler in relationship development (Cullingford 2006).

*'Process is about building confidence. I think it is not a question of people not being able to do things but a case that they hadn't done them before, it was a sideways move and a question of confidence'. Mentor 1*

The mentee grew in confidence through the *progress-making, cultivation* phase. Morton (2003) identifies confidence building as a key factor in relationship development. The mentor reflected on her new skills, knowledge and experience of the process and this may be perceived as a positive determinant in relationship building since the mentor is gaining from the interaction and values the benefit for both her mentee and herself.

*'I've gained from working outside my discipline, no subject rivalry, different perspective, discussing methods and methodologies. I've gained confidence in supporting a colleague who is highly competent reassuring my own level of competence as a mentor'. Mentor 1*

The mentee experienced transformational development and met her objectives and aspirations developing new skills and knowledge.

*'I will carry on seeing my mentee because the project is ongoing, to see how it develops'. Mentor 1*

*'We've finished officially but keeping in-touch, I've learnt a lot, would want to share outcomes with my mentor. It's been a good experience for both myself and my mentor. We still meet-up every now and then just to catch-up over lunch. Overall it has been, very, very, useful. I see only benefits and think that the issue of having enough time is critical. I would like to be a mentor sometime'. Mentee 2*



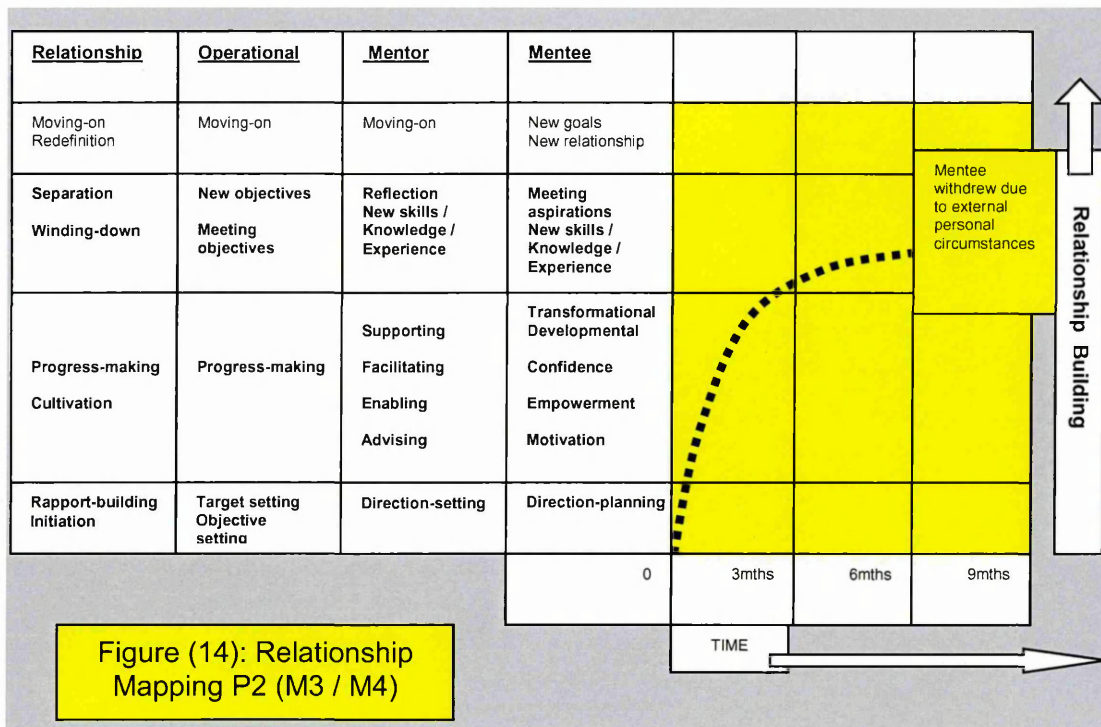
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These align with Clutterbuck (2005), Morton (2003), as characteristics of a positive relationship. The relationship was *redefined* and they are *moving-on* towards a *professional friendship*, *setting new goals*.

Both the mentor and mentee demonstrated a high degree of **perspicacity** through their ability to make sound judgements to enable the relationship to build progressively over time. They demonstrated their **capacity** to undertake their complementary roles and responsibilities within the mentoring relationship in order that the relationship may progress and build. They demonstrated an effective **modus operandi** in terms of managing the process to enable progressive relationship building and outcomes to be achieved. The characteristics and factors, the **ingredients**, which appeared to influence the relationship were identified as: time pressures on the mentee to make progress, which she overcame through high levels of motivation and realistic targets; the positive benefits of being geographically close to each other so that meetings could be easily convened; complementary matching and mutual respect for each other; positive benefits perceived working off-line with a mentor who is not the mentees line manager.

#### **4.06 Relationship P2: M3/M4**

This relationship displays the characteristics of a **progressive** relationship since it built through the identified relationship phases as proffered by Clutterbuck (2004) and Kram (1983) and resulted in a positive outcome for both participants, however, was terminated as a result of personal circumstances preventing the mentee completing the programme. The **relationship mapping template** was used to plot the relationship as it built over time based upon interpretation, sense-making and analysis of the participants' comments. The resultant profile is presented below with the accompanying data as extracted from the semi-structured interviews at interview points, +3, +6 and +9 months.



### Interpreted as:

+3 months transcript data	Codes/Labels
<p><b>3 months: Mentor 3 - comments</b></p> <p><i>I think it's gone well so far, really well, we've had some good outcomes that have come from it... he seems delighted by it so far and I'm very happy indeed with it.</i></p> <p><i>He had certain objectives that he wanted to get from it and at the time they seemed very ambitious... let me tell you what they were, first it was, after the Christmas holidays he wanted to have sent through to me two articles for possible journal submission and they came through and they weren't half bad... he's a scientist and what he wants to do is some research into plagiarism so it is research that is quite far removed from discipline area ...</i></p> <p><i>... so he produced two papers, I said to him did he want broad feedback or detailed... and if he wants detail we would have to have an agreement about whether he wanted me to be a real critical friend and he said he did, so, I spend probably two half days looking at this stuff, so I really went to town on it... it's not my field, it's always a bit of a risk isn't it giving such detailed feedback to a colleague, but he took it in the spirit in which it was offered and intended... so he accepted the feedback very positively</i></p> <p><i>... the other thing he wanted was to discover how to network and I said you know the best way is to identify a conference that looks good and be prepared to pipe up at that conference saying this is my name I am really interested in something similar, if I give you my card so that we can contact each other... and I made some enquiries and there was an HEA seminar on</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor support, progress-making</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation, supportive mentor</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentee learning new skills, knowledge, transformational development, progress-making</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Building mentee confidence through advising, enabling, facilitating, supporting, progress-making</b></p>

<p>plagiarism in STEM subject areas which is perfect for this guy... so I sent him that and he was very excited by that and he would be definitely going to it...</p> <p>We talked through what strategy he might take for putting down a marker for himself there... it's absolutely the right forum for him to be able to do that... he has subsequently submitted a paper for a similar sort of event and that would be late summer I think... we had a discussion about conference proceedings because he is a bit nervous that if he put in a conference proceeding that this might negate a future peer reviewed journal paper which is what he really wants to do... so I said different disciplines have different ways of working.</p> <p>I've put a lot of time into it but it's nice to mentor someone and see that they've grown partly as a consequence of your input.</p> <p>The other thing that has worked well is that we've had a very clear agreement about how we want to work together... to have a clear understanding of expectations... I've asked him to write a record of each meeting.</p> <p>Very positive... because the scheme is new to me I wanted to make sure it worked really well and I've tried to put him at the centre of all my thinking about... but I have a stake in it as well because I want to make sure it works well so if I do it again I can learn from it and maybe take a more efficient approach... I've learnt the setting up of the expectations thing at the beginning has been a really important thing to do, not least of which it can be very crushing for a colleague because they are exposing themselves quite a lot of the time... so it can be quite crushing to receive full and frank feedback, so we agreed that I would serve as a very picky journal reviewer... nonetheless I was still pretty nervous about how he would receive that... so I've learnt a lot from that... what I've also learnt personally is that it is very possible for me to... because I think I have done a pretty good job on this to be honest... it's possible for me to help people like him even though his research focus has no connection with mine whatsoever... it's been a real challenge to work through his stuff... when you are looking at potential journal articles that are outside your comfort zone as far as the field is concerned, it's a big challenge really... it's very time consuming... I've felt really stretched by it because it's important for him... what he wants is good quality feedback not something that could be counterproductive so it is a big challenge but it has challenged me in a really positive way.</p> <p>I think the guy will walk away from this relationship and think I got a lot from that... we've sort of left it at the moment because we have sort of achieved all the initial outcomes already.</p> <p><b>3 months: Mentee 4 - comments</b></p> <p>To be honest one of the things I like about this mentor, mentee thing is that it gave me some deadlines to finish whatever I wanted to do, because at the moment all the research that I am doing is in my own time, because of that I</p>	<p>Interpreted as - Building mentee confidence through advising, enabling, facilitating, supporting, progress-making, reflecting</p> <p>Interpreted as - Supportive mentor, building mentee confidence</p> <p>Interpreted as - Direction-setting, planning</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive, advising, enabling, reflecting, new knowledge, progress- making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Building mentee confidence through advising, enabling facilitating, supporting, transformational development, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation, confidence, progress-making, mentor enabling</p>
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<p><i>always postpone... I have data for at least four different papers but I never have a chance to write them up... so because of this mentor session my mentor has said I want to see this, this and this... because of that I managed to write at least the first draft and he actually went through that as well and all that I've got to do is re-jig a bit and it won't take too much of a time... so for two papers it's all done and dusted, that's good.</i></p> <p><i>I think I'm in a slightly different position than other mentees because my situation is that I know what I'm doing but don't know where I'm going... he took it seriously and without him I would not have written up what I have with my work load so I'm happy that there are two papers already there.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation, confidence, progress-making, supportive mentor, learning new skills, new knowledge</p>
<b>+6 months transcript data</b>	<b>Codes/Labels</b>
<p><b><u>6 months: Mentor 3 - comments</u></b></p> <p><i>I haven't seen my mentee since we last spoke, he's been quite elusive and I have sent him several emails because I think the last time we met in March I think everything was going well then and he sent me a record of where we had got and what we had planned and agreed what would happen next... he has got back to me and said he was really sorry he's had some things going on which have distracted him from this mentoring scheme and to say that he hadn't been ignoring me... we had made some really good progress.</i></p> <p><i>I think its helped kick start some ideas he was playing around with and turn them in to tangible outputs and I think he has identified at least one network which seems relevant for him which he has been able to plug into, to an extent anyway...so from that point of view I'm very positive.</i></p> <p><i>He said he is slowly coming back to life and will do this thing soon and send me an update, so I think he has probably been through a sticky patch and hopefully turned a corner.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive</p> <p>Interpreted as - Progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive</p>
<p><b><u>6 months: Mentee 4 - comments</u></b></p> <p><i>So far it has definitely been worthwhile because I know where I'm going... and I've had good feedback from my mentor regarding the papers so I can improve overall.</i></p> <p><i>I think we are almost finished because what we said was that I have identified two conferences for which I can give a presentation, two of them came with papers as well so after that I will come back with the experience I have had and the presentations I have to write those as a paper... so after the last meeting I have not made contact because of my goals I haven't been able to do it but now that I am back so I have to write this up....</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentor supporting, mentee learning, progress-making.</p> <p>Interpreted as - Redefinition, moving-on?</p>
<b>+9 months transcript data</b>	<b>Codes/Labels</b>
<p><b><u>9 months: Mentor 3 – comments</u></b></p> <p><i>I don't think there has been a lot of progress since then in July he sent me an email saying there were things in his life, that weren't work related that were stopping him from progressing.</i></p> <p><b><u>9 months: Mentee 4 – comments</u></b></p> <p><i>Mentee not available for interview.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Redefining, relationship terminated due to mentee personal circumstances</p>



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## **Analysis of P2: M3 / M4 – progression through the phases**

The mentor was a male academic (Professor) and the mentee was a male academic (Senior Lecturer) both experienced academics in their own field of expertise and both possessed doctoral qualifications. The mentor was 40-49 years of age and had been with the organisation for 23 years and the mentee was 40-49 years of age and had been with the organisation for 7 years. The mentor and mentee had previous positive experience of a mentoring process through their doctoral training and research supervision of others. This prior experience of undertaking the role of mentor and or mentee would appear to be an important factor in determining their expectations of how the mentoring and relationship building may develop over time in order to achieve a positive outcome. As Garvey (2008), refers to as '*readiness to mentor*'.

The mentee was not contactable for the first interview but the mentor had a sound understanding of the term 'mentoring' prior to the intervention commencing, as;

*'Helping people to facilitate work towards research and teaching ambitions. To develop concrete plans for achieving outcomes. Less formally working out what it is they would really like to do, helping them think through plans for meeting those ambitions. Quite different working with somebody from a different discipline might be challenging. There are some areas I would not be able to help with effectively. I want to be comfortable although I will probably learn from being taken out of my comfort zone. Encourage cross-sharing of ideas. Share what you might not do with a close colleague or line manager who may question your professionalism and your ability. The right match is important. At the start need to discuss the process of being a researcher, be clear with expectations and have a realistic understanding of what the mentoring process can achieve. I do see myself as someone who will sit down and see how we can work together, a lot of small steps can enable real progress on a long journey, likely to be small steps to give confidence. Need to be realistic and clear with each other. Gained a lot from helping colleagues in the past, finding it intrinsically rewarding. There is a nurturing thing going on. Not sure how open ended the journey is, don't want dependency culture, important to identify boundaries early on and what the outcomes might be. There should be an end. Work to a programme and you need to see movement and be reflective'. **Mentor 3***

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The relationship developed progressively through the phases of the mentoring process with positive outcomes for both of the mentor and mentee, both commenting that they had benefitted from the process. The identifiable phases were *rapport-building*, *initiation*, *progress-making* and *cultivation*. Key factors and determinants in this relationship include the expert knowledge and experience of the mentor which aligned to the mentee's needs and aspirations. The mentor's ability to listen, engage and advise, to set a clear framework and direction with their mentee. The mentor's flexibility in the process and their ability to reflect on their mentee's learning and their own. The mentor was very aware of building the mentee's confidence through the process and enabling them to develop over time and to become more independent. Key determinants displayed by the mentee included having a clear objective and goal to achieve at the start of the process, the motivation to make progress and gain new knowledge and skills in order to achieve these. Motivation is perceived as a key enabler in relationship development (Cullingford 2006). The participants conveyed satisfaction as to their pairing / matching, which is an enabling factor as conveyed by Cox (2005) and benefitted from working off-line as proffered by Megginson (1995). The mentor was experienced in mentoring and demonstrated a sound understanding of his role and the process of mentoring. He was supportive, enabling and facilitated the process with a degree of flexibility.

*'I've spend focussed time to review my mentee's work, good to see my mentee grow and develop, open and explorative to new ideas based around an outline structure. Relationship very positive, mentee at the centre of my thinking'. Mentor 3*

*'Very supportive mentor, very happy with outcomes so far'. Mentee 4*

These attributes align with Clutterbuck's (2005) suggested mentor competences.

The mentor and mentee agreed clear targets and direction and they were focussed on achieving these. This aspect aligns with Gibb (1994), where the

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negotiation of clear targets is considered a key factor in enabling the development of a mentoring relationship.

*'Having a very clear agreement had worked well, agreeing type of feedback, clear understanding of expectations, keeping records of each meeting and agreement. I think the mentoring was going really well, some really good outcomes being achieved, my mentee is happy with progress, we've agree certain objectives which are ambitious but they were being achieved'. Mentor 3*

*'Very useful to have deadlines to finish work, I'm pleased with the outcomes'. Mentee 4*

Time pressure and personal issues prevented the mentee maintaining his progress. Douglas (1997) identifies lack of time for engagement in mentoring as a potential issue.

*'Lack of time is the biggest issue'. Mentee 4*

The mentee was highly motivated at the start of the relationship and competent and valued the experience and knowledge of his mentor. The mentee grow in confidence through the *progress-making, cultivation* phase.

*'It is about building confidence, for my mentee to go away and pick things up and do them. Building confidence reduces the likelihood of dependency'. Mentor 3*

*'I've made good progress awaiting feedback from conference paper, I will continue to progress, able to identify areas to publish, happy to move towards goals'. Mentee 4*

The mentor reflected on his skills, knowledge and experience, which are positive outcomes of the process as highlighted by Morton (2003) and Clutterbuck (2005).

*'I'm learning from the experience, I've been stretched but enjoying the process, quite demanding, feeling challenged in a good way, gained from the experience, confirming I am quite a good mentor. It's different helping people on own project. Mentoring has alerted me to my capacity as a mentor working outside my immediate subject area. The experience had been very positive'. Mentor 3*

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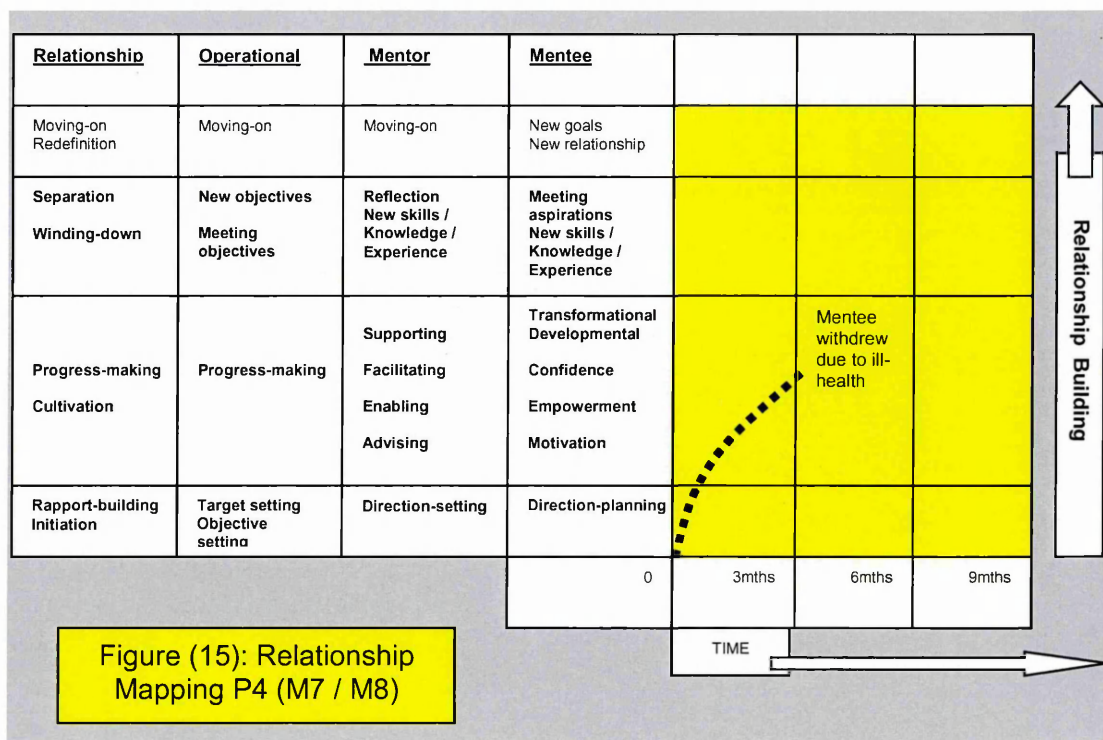
The mentee experienced transformational development to a point and met a number of objectives. He also engaged in new research social environments and networks which align to Kram's (1983) notion of psychosocial development through mentoring.

The relationship displayed the features of a progressive relationship. The mentor demonstrated a high degree of **perspicacity** through his ability to make sound judgements to enable the relationship to build progressively. Both the mentor and mentee demonstrated their **capacity** to undertake their complementary roles and responsibilities within the mentoring relationship in order that the relationship may progress and build. The relationship built through effective **modus operandi** in terms of managing the process setting clear targets and objectives to enable progressive relationship building and outcomes to be achieved. The characteristics and factors, the **ingredients**, which appeared to influence the relationship were identified as: time pressures on the mentee to fully engage; the negative imposition of being geographically remote so that meetings could not be easily convened; complementary matching and mutual respect for each other; positive benefits perceived working off-line with a mentor who is not the mentees line manager.

#### **4.07 Relationship P4: M7 / M8**

This relationship developed through the initial relationship building phases and was progressing well but unfortunately the mentee had to withdraw as a result of ill-health. For the purpose of this research it has been labelled as a **progressive** relationship since the purpose is to determine the factors and determinants which contributed to the mentoring relationship building and these can be considered up to the point of mentee withdrawal. The **relationship mapping template** was used to plot the relationship as it built over time based upon interpretation, sense-making and analysis of the participants' comments. The resultant profile is presented below with the accompanying data as extracted from the semi-structured interviews at interview points, +3, +6 and +9 months.





## Interpreted as:

+3 months transcript data	Codes/Labels
<p><b>3 months: Mentor 7 - comments</b></p> <p>The mentoring is fairly good so far, my mentee is drafting a paper and we have met twice. I try to focus my mentee on specific activities to make the process manageable and that she seems comfortable with this approach. She is progressing well and benefiting from having someone she is accountable to.</p> <p>I try and get my mentee to be tied down to a specific activity and make it manageable and she seemed to like that... she said you are good at this aren't you.</p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive, direction-setting, progress-making</p>
<p><b>3 months: Mentee 8 - comments</b></p> <p>I don't think it could be better really, I like it because it fits in with what I'm doing and it's not highly pressured. I'm getting enough pressure elsewhere, but it's making me put the time in.</p> <p>It's mainly down to me so it's making me take control which is what I need, but I get gentle nudges now and again which is what I need.</p> <p>It's how I would have expected actually. It's relaxed enough and very open and very suitable for me, he understands the way I'm thinking, so I think it is a good pairing. It's kind of given me a kick-up the arse and confidence to think that I can do it, that I have something to say, I have an ally, I have no reason to doubt him but he thinks I have something publishable.</p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive, mentee empowerment</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor, enabling, mentee empowerment, confidence building</p>

<p><i>He's given me pointers to make my work longer and add bits to make it publishable, to make it an article rather than a conference paper. The fact that we have meetings set up means that it makes me do it, so it gives me a different priority, I have put in the time and feel quite chuffed.</i></p> <p><i>Hopefully more people will do this kind of thing and take it on board and certainly, obviously not yet, but in the future, I would like to be a mentor to somebody else.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive, advising, enabling, mentee motivated, confidence building, progress-making</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentee confidence building</b></p>
<b>+6 months transcript data</b>	<b>Codes/Labels</b>
<p><b><u>6 months: Mentor 8 – comments</u></b></p> <p><i>I am actually leaving; I haven't been well and am going to concentrate on getting myself better. I have not met with my mentor since we last spoke, I was really keen. There was a lot of encouragement about what I was doing and that was really good.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive, mentee confidence, relationship terminated due to mentee ill-health</b></p>

### **Analysis of P4: M7 / M8 – progression through the phases**

The mentor was a male academic (Principal Lecturer) and the mentee was a female academic (Senior Lecturer). The mentor was an experienced academic and possessed a doctoral qualification. The mentee was less experienced and possessed a first degree. The mentor was 40-49 years of age and had been with the organisation for 6 years and the mentee was 40-49 years of age and had been with the organisation for 2 years. The mentor had previous positive experience of a mentoring process through their doctoral training and research supervision of others. This prior experience of undertaking the role of mentor would appear to be an important factor in determining expectations of how the mentoring and relationship building may develop over time in order to achieve a positive outcome. As Garvey (2008), refers to as '*readiness to mentor*'.

The mentor presented a sound understanding of the term 'mentoring' and the process of mentoring prior to the intervention commencing, for example;

*'Mentoring is about someone more experienced or knowledgeable in a particular subject domain or methods and who is able to pass on knowledge or encourage and support someone who is less experienced and would benefit from that supervision. Facilitate not that directive, being adaptive and engaging in reflection. Good mentors are probably those that engage in reflective practice on a regular basis, challenge in a good way for the mentee to think differently. Needs to be two-way interaction. Good to flit between being a mentor or mentee as you always learn. Even if I don't know about the area I still have knowledge of the principles of research and how to get projects completed. I can still help people whatever their background is. Advantages depend*

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*upon the attitude the mentor takes and likewise mentees, if not well matched could be a problem. Important to be assertive and agree an agenda that you both agree is workable and doable. Disadvantages; if people have different expectations or mentor over bearing, blurring boundaries on ethical collaboration. Mentor must have mentees best interests at heart, unconditional positive regard. I want to be challenged, I want my mentee to be open and I want to be business like so that I can give advice and support. At the end it's whether both can benefit'. **Mentor 7***

The mentee was a novice to mentoring but presented a limited and basic understanding of the term 'mentoring' as outlined below.

*'Mentoring is about working alongside somebody who is at the same level but more experienced. A mentor is a sounding board for somebody with less experience. I'm hoping it will be good, to kick start me, to help me on the ladder, which I don't know much about. I really don't know enough about it. I'm excited about research but quite how the mentoring process will work I don't know'. **Mentee 8***

The relationship was developing through the initial identified phases of the mentoring process with potentially positive outcomes for the mentee and satisfaction for the mentor.

*'The relationship is comfortable. My mentee said you are good at this which gave me satisfaction'. **Mentor 7***

Key factors and determinants in this relationship include the expert knowledge and experience of the mentor. The mentor's ability to listen, engage and advise, to set a clear framework and direction with their mentee.

The mentee conveyed satisfaction as to their pairing / matching, which is an important factor as conveyed by Cox (2005) in relationship development. The mentor was experienced in mentoring and demonstrated a sound understanding of his role and the process. He was supportive, enabling and facilitated the process. These attributes align with Clutterbuck's (2005) suggested mentor competences.



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The mentor and mentee agreed clear targets and direction and they were focussed on achieving these. This is identified by Gibb (1994) as a key prerequisite for positive relationship development.

*'My mentee is drafting a paper, focussing on specific activities to make progress manageable. My mentee appears comfortable with this approach, she's progressing well and benefiting from having someone to be accountable to'. Mentor 7*

Although pressure of time for the mentee was apparent she managed to prioritise her key objectives. The mentee was motivated and valued the experience and knowledge of her mentor. Motivation is perceived as a key enabler in relationship development (Cullingford 2006). The relationship developed in a short space of time in terms of building a working relationship in the *rapport-building, initiation and progress-making* phases.

The mentee gained confidence by the support and advice from her mentor.

*'Progress is good, I'm pleased with the interactions, feel more in control, getting gentle nudges. My mentor is really positive on the work I've produced and I've gained confidence. The relationship is professional and I like that. It's a good pairing. I feel I can do that, I have something to say'. Mentee 8*

The mentee valued the opportunity to work-off line which may be perceived as an enabling factor as proffered by Megginson (1995).

The mentee stated that she would like to be considered as a mentor in the future, which as a positive indicator for the relationship (Clutterbuck 2005). The relationship was developing well and it is unfortunate that the mentee had to withdraw from the process due to the mentee's ill-health.

*'I'm disappointed in not continuing, keen to be part of it'. Mentee 8*

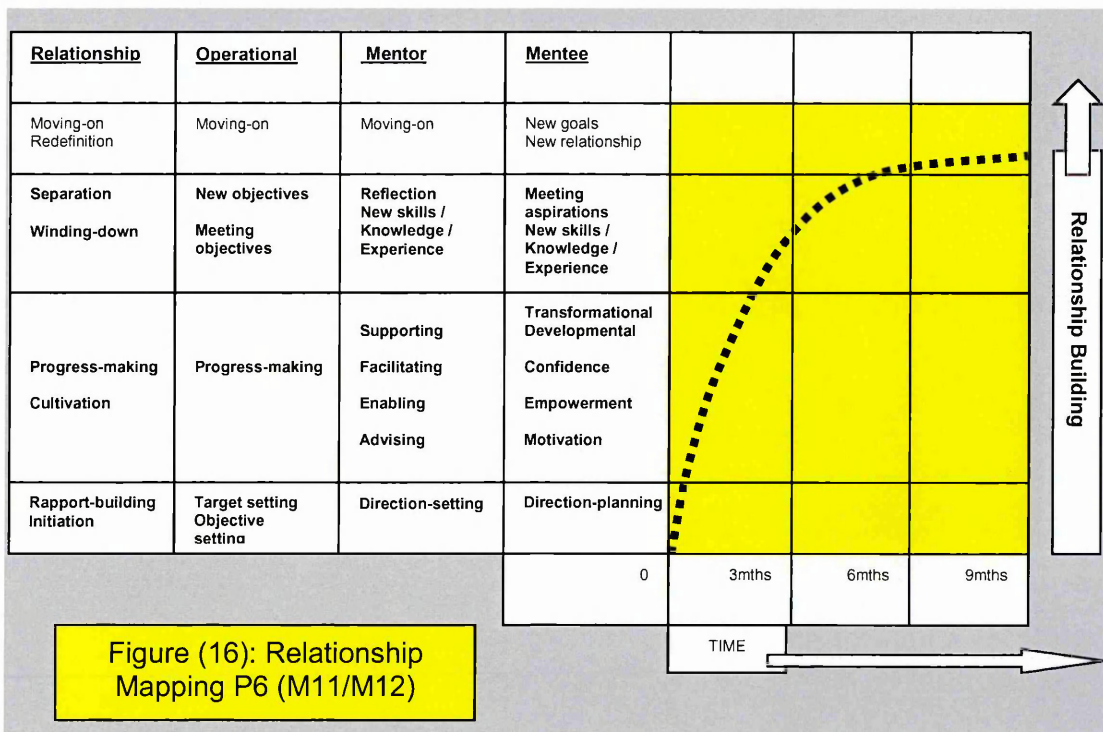
The relationship displayed the features of a progressive relationship. The mentor demonstrated a high degree of **perspicacity** through his ability to make sound judgements to enable the relationship to build progressively. Both the



mentor and mentee demonstrated their **capacity** to undertake their complementary roles and responsibilities within the mentoring relationship in order that the relationship may progress and build. The relationship built through effective **modus operandi** in terms of managing the process setting manageable targets and objectives to enable progressive relationship building and outcomes to be achieved. The characteristics and factors, the **ingredients**, which appeared to influence the relationship were identified as: time pressures on the mentee to fully engage; positive benefits perceived working off-line with a mentor who is not the mentees line manager; complementary matching.

#### 4.08 Relationship P6: M11/M12

This relationship built through all the identified relationship phases as proffered by Clutterbuck (2004) and Kram (1983) and resulted in a positive outcome for both participants and is therefore labelled as a **progressive** relationship. The **relationship mapping template** was used to plot the relationship as it built over time based upon interpretation, sense-making and analysis of the participants' comments. The resultant profile is presented below with the accompanying data as extracted from the semi-structured interviews at interview points, +3, +6 and +9 months.



## Interpreted as:

+3 months transcript data	Codes/Labels
<p><b>3 months: Mentor 11 - comments</b></p> <p><i>It's going well we've had two meetings and we have a third on Wednesday and the mentee is now, through working with another colleague is involved in an EU funded pedagogic research project... so things are going well.</i></p> <p><i>We try and keep it quite low key and flexible and that's working very well... we've both had to move dates, my mentee had to move the last one and I've moved this one... and by having a very outline structure of what we are going to discuss we've been able to be quite open and explore new ideas and in the last meeting we spent more time with me suggesting ways to progress the research project he is now involved with rather than what he originally wanted to explore because this is giving him a new way to progress.</i></p> <p><i>He seems far more confident and competent to actually take this on because... well first of all he's coming into research new anyway but then to move from an area as divorced from pedagogic research as textile design, you know to make that paradigm shift has been good to see how quickly he's taken that on board.</i></p> <p><b>3 months: Mentee 12 - comments</b></p> <p><i>It's going really well, I had my first meeting in early November... which we went through the key areas I thought I would benefit from having a mentor... my mentor talked about his background and how he might be able to help.</i></p> <p><i>Three meetings and all productive... He's very good at pointing me in the right direction without giving answers... it's all very positive in that it's all his experience to guide me... last week we actually went through some data and statistics and he's identified up to potentially three great research projects.</i></p> <p><i>I can't say there isn't anything that's not working, because we agreed everything at the beginning.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentor supporting, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor advising, enabling, facilitating, supporting, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee, confidence building, empowerment, learning new skills, knowledge, transformational development, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Direction-setting, mentor supportive</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive, advising, facilitating, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Direction-setting</p>
+6 months transcript data	Codes/Labels
<p><b>6 months: Mentor 11 - comments</b></p> <p><i>Well formally it's completed, the mentee did ask that we keep in touch and probably meet up again perhaps early next academic year, so I said I would be happy with that.</i></p> <p><i>What's worked well is for us to be able to share ideas, we have both learnt from it, it's given me insight.</i></p> <p><i>In this case I wanted to be led by my mentee so what I've done is listen to the issues, given the immediate response, but at the next meeting that's when I've been able to be proactive in between... I've found this and you might like to look at it... because I want to react to what the mentee feels they need... being supportive.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Redefinition, moving-on</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor reflective</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor, advising, enabling, facilitating, supportive</p>

<p><b>6 months: Mentee 12 - comments</b></p> <p><i>It has been ongoing up to now, but whether it will continue I am uncertain... I was looking for advice and support with a particular research project which is now completed although I still have yet to write it up... which is good.</i></p> <p><i>The best thing is being able to talk quite freely and openly about things and not feeling judged... him being a very good mentor, he's been very good at advising and helping at the same time he has not directed me in anyway, he has supported me and challenged a few things that has made me think differently with my lack of experience on the research side.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentee meeting aspirations, redefinition, moving-on</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor advising, supportive, mentee transformational development</p>
<p><b>+9 months transcript data</b></p>	<p><b>Codes/Labels</b></p>
<p><b>9 months: Mentor 11 – comments</b></p> <p><i>Only to say that I have really enjoyed working with someone from a very different discipline it makes you really look at yourself and your own practice.</i></p> <p><b>9 months: Mentee 12 – comments</b></p> <p><i>I have found it very helpful... I am still being mentored, in fact I have another session next week, but that's after a long break. He is happy to guide me along the way and help me in any way he can to hear my ideas and what I'm planning to do.</i></p> <p><i>The benefits... particularly are for people like me who are new to the process.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Reflective, new knowledge</p> <p>Interpreted as - Relationship moving-on, redefinition, new goals</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee reflection</p>

### **Analysis of P6: M11 / M12 – progression through the phases**

The mentor was a male academic (Professor) and the mentee was a male academic (Senior Lecturer). Both the mentor and mentee were experienced academics in their own field of expertise and both possessed doctoral qualifications. The mentor was 50-59 years of age and had been with the organisation for 4 years and the mentee was 40-49 years of age and had been with the organisation for 2 years. The mentor and mentee had previous positive experience of a mentoring process through their doctoral training and research supervision of others. This prior experience of undertaking the role of mentor and or mentee would appear to be an important factor in determining their expectations of how the mentoring and relationship building may develop over time in order to achieve a positive outcome. The readiness to mentor or be mentored is identified as a key determinant in the likely positive outcome of a mentoring intervention, Garvey (2008).



Both the mentor and mentee presented a sound understanding of the term 'mentoring' prior to the intervention commencing, for example;

*'A mentor to act as a guide, critical friend, to offer advice. Different from teaching role because mentee needs to drive where they want to be and the mentor needs to help them get there. In teaching we start with the end point and try to get the student to reach it. Mentee coming with their own end point and we are navigating them there. Advantage is accessing shared expertise, I may be a mentor but realised I could benefit in certain areas from being a mentee. What is important is that what takes place in the mentoring meeting stays in the meeting, confirming confidentiality at the beginning is essential. I don't have concerns about the programme as mentoring is something I've been doing for a long time. Interested in working with people from different disciplines'.*

**Mentor 11**

*'A one-to-one relationship which hopefully facilitates development of specific knowledge, skills, behaviours and networks for someone like me who is less experienced. Confidential, non-judgemental relationship to facilitate a wide range of learning and development. Mentor as a sounding board who is going to listen and give support, question and advise rather than tell. It should not be instructive more about me learning and then making informed decisions. Positive, with someone I don't know from a different discipline, good to get a different perspective. It will be interesting to see how it works. If you have a good relationship, based on trust I think it should enable me to develop and achieve my goals, to enhance current knowledge and skills and hopefully a two-way process. Issues might occur if there is not full engagement between the mentor and mentee'.* **Mentee 12**

The relationship developed in a short space of time in terms of building a positive working relationship in the *rapport-building* and *initiation* phases. Key factors and determinants in this relationship include the expert knowledge and experience of the mentor which aligned to the mentee's needs and aspirations. The mentor's ability to listen, engage and advise, to set a clear framework and direction with their mentee. The mentor's flexibility in the process and their ability to reflect on their mentee's learning and their own. The mentor was very aware of building the mentee's confidence through the process and enabling them to develop over time and to become more independent. Key determinants displayed by the mentee included having a clear objective and goal to achieve



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at the start of the process, the motivation to make progress and gain new knowledge and skills in order to achieve these.

The participants conveyed satisfaction as to their pairing / matching, which is identified as an important enabler to positive relationship development (Cox 2005) and the benefits of working off-line (Clutterbuck 1995).

*'I valued working with someone from a different area of the organisation because there are no line management issues. I feel good about working with someone I do not see on a daily basis'. Mentor 11*

*'The matching is good. Working with somebody from a totally different discipline has worked well. I can be more enquiring than I would have been with a line-manager'. Mentee 12*

The mentor was experienced in mentoring and demonstrated a sound understanding of his role and the process. He was supportive, enabling and facilitated the process with a degree of flexibility, this aligns with Clutterbuck's (2005) suggest mentor competences.

*'The mentoring is going well. Linked mentee up with another colleague which would help him realise his ambitions through undertaking the project. The flexible approach is working well and feel the relationship is open and fluid evidenced by regular contact'. Mentor 11*

*'I value my mentor's experience to help me on my way and his ability to think about his ideas and provided good advice on where I am producing good work and where to develop certain areas. The mentoring is going well, and the discussions were open and honest. My mentor talked about his background and how he might help'. Mentee 12*

The mentor and mentee agreed clear targets and direction and they were focussed on achieving these which aligns with Gibb (1994), where he suggests the importance of this aspect in developing the mentoring relationship.

Although pressure of time for the mentee was apparent he managed to prioritise his key objectives and completed them. The mentee was highly motivated and

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competent and valued the experience and knowledge of his mentor. These are perceived as key relationship enablers by Cullingford (2006).

*'I regard my mentor highly – advising, helping not directing, supporting, challenging, and made me think differently. The main issues relate to time and workload. I feel inspired and encouraged, grown my interest in research'. Mentee 12*

The relationship developed in a short space of time in terms of building a working relationship in the *rapport-building* and *initiation* phases. The mentee was empowered by the support and advice from his mentor. The mentee grew in confidence through the *progress-making, cultivation* phase.

*'My mentee is far more confident and competent. The relationship is very professional and very productive. My mentee feels positive and the process has done him a world of good'. Mentor 11*

The mentor reflected on his new skills, knowledge and experience. Ehrich (2004) identifies potential benefits for both parties, as in promoting personal satisfaction and growth.

*'I'm learning how difficult it is to switch paradigms, really enjoying the process. Sharing ideas has meant we have both learnt, seeing different perspectives, reflection on own practice, challenging and beneficial'. Mentor 11*

The mentee experienced transformational development and met his objectives and aspirations developing new skills and knowledge.

*'The project I'm involved with is going to run for a period beyond the planned mentoring intervention and my mentor has agreed to be critical friend'. Mentee 12*

The relationship was *redefined* and continuing such that guidance could be further sought by the mentee.

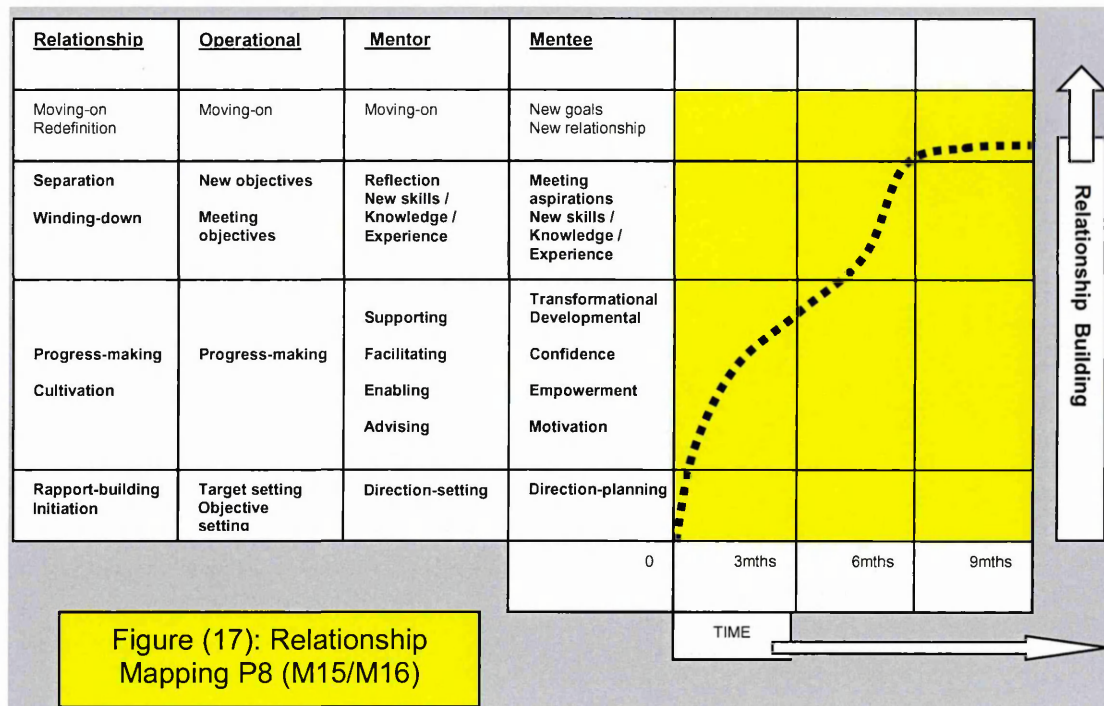
Both the mentor and mentee demonstrated a high degree of **perspicacity** through their ability to make sound judgements to enable the relationship to build progressively over time. They demonstrated their **capacity** to undertake

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their complementary roles and responsibilities within the mentoring relationship in order that the relationship may progress and build. They demonstrated an effective **modus operandi** in terms of managing the process to enable progressive relationship building and outcomes to be achieved. The characteristics and factors, the **ingredients**, which appeared to influence the relationship were identified as: time pressures on the mentee to make progress, which he overcame through high levels of motivation and realistic targets; the positive benefits of being geographically close to each other so that meetings could be easily convened; complementary matching and mutual respect for each other; positive benefits perceived working off-line with a mentor who is not the mentees line manager.

#### **4.09 Relationship P8: M15 / M16**

This relationship built through all the identified relationship phases as proffered by Clutterbuck (2004) and Kram (1983) and resulted in a positive outcome for both participants and is therefore labelled as a **progressive** relationship. The **relationship mapping template** was used to plot the relationship as it built over time based upon interpretation, sense-making and analysis of the participants' comments. The resultant profile is presented below with the accompanying data as extracted from the semi-structured interviews at interview points, +3, +6 and +9 months.



### Interpreted as:

+3 months transcript data	Codes/Labels
<p><b>3 months: Mentor 15 - comments</b></p> <p><i>It was a very interesting exchange of views really about ways we could collaborate.</i></p> <p><i>I see it more as a collaboration than a mentoring, but that's my particular view of it...it just depends what the mentee and mentor wants to get out of it.</i></p> <p><i>One thing we discussed was that my mentee said she didn't feel strong in writing things and getting them out and I said I would be happy to read what she wrote... that will be a very positive way forward.</i></p> <p><i>The mentoring thing is quite interesting to see how other colleagues see their work, they have a different eye that make you reflect back on your own work I think.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor discussing, advising, facilitating, supportive</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor reflective</p>
<p><b>3 months: Mentee 16 - comments</b></p> <p><i>I'm near the end of writing up some research I did last year and I will be taking it to my mentor so I will be arranging a meeting after Easter.</i></p> <p><i>I'm enjoying working with someone who is I would say outside my immediate school but have similar interests in research.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivated, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivated</p>
+6 months transcript data	Codes/Labels
<p><b>6 months: Mentor 15 - comments</b></p> <p><i>Well I have had a paper from my mentee and I have commented on that. She has made progress. I think the involvement will carry on because we</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive, mentee progress-making</p>



<p><i>have a common interest.</i></p> <p><i>I think she will send me other things to read and I would be happy to do that. It has been working well overall and we have built a relationship which is ongoing.</i></p> <p><i>It makes you reflect on your own practice and how best to draw things out of other people and how to play to their strengths, so it's good as a piece of reflection.</i></p> <p><b>6 months: Mentee 16 - comments</b></p> <p><i>I prepared an action plan which I sent to my mentor and he has come back with some very good suggestions.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Redefining, moving-on</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor reflective</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive, mentee motivated, new goals</b></p>
<b>+9 months transcript data</b>	<b>Codes/Labels</b>
<p><b>9 months: Mentor 15 – comments</b></p> <p><i>The good thing is that my mentee has finished what she set out to do and she has become a reader. There is output and she is getting things done.</i></p> <p><b>9 months: Mentee 16 – comments</b></p> <p><i>I wouldn't hesitate to go to him for advice or for him to be a critical reader for another article so that relationship has been established.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Mentee meeting aspirations, moving-on</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Redefinition, moving-on, professional friendship</b></p>

### **Analysis of P8: M15 / M16 – progression through the phases**

The mentor was a male academic (Reader) and the mentee was a female academic (Principal Lecturer) both experienced academics in their own field of expertise and the mentor possessed doctoral qualifications. The mentor was 40-49 years of age and had been with the organisation for 20 years and the mentee was 40-49 years of age and had been with the organisation for 12 years. The mentor and mentee had previous positive experience of a mentoring process through their doctoral training and research supervision of others. This prior experience of undertaking the role of mentor and or mentee would appear to be an important factor in determining their expectations of how the mentoring and relationship building may develop over time in order to achieve a positive outcome.

The mentor presented a sound understanding of the term 'mentoring' prior to the intervention commencing, for example;

*'A process of helping people to reflect, getting people to reflect on where they are, strengths and weaknesses and to move on. It's not a process of telling people what to do but a process of aiding them so that they know how to do it. You do more with a*

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*mentor than you might do by yourself. I'm looking forward to contact with another department. The opportunity to reflect on their work and my own and generally take part in this reflective activity which is an important part of academic life and something I enjoy. Most people's research is interesting, perhaps not riveting but there is something interesting in it and to move that on with people in excellent. I think it is largely for the mentee to disclose what they want to disclose. I hope to give something that is useful to the person I am mentoring, to make sure what I do is useful, so my main concern is that I'm successful in it'. Mentor 15*

The relationship developed in a short space of time in terms of building a positive working relationship in the *rapport-building* and *initiation* phases. Key factors and determinants in this relationship include the expert knowledge and experience of the mentor which aligned to the mentee's needs and aspirations. The mentor's ability to set a clear framework and direction with their mentee. The mentor and mentee agreed targets in relation to her writing output.

*'I've prepared an action plan for the longer term and am developing my writing'. Mentee 16*

The mentor's support in the process and their ability to reflect on their mentee's learning and their own. The mentor was aware of building the mentee's confidence through the process and enabling them to develop over time and to become more independent. Key determinants displayed by the mentee included the motivation to make progress despite significant time pressures and gain new knowledge and skills in order to achieve these.

The participants conveyed satisfaction as to their pairing / matching which is an important factor in positive relationship development, as conveyed by Cox (2005).

*'I'm finding the mentoring useful. I'm really pleased with the person I've been paired with, someone who has published a lot. I am good at doing research, good at collating, but what I'm not good at is actually writing it up and getting it published'. Mentee 16*

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The mentee conveyed satisfaction working off-line with their mentor and this is identified as an important enabler to positive relationship development (Megginson 1995).

*'I'm enjoying working with someone who is I would say outside my immediate school but have similar interests in research'.* **Mentee 16**

The mentor was experienced in mentoring and demonstrated a sound understanding of his role in the process. He was supportive, enabling and facilitated the process flexibility.

*'I'm supporting her to develop her writing. The relationship is more like research colleagues working collaboratively'.* **Mentor 15**

Although pressure of time for the mentee was apparent she managed to ultimately prioritise her key objective and completed, she was motivated to complete her objectives. Douglas (1997) identified the lack of time as a potential issue in building effective mentoring relationships.

*'I'm concerned about time pressures for both myself and my mentee'.* **Mentor 15**

*'I'm finding difficult with time pressures, struggling to find time to progress my writing'.*  
**Mentee 16**

Both of the mentor and mentee gained from the process which aligns to Ehrich's (2004) assertion that mentoring relationships can result in personal satisfaction and growth for both the mentor and mentee. The mentor reflected on his experience.

*'I've reflected on own practice and research. I've learnt about mentoring and challenging my mentee in a positive way to give confidence'.* **Mentor 15**

The mentee was motivated and competent and valued the experience and knowledge of her mentor. The mentee developed through the *progress-making, cultivation* phase. The mentee experienced developmental benefits and met her objectives and aspirations developing her writing skills. The relationship was

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redefined and they are moving on towards a *professional / critical friend* relationship.

*'My mentee has achieved largely what she wanted to achieve. She has flown the nest, she's a confident, productive researcher'. The relationship will continue because we have a common interest'. Mentor 15*

*'I won't hesitate to go to my mentor for advice as a critical reader. The relationship is very professional. My mentor is a critical friend, we've talked about the research and are surprised at the overlap from different disciplines'. Mentee 16*

Both the mentor and mentee demonstrated **perspicacity** through their ability to make sound judgements to enable the relationship to build progressively over time. They demonstrated their **capacity** to undertake their complementary roles and responsibilities within the mentoring relationship in order that the relationship may progress and build. They demonstrated an effective **modus operandi** in terms of managing the process to enable progressive relationship building and outcomes to be achieved. The characteristics and factors, the **ingredients**, which appeared to influence the relationship were identified as: time pressures on the mentee to make progress, which she overcame through high levels of motivation and realistic targets; the geographical distance between the participants was perceived as an issue restricting more frequent and regular contact; complementary matching and mutual respect for each other; positive benefits perceived working off-line with a mentor who is not the mentees line manager.



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#### 4.10 Summary - Determinants supporting 'Progressive' Mentoring Relationship Building

Each mentoring relationship and pairing is unique but it was found that each mentoring relationship which built progressively possessed a number of common features, factors and determinants which enabled each of the mentoring relationships to build over time resulting in benefits for both participants. The time frames differed with each pairing, as one might expect, but in each case the relationships built through the identified phases and stages of relationship development as proffered by Clutterbuck (2004) and Kram (1983).

The key conceptual themes that emerged from the original data analysis derived across all transcripts, **perspicacity**, **capacity**, **modus operandi** and **ingredients** were found to capture the principal constituents of mentoring relationship building. The progressive relationships each possessed the positive features characterised by the themes, the mentor's and mentee's understanding and insight to enable the relationship to build, their capacity to undertake their roles and responsibilities, how to approach and build the process.

In all the progressive relationships the mentors were experienced in mentoring and had prior experience of being mentored and indeed had doctoral qualifications, they had experience of being supervised through their studies and had supported others through the process. This factor, readiness to mentor, is considered by Garvey (2008) as an enabling factor to support the positive process of building a mentoring relationship. In each case the mentors provided an understanding of the term mentoring and they also possessed knowledge and had expertise in the subject specialism which their mentee was requiring support in, be it subject based knowledge and/or knowledge of the research process. These attributes may support their perspicacity, (mentor understanding and insight) and capacity (ability to undertake the role of a mentor), to undertake the role of an effective mentor.

In each of the cases of progressive mentoring relationship building the mentors were supportive of their mentee in the process and there was evidence that they had the ability and capacity to discuss, listen, advise, and enable and facilitate their mentees progress. These attributes are determinants which illustrate the individual mentor's ability through their perspicacity and capacity to undertake their role effectively and build the relationship and align with the competences of an effective mentor as identified by Clutterbuck (2005). The mentors possessed the capacity to manage and negotiate the process effectively in a progressive manner and therefore enable progress to be made by the mentee. These aspects align with Gibb (1994), where he suggests the importance of negotiation in developing the mentoring relationship towards a successful outcome.

The progressive relationships were characterised by the mentor's acknowledgement of the need to build the mentee's confidence through the process and demonstrated their capacity to do so through providing the necessary support and guidance. Through building the mentee's confidence the mentee's became more empowered and independent and ultimately transformational development was evidenced through meeting their objectives and moving on. The ability to build mentee confidence would appear to be an important determinant in building a progressive mentoring relationship, this aspect aligns to Clutterbuck (2005).

The progressive relationships each possessed an effective *modus-operandi* in building their relationship, the process and method of effectively building the relationship over time. Each relationship built in a different way but the common determinants which characterised the progressive nature of the relationship included evidence of effective operational aspects in managing the process which may be described as objective setting, contracting, making progress towards the objectives, meeting the objectives with underlying support, facilitation, advice and guidance from the mentor. The mentors possessed the ability to move the relationship on as it developed supporting progress-making, building mentee confidence, ultimately drawing the relationship to a conclusion and redefining the relationship, be it separation; since the mentee had

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completed and moved on, or the relationship continued as a professional friendship.

In each of the progressive relationships the mentors all acknowledged that they had benefitted from the relationship and were reflective of what they had gained from undertaking the role and responsibility of being a mentor. The mentors were positive of their experience which aligns to Ehrich's (2004) assertion that mentoring relationships can result in personal satisfaction and growth for the mentor and this recognition of beneficial effect may be a positive determinant towards supporting progressive mentoring relationship building on the part of the mentor.

A common determinant in the progressive relationships relates to the mentee's motivation to engage in the mentoring process and work towards their goals and meet their objectives. Despite potentially adverse ingredients, such as time pressures, being geographically distant from their mentor hindering personal contact, the mentees possessed the capacity to attain their goals through their determination to be successful. The mentee's possessed the personal characteristics and capacity of being able to make progress with the support of their mentor.

A common ingredient in each of the progressive relationships was an acknowledgement from the participants that the matching of the pairing was positive and compatible. There appeared to be a mutual respect, be it acknowledgement of the mentor's ability to mentor, their expertise and knowledge and the mentor's recognition of their mentee's ability to make progress, to meet their objectives, their commitment to the process. These would appear to be key determinants and characteristics which support progressive relationship building. A further positive ingredient recognised by the participants appeared to be the value of working off-line, (Megginson 1995). From the mentee's perspective this was working with someone outside their immediate line-management and therefore it was felt that they could be more open and honest and indeed reveal their weaknesses more readily. From the mentor's point of view, they appeared to value the opportunity of being slightly

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more challenged working outside their immediate discipline and perceived this as a benefit enabling them to be more reflective of their skills as a mentor and learning more from the process. Working off-line may be a positive determinant in enabling progressive relationship building. This is common to all the relationships being investigated and therefore the progressive nature of relationship building is a combination of all the factors and determinants identified above.

In the progressive relationships the mentees achieved their outcomes and aspirations. There were no concerns with regard to dependency and the relationships were redefined and the participants moved-on, be it separation or as professional friends.

Having analysed the mentoring relationships which built progressively the next section considers those relationships which flat-lined and faltered.



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#### 4.11 'Flat-lining' Mentoring Relationships

The previous section identified and analysed those relationships which built progressively identifying key determinants, characteristics and traits which appeared to enable the mentoring relationships to build over time. This section presents an analysis of those relationships which this research labels as 'flat-lining' i.e. those relationships which faltered and were stuck at a point not enabling the relationship to build progressively through all the phases of the mentoring process. The two cases which have been clustered together for analysis in this section are:

**Flat-lining**            P7:        M13/M14  
                              P11:        M21/M22

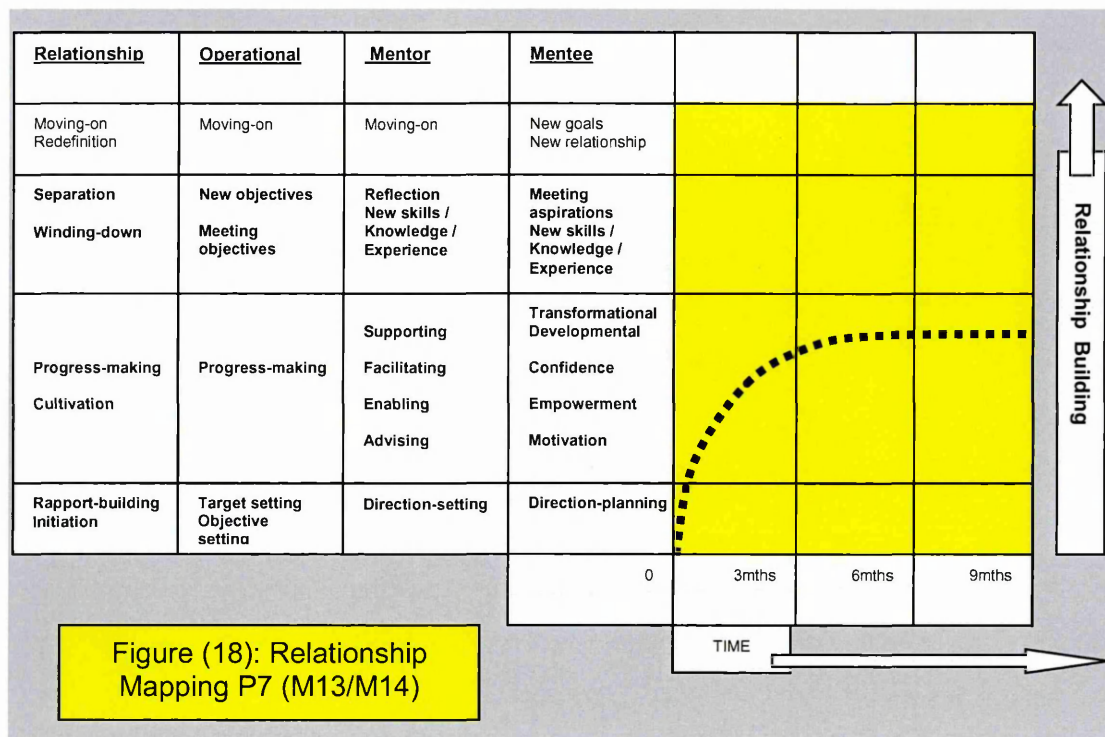
Each of these mentoring relationships (cases of - units of analysis) are now presented individually and interpreted to consider what happens within this type of relationship, 'flat-lining'.

#### 4.12 Relationship P7: M13 / M14

This relationship built through the *initiation*, *rapport-building* phases and into the *progress-making*, *cultivation* phase but did not enter the *separation* phase as identified relationship phases as proffered by Clutterbuck (2004) and Kram (1983) and is therefore labelled as a **flat-lining** relationship in terms of relationship building. There was a potential dependency issue since the mentee appeared not to gain transformational development and move-on, yet perceived benefits from the process. So although the relationship did not develop through all the phases, benefit was experienced by the mentee particularly in terms of less tangible outcomes, such as, confidence building and developing softer skills in developing new ways of working.

The **relationship mapping template** was used to plot the relationship as it built over time based upon interpretation, sense-making and analysis of the participants' comments. The resultant profile is presented below with the

accompanying data as extracted from the semi-structured interviews at interview points, +3, +6 and +9 months.



### Interpreted as:

+3 months transcript data	Codes/Labels
<p><b>3 months: Mentor 13 - comments</b></p> <p><i>I think its progressing quite well I've seen my mentee twice now and I think she would say it's going well in that she is moving forward various projects... I think she is finding it very useful.</i></p> <p><b>3 months: Mentee 14 - comments</b></p> <p><i>I had a second meeting with my mentor on Monday, really, really useful actually. The first meeting we had we had a set of targets which we agreed so it was useful to talk to my mentor on Monday to talk about where I was with those and set another set of targets, so it's inspired me.</i></p> <p><i>I took on her suggestions and managed to get more money and similarly networking as well as I wasn't sure... so it's practical things as well as about knowing, partly about having confidence as well.</i></p> <p><i>She gives me pointers and tips for structuring and writing but also a lot about managing time at work, it's a whole range of things really.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive, mentee progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Direction-planning, mentee motivation, progress-making</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor advising, enabling, mentee progress-making, confidence building</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor advising, supportive</p>
+6 months transcript data	Codes/Labels
<p><b>6 months: Mentor 13 - comments</b></p> <p><i>She is doing well... we mapped out meetings going into next year... I have a slight concern about dependency... but by having the luxury of the time</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentee direction-planning, progress-making</p>

<p>together, even if its an hour, supports your mentee.</p> <p>An insight into how somebody else works in terms of research which has been interesting... we have found that we have quite a few things in common. So there has been a kind of bridge, it has been nice to support someone and working with someone in a different setting and environment.</p> <p>She has sent me stuff and I have prioritised it.</p> <p><b>6 months: Mentee 14 - comments</b></p> <p>I sort of thought that I would have to write straight away and my mentor said it can take a year from meeting to finishing the article.</p> <p>I always prepared for the meeting and took notes and would write them up, the meeting and the targets... I do value the input and time that she has given... she is excellent.</p> <p>It's been more about inspiring you to do work and gaining confidence, building networks and things like that. I wouldn't think twice now about speaking to someone from another university to work together or things like that were previously I wouldn't have thought of it.</p> <p>I think I am able to prioritise more, manage time and be more assertive at work.</p> <p>I think I have gained confidence, an understanding of how processes work which enables me to take decisions with confidence.</p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentor reflective</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor advising, facilitating, supportive</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivated, mentor supporting</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee confidence building</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee progress-making, confidence building</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee confidence</p>
<b>+9 months transcript data</b>	<b>Codes/Labels</b>
<p><b>9 months: Mentor 13 – comments</b></p> <p>I'm still mentoring my mentee and we decided to keep going into this year.</p> <p><b>9 months: Mentee 14 – comments</b></p> <p>I have got out of this professional motivation as much as anything, it's inspiring talking about other ideas.</p> <p>I've found the process really useful. Enjoyed it mainly and the pairing good actually, very supportive and a really good role model being someone you could aspire to be like and professionally be like my mentor.</p>	<p>Interpreted as - Relationship continuing</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation</p> <p>Interpreted as - Matching positive, relationship continuing</p>

### **Analysis of P7: M13 / M14 – progression through the phases**

The mentor was a female academic (Reader) and the mentee was a female academic (Principal Lecturer). The mentor was an experienced academic in her own field of expertise and possessed doctoral qualifications and had previous experience of a mentoring process through their doctoral training and research supervision of others. The mentee was less experienced and was developing

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her research. The mentor was 40-49 years of age and had been with the organisation for 12 years and the mentee was 40-49 years of age and had been with the organisation for 10 years after having a career break.

The mentor conveyed an understanding of the term 'mentoring' prior to the intervention commencing, but this seemed quite narrow in scope, concentrating on support and help but not mentioning an end point, goals, targets or meeting objectives, for example;

*'Very much about supporting, exploring where weaknesses are perceived and helping to support and develop those areas. Filling the gaps where ordinarily one might not get help. The advantage is to have someone to talk to and develop networks. We will need a clear starting point and structure, need to be focussed'. Mentor 13*

The mentee provided a limited understanding, less focussed on the process and her own outputs and targets, but more focussed on being with and learning from her mentor who she admired.

*'There are different ways of being mentored and different ways of approaching it, not sure how it will work. Really pleased with the person I have been paired with, I admire her professionally; being with her and how she models things I will learn anyway, she is much more experienced. I have a lot of respect for my mentor'. Mentee 14*

The relationship was difficult to interpret since it appeared to be open-ended at the outset and the mentee entered the relationship without specific objectives in mind. Brockband (1998) argues that where colleagues undertake mentoring in Higher Education an understanding of the phases of mentoring may enable progress and the realisation that the relationship is not required to continue for life. The relationship developed through the *initiation*, *rapport-building* phases and into the *progress-making*, *cultivation* phase. There was evidence that the mentee had learnt and made progress but the relationship appeared on-going with new objectives being set and there was a potential for dependency creeping into the relationship as recognised by the mentor.



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*'She is doing well... we mapped out meetings going into next year... I have a slight concern about dependency... but by having the luxury of the time together, even if it's an hour every few months, supports your mentee'.* **Mentor 13**

Meggison (2004) and Ragins (2007) point to concerns about dependency on one side or the other and feelings of abandonment or feelings of entrapment. The mentee did not appear to be achieving independence through transformational development and did not appear to want to move-on and redefine the relationship. Scandura (1998) perceives relationships which do not attain their goals as potentially dysfunctional. The mentoring process was continuing into the following year by agreement and the mentor appeared to lack the perspicacity and capacity to manage the process to a conclusion.

The mentoring process was producing perceived positive outcomes for the mentee.

*'I'm more assertive, blocking writing time, understanding of process enabling decisions to be made. I feel inspired, taking advice from my mentor on time management and value having someone to talk to and share ideas. It's given me extra motivation and more confidence that I can achieve what I want to achieve'.* **Mentee 14**

The mentee conveyed satisfaction as to their pairing / matching, which is perceived as an enabler to positive relationship development (Cox 2005), but the satisfaction appeared to be based on admiration as a role model, someone to aspire to. The mentor was experienced in mentoring, she was supportive, enabling and facilitated the process with a degree of flexibility but firm targets and an end point were not negotiated.

*'My mentor has been very supportive, proactive, a really good role model, somebody I can aspired to be like. I feel professional motivation and have found it inspiring talking about different ideas. I've learnt how to do things better, work smarter and to prioritise'.*

**Mentee 14**

The ability to negotiate and build the relationship over time is perceived to be a key determinant in enabling the relationship to progress effectively and

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ultimately reach an end point (Gibb 1994). The mentor and mentee appeared to regularly renew targets without redefining the relationship and moving-on.

Although pressure of time for the mentor was apparent she managed to prioritise supporting her mentee. The mentee appeared motivated and valued the experience and knowledge of her mentor who she very enthusiastically kept referring to as a role model. The mentee identified a growth in her confidence through the *progress-making, cultivation* phase. The relationship was continuing on much the same basis as originally cast.

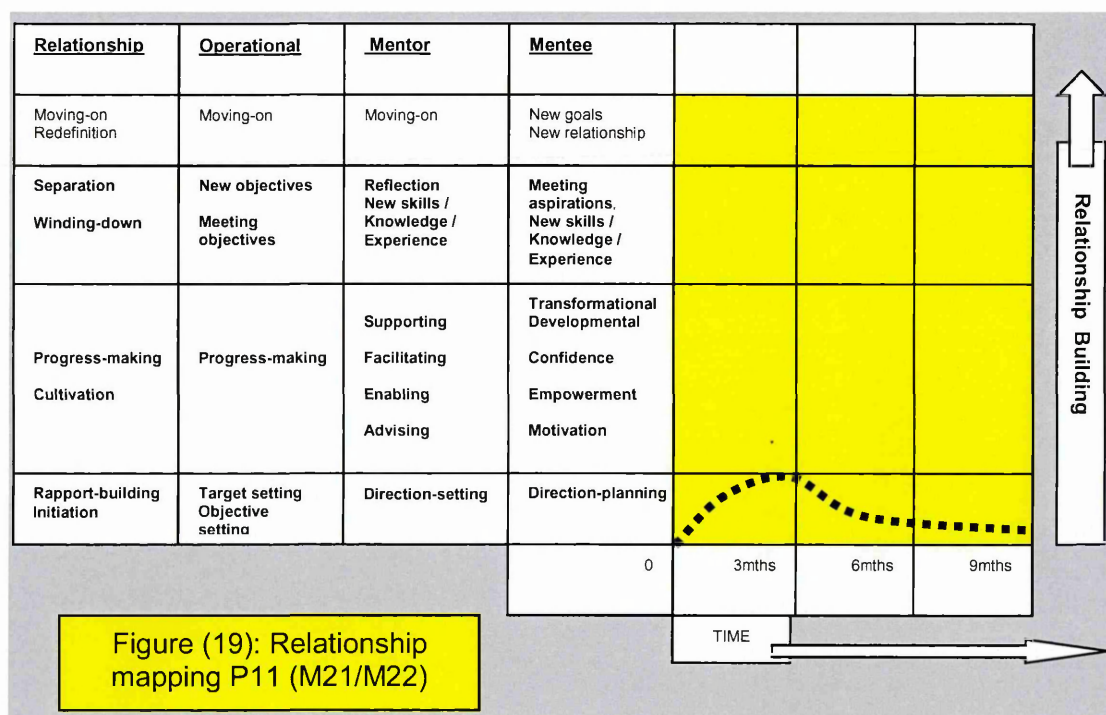
Both the mentor and mentee demonstrated a degree of **perspicacity** through their ability to make sound judgements to enable the relationship to build progressively over time to a point, but ultimately this resulted in the open-ended, continuation of the relationship: there was no separation or moving-on. They demonstrated **capacity** to undertake their complementary roles and responsibilities up to a point but lacked the capacity to build the latter stages and conclude the relationship enabling mentee empowerment and independence. They demonstrated an ineffective **modus operandi** in terms of managing the process to enable progressive relationship building and outcomes to be achieved through lack of clear targets towards an end point, they appear to continually renegotiate, leading to fuzzy outcomes. Kirkpatrick (2008) identifies, fuzzy goals, as an inhibitor to mentoring relationship development. It is important to acknowledge that although the relationship did not reach a conclusion the mentee perceived benefits had been derived leading to greater confidence and development of softer skills. The characteristics and factors, the **ingredients**, which appeared to influence the relationship were identified as: dependency on the part of the mentee; a lack of understanding of the mentoring process as to the progressive nature of relationship building to meet an end point.

#### **4.13 Relationship P11: M21 / M22**

This relationship did not develop beyond the *initiation, rapport-building* phase, as proffer by Clutterbuck (2004) and Kram (1983) and is therefore labelled as

**flat-lining** in terms of relationship building. Although the relationship did not develop through the phases, the relationship was perceived as helpful and benefit was perceived by both the mentee and mentor particularly in terms of enabling personal reflection.

The **relationship mapping template** was used to plot the relationship as it built over time based upon interpretation, sense-making and analysis of the participants' comments. The resultant profile is presented below with the accompanying data as extracted from the semi-structured interviews at interview points, +3, +6 and +9 months.



### Interpreted as:

+3 months transcript data	Codes/Labels
<p><b>3 months: Mentor 21 - comments</b></p> <p><i>So we agreed from the first session she should go away, think about her way of working and whether she wanted pedagogical research to be something. I can look at what you've done and talk about it but what are you going to give up.</i></p> <p><i>It made me think about what it is that I want to give up so there was a kind of nice thing going on there when I was reflecting on what I had just asked her.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor reflective</b></p>

<p><i>So in an odd sort of way, from the initial meeting thinking we will have one more and see how it goes and then that was good, so we definitely will have a third.</i></p> <p><i>I think it is working well because we have both decided to try and make a go of it.</i></p> <p><i>It's quite slow, I don't think that means it isn't working well; it's just a process that takes time to work well.</i></p> <p><i>It's a relationship of equals rather than a mentor mentee relationship. I'm liking it more as it goes along, I'm kind of as much the mentee in this situation. I'm now beginning to see that I can both offer stuff and get stuff back even if it's not intentional.</i></p> <p><b><u>3 months: Mentee 22 - comments</u></b></p> <p><i>Yesterday's meeting I can only call fantastic because what we were able to do was understand what my blocks were, what's stopping me, it might look ok on paper, but actually I'm still very nervous about whether what I've got to say out there in the world of pedagogy is at all of any relevance to anybody.</i></p> <p><i>I was a bit nervous and I was a bit disappointed with comments between sessions one and two, because I don't feel that you can just leave me at this point... I was a bit muddled and then last meeting started to bring it all together and give me direction.</i></p> <p><i>I can't think of any downers on this at all really I feel motivated; in fact it's motivated both of us.</i></p> <p><i>What it did was make me see that I am in charge of this and the only reason I haven't done it is because, one, have the confidence and two, really just not sure I could ever prioritise it.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Still direction-setting</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Still direction-setting</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Reflection on process</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Redefining roles</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentee reflective</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentee direction-setting</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentee reflective on process, motivated?</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentee reflective</b></p>
<p><b>+6 months transcript data</b></p>	<p><b>Codes/Labels</b></p>
<p><b><u>6 months: Mentor 21 - comments</u></b></p> <p><i>Probably when you look back you will detect some optimism in there and some cynicism, cynicism to start with... I've tried at least three times to schedule another meeting and each time there has been a reason why it's not possible.</i></p> <p><i>When I thought about it we will possibly meet again. I think it is more now a sense that we will be colleagues... we are both stuck in operational roles.</i></p> <p><i>It made me reflect on what I'm going to stop doing and I haven't done that either.</i></p> <p><b><u>6 months: Mentee 22 - comments</u></b></p> <p><i>I wanted it to happen, but other commitments have been full on... I haven't been able to protect my time... I do think it is a good system and I want to carry on... I see it as something we have just started.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor reflecting on process</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Redefining roles</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor reflective on process</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentee still at the direction-setting stage</b></p>



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### **Analysis of P11: M21 / M22 – progression through the phases**

The mentor was a male academic (Professor) and the mentee was a female academic (Principal Lecturer) both experienced academics in their own field of expertise and the mentor possessed doctoral qualifications. Both had significant management roles and responsibilities and were essentially peers in the organisation and in the relationship. The mentor was 40-49 years of age and had been with the organisation for 17 years and the mentee was 40-49 years of age and had been with the organisation for 15 years. The mentor had limited experience of the mentoring process. The mentee had no previous experience of formal mentoring and therefore had no real expectations. There was a potential lack of readiness to mentor or be mentored and this may have been a key influencing determinant as to why the relationship 'flat-lined' and did not build over time, (Garvey 2008). The mentor presented a lack of understanding of the term 'mentoring' prior to the intervention commencing. The mentor had a focus on himself and what he may gain from the process and a lack of realisation as to his responsibility, and therefore capacity, in enabling the building of the mentoring relationship to facilitate the mentee meeting their aspirations. Equally the mentee appeared to lack aspiration other than reflecting on their own position and circumstance which in itself has a value, to this end, the aspiration was met.

A potentially inhibitive key determinant is the participant's limited understanding of the process of mentoring prior to entering into the relationship;

*'Mentoring is about asking relevant questions more akin to close personal management. The advantages are building a relationship with someone and hopefully allows you to feel good about yourself. Possible benefits would be virtue and reward, a good and nice feeling to support somebody'. Mentor 21*

The mentee conveyed a similarly limited understanding of the mentoring process.

*'I imagine a shared experience, two-way process. A relationship built on trust. To move things forward'. Mentee 22*

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This relationship did not develop beyond the *initiation, rapport-building* phase but was perceived to be helpful by both participants. The relationship was difficult to interpret since it appeared to be open-ended at the outset with the mentor having his own personal objectives which confused the relationship and therefore potentially hindered relationship building. The relationship appeared to be one representing a peer discussion, colleagues reflecting on where each one was in terms of their own development.

*'I want to learn about sources of funding and my mentee about pedagogic research, from the first meeting I started to reflect that I am not actually being research productive. It's possibly a catalyst on the side of my own learning and teaching profile to motivate myself to start developing my own research again'. Mentor 21*

Brockband (1998) argues that where colleagues undertake mentoring in Higher Education an understanding of the phases of mentoring may enable progress and the realisation that the relationship is not required to continue for life. There was evidence that the mentee had learnt from the process but the relationship appeared on-going. The mentee talked of being motivated but was not proactive in terms of making tangible progress.

*'I feel very motivated, it has motivated both of us, and it's given me more confidence in what I have to offer'. Mentee 22*

The mentee conveyed satisfaction as to the pairing / matching (Cox 2005) and valued working off-line (Clutterbuck 1995).

*'The relationship is relaxed, on an even keel, very attuned into each other's brains'. 'I value having a mentor from a different subject area, it's fantastic, because I know the majority of people in my School, so to have somebody who sees me for myself and not for my role in the School is very positive'. Mentee 22*

The mentor was relatively inexperienced in mentoring and did not demonstrate a sound understanding of his role in the process and indeed started the process with a sceptical attitude which reflected his inexperience and maybe a determining factor in as to why the relationship did not build over time.

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*'I started off with slightly sceptical attitude, would I be able to find the time and would it be worth it'. Mentor 21*

The mentor facilitated discussion but no direction. The mentor and mentee did not agreed targets. The negotiation of targets is perceived as a critical part of the process (Gibb 1994).

*'I think the interaction really is useful and revealing both for myself and my mentor. I still felt unsure and nervous about what I have to offer to the world of pedagogy. I felt muddled between meetings one and two – now starting to come together'. Mentee 22*

There were time pressures on the mentee and she was unable to prioritise.

*'Work pressures, we've been unable to scheduled meetings, but we will meet again but as colleagues a professional friendship'. Mentor 21*

*'Lack of time was the issue, busyness of individuals'. Mentee 22*

The mentor reflected on his role.

*'It takes time to work well, the relationship is one of equals, and the process is getting better and I'm enjoying it more, I've been more reflective, beginning to see that I can both offer and gain from the process'. Mentor 21*

The relationship did not develop and the roles were redefined to be a peer work colleague relationship. This relationship was essentially a meta-reflection, based on discussion of what might be possible, but no action or progress was demonstrated. Kirkpatrick (2008) identifies, fuzzy goals, as detrimental to relationship development. The relationship would be described by Scandura (1999) as dysfunctional through lack of goal attainment.

The perception of the participants, however, was that they had gained from the process through reflecting on their own circumstances and identified barriers which hindered their opportunities to make progress.



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*'No tangible outputs but thinking about things differently as part of a journey, reflecting. I want to carry on, something we've just started and it's a good process. We will continue to meet up as colleagues, a professional friendship for peer support'. Mentee 22*

Both the mentor and mentee demonstrated a lack of **perspicacity** through their inability to enable the relationship to build progressively over time, which ultimately resulted in the open-ended continuation of the relationship: there was no separation or moving-on, it fizzled out. They demonstrated limited **capacity** to undertake their complementary roles and responsibilities. They demonstrated an ineffective **modus operandi** in terms of managing the process to enable progressive relationship building and outcomes to be achieved through lack of tangible targets leading to fuzzy outcomes, there appeared to be no negotiation which is identified as a key determinant of progressive relationship building (Gibb 1994). Kirkpatrick (2008) identifies, fuzzy goals, as an inhibitor to mentoring relationship development. It is important to acknowledge that although the relationship did not reach a conclusion the mentee perceived benefits had been derived leading to greater confidence and development of softer skills. The characteristics and factors, the **ingredients**, which appeared to influence the relationship were identified as: lack of understanding of the mentoring process as to the progressive nature of relationship building to meet an end point; the mentor focussing on own objectives and not those of his mentee; time pressures; lack of negotiation towards tangible objectives and targets.

#### **4.14 Summary - Determinants influencing 'Flat-lining' Mentoring Relationships**

The relationships which 'flat-lined' support the findings from the 'progressive' mentoring relationships described in the previous section since where certain features, factors and determinants are compromised or absent the mentoring relationships failed to build successfully. The relationships were held within a stage or phase of relationship development as proffered by Clutterbuck (2004) and Kram (1983) and did not progress or built to a subsequent stage.



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Relationship pairing **P7 (M13 /M14)**, for example, progressed through identifiable consecutive phases as the relationship built but did not develop through the separation phase since there was an element of dependency emerging on the side of the mentee who appeared not to want the relationship to end. This dependency (ingredient) was recognised by the mentor, but they did not demonstrate the perspicacity or capacity, as a mentor, to conclude the relationship. A further contributing factor was the continual renegotiation (modus operandi) of targets and goals which resulted in an open-ended relationship, never reaching an end-point.

Pairing **P11 (M21 / M22)** flat-lined at an early stage in terms of building a mentoring relationship. The critical factors and determinants which contributed to this include the participants inability to differentiate their roles and responsibilities of assuming the role of a mentor and/or mentee from the outset. There was a lack of clarity and the mentor was focussed on what he might gain from the process (ingredient). The participants describing the relationship as being more on the lines of a peer relationship as colleagues. The mentor and mentee both appeared to lack perspicacity and capacity to build the relationship. There was no real focus to the meetings, lack of clear objectives and therefore an ineffective modus operandi in enabling tangible progress to be made. These aspects align with Gibb (1994), where he suggests the importance of negotiation in developing the mentoring relationship towards a successful outcome. Both participants appeared to have limited comprehension as to the process of building a mentoring relationship. This appears to be a critical ingredient thereby potentially identifying the need for participants to enter into a relationship with a prior understanding of their respective roles, responsibilities and prior insight into the phases of mentoring to increase the likelihood success. This factor, readiness to mentor, is considered by Garvey (2008) as an enabling factor to support the positive process of building a mentoring relationship, conversely a lack of readiness may inhibit.

In each of the cases of flat-lining mentoring relationships the mentors were supportive of their mentee and there was evidence that they discussed, listened and advised and built mentee confidence to a point, but these alone were not

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necessarily effective to enable the mentoring relationships to build through to a successful conclusion. In each of the flat-lining examples both the mentors and mentees experienced benefits from the process, which is considered as a positive determinant by Ehrich (2004), further, a positive ingredient recognised by the participants appeared to be the value of working off-line, (Megginson 1995), yet these aspects in isolation do not necessarily result in the building of a successful mentoring relationship and thereby realising the full potential of such a relationship. There is evidence that it is a combination of all four themes, (perspicacity, capacity, modus operandi and ingredients) effectively working together which appears to enable mentoring relationships to build progressively and successfully over time.

Having analysed the mentoring relationships which flat-lined and faltered the next section considers those relationships which break-down and terminate.

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#### 4.15 'Break-down' Mentoring Relationships

The previous sections have identified and analysed those relationships which built 'progressively' and those which faltered and 'flat-lined', identifying key determinants, characteristics and traits which appeared to influence the mentoring relationship building. This section presents an analysis of those relationships which this research labels as 'break-down' i.e. those relationships which failed and terminated. The three cases which have been clustered together for analysis in this section are:

<b>Break-down</b>	P3:	M5/M6
	P5:	M9/M10
	P10:	M19/M20

Each of these mentoring relationships (cases of - units of analysis) are now presented individually and then compared and contrasted in order to interpret what happens within this type of relationship, 'break-down'.

#### 4.16 Relationship P3: M5 / M6

This relationship did not develop beyond *initiation*, *rapport-building* phase as identified by Kram (1983) and Clutterbuck (2004) and resulted in uncertain outcomes for both the participants and ultimate termination. The participants conveyed a limited understanding of the mentoring process and the mentee appeared to lack motivation to overcome confidence issues and time pressures. This relationship is therefore labelled as a **break-down** relationship. The **relationship mapping template** was used to plot the relationship as it built over time based upon interpretation, sense-making and analysis of the participants' comments. The resultant profile is presented below with the accompanying data as extracted from the semi-structured interviews at interview points, +3, +6 and +9 months.

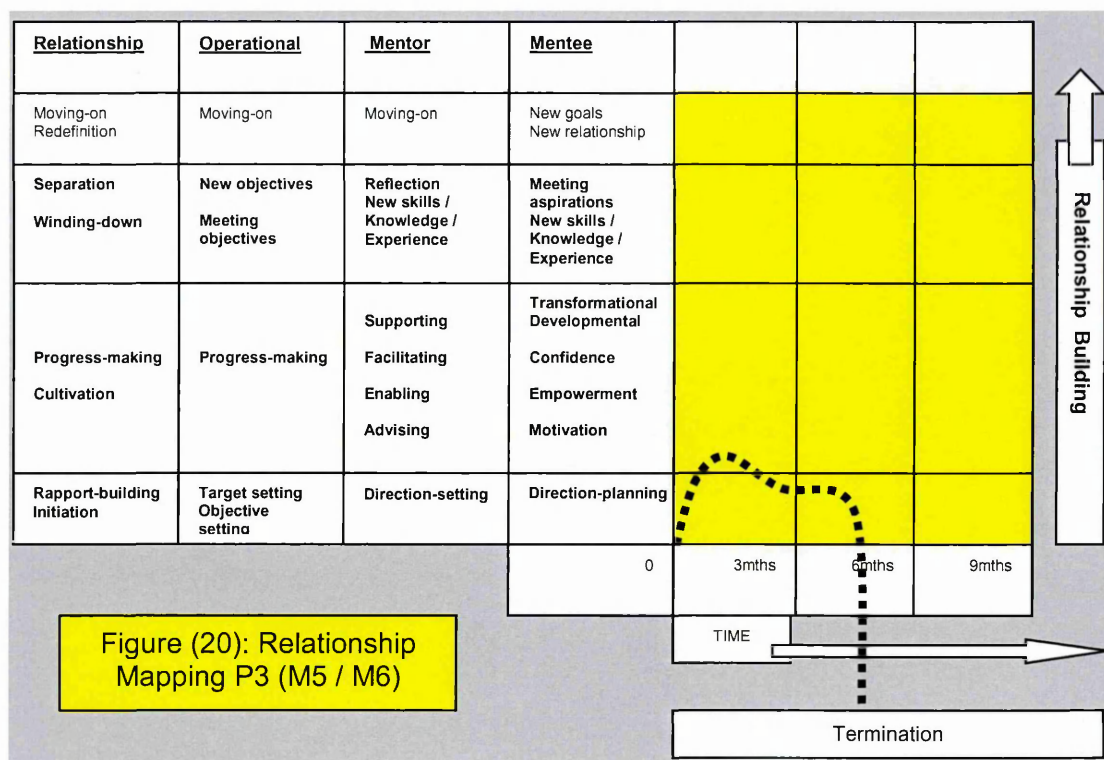


Figure (20): Relationship Mapping P3 (M5 / M6)

## Interpreted as:

+3 months transcript data	Codes/Labels
<p><b>3 months: Mentor 5 - comments</b></p> <p>We met the first time to discuss what we were going to do and how we were going to work and he was going to do some work and bring it the second time, which he didn't... but we still met. He put in a SPUR bid, he didn't get it but is waiting for feedback and I have another meeting with him.</p>	Interpreted as - Direction-setting
<p><b>3 months: Mentee 6 - comments</b></p> <p>It's ok at the moment, but I think it's probably my fault for not doing one of the things I needed to do which was draft a paper and send it to my mentor. In general it's been ok but I think it's been a case of me letting down the system for not doing my bit in time. I am hoping that in a couple of weeks I can do that.</p>	Interpreted as - Motivation issues
<p>It's been good having a supportive mentor to bounce a few ideas off her to get an idea of what I could do in terms of planning out from one month to the next what I need to do... as I say the main problem is that I have been taken away by day to day hassles.</p>	Interpreted as - Mentor supportive
<p>I'm exploring things like trying to build up confidence in sending off a paper and so on because I've sent off quite a few in the past and kept getting knocked back... so I think it is useful not having a judgemental mentor, telling me off but one that will give me a bit of advice and support when needed so it's pastoral as well. More on the nuances of trying to get something published.</p>	Interpreted as - Mentor supportive



+6 months transcript data	Codes/Labels
<p><b>6 months: Mentor 5 - comments</b></p> <p><i>It's difficult to say as the engagement has been minimal and has fizzled out due to other things getting in the way.</i></p> <p><b>6 months: Mentee 6 - comments</b></p> <p><i>Mentee unavailable for interview</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Termination</b></p>

### **Analysis of P3: M5 / M6 – progression through the phases**

The mentor was a female academic (Principal Lecturer) and the mentee was a male academic (Senior Lecturer). The mentor was an experienced academic in her own field of expertise but did not possess doctoral qualifications and had limited experience of mentoring. The mentee was less experienced and was wanting to develop his research. The mentor was 50-59 years of age and had been with the organisation for 14 years and the mentee was 40-49 years of age and had been with the organisation for 6 years having entered academia from practice. Key factors and determinants appear to be the mentees lack of commitment and motivation in the process to meet objectives and the readiness of both the mentor and mentee to engage in the process.

The mentor conveyed a limited understanding of the term 'mentoring' prior to the intervention commencing, which appeared narrow in scope. There was no reference to the process of mentoring or recognition of their role and responsibilities and this lack of prior understanding may be an inhibitor to mentoring relationship building, for example;

*'Using my knowledge base and experiences, to enable other people to grow into the role they want to grow into, in this case pedagogic research, enabling people to further their career. Time wise I'm not sure how it is going to work out. Not easy turning practice into research and find a theoretical framework. People don't know how to get from practice base to research, methodology and method. I'm not going to be a proof reader. I have no concerns, I just want to get on with it'. Mentor 5*

The mentee also conveyed a limited understanding of the term mentoring, focussing on being mentored by someone more experienced, knowledgeable and supportive but did not refer to the process of mentoring. This apparent lack of prior appreciation of the process of building a mentoring relationship and how

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it might build overtime may be an inhibitive determinant in the relationship from the outset leading to the ultimate break-down.

*'Working with someone more experienced and knowledgeable in a particular subject domain or methods and who is able to pass on knowledge or encourage and support someone less experienced. There needs to be two-way interaction. I do want to be challenged, I want to do something, to get a clear identity, support and I don't want to be isolated. Everyone has problems with writing, sometimes I have a slow period, and for me to get things out of it I need to trust the mentor and they need to be open with me'. Mentee 6*

The relationship did not develop beyond the *rapport-building* and *initiation* phases. At the first meeting there was a discussion on setting the direction.

*We've discussed and agreed objectives and how we are going to work but my mentee has not produced the outcome by second meeting. Mentor 5*

There appeared to be a lack of commitment, motivation on behalf of the mentee who did state that he had a confidence issue in preparing written work having had submissions rejected and that he had other pressure on his time through work commitments. Cullingford (2006) identifies the importance of motivation in terms of relationship development.

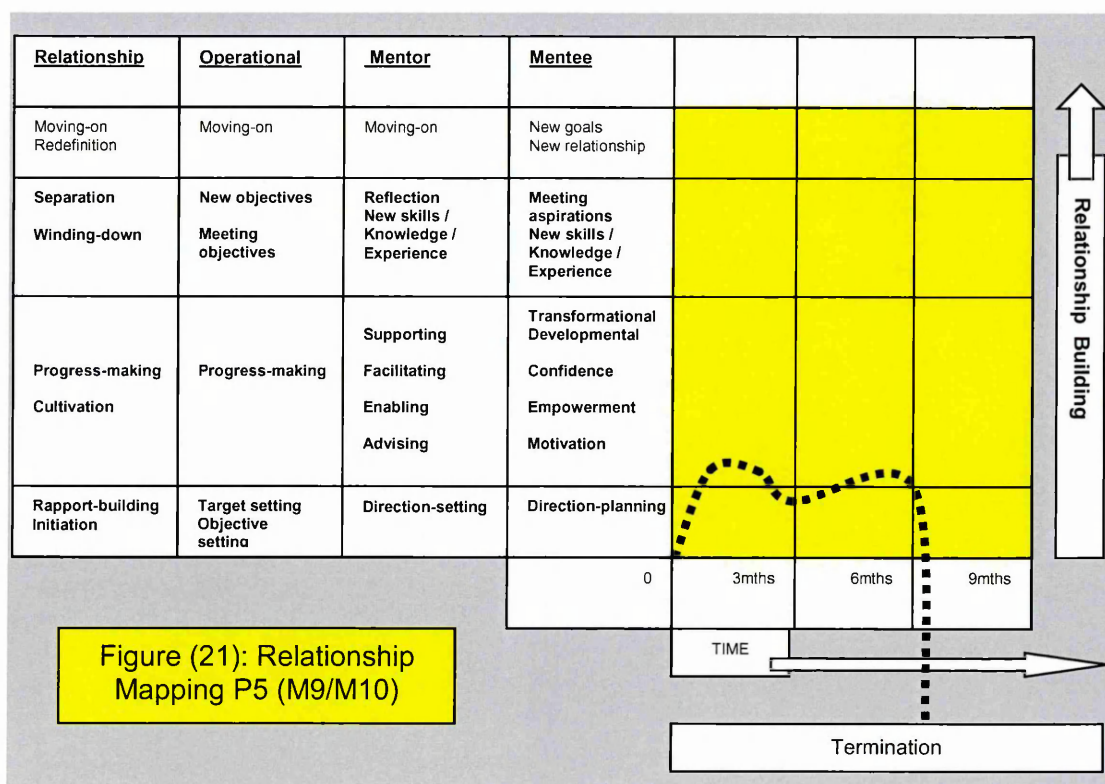
The mentee did not develop through the identified phases and there were few positive outcomes for both of the mentor and mentee. The mentee felt that his mentor was supportive, but little mentee development was perceived and the relationship fizzled out and was terminated.

Both the mentor and mentee demonstrated a lack of **perspicacity** through their inability to enable the relationship to build progressively over time, which ultimately resulted in the relationship terminating. They demonstrated a lack of **capacity** to undertake their complementary roles and responsibilities. They demonstrated an ineffective **modus operandi** in terms of managing the process to enable progressive relationship building. The characteristics and factors, the **ingredients**, which appeared to influence the relationship were identified as: lack of understanding of the mentoring process as to the progressive nature of

relationship building to meet an end point; the mentee lacking confidence and motivation focussing; time pressures; lack of mentee engagement and progress making.

#### 4.17 Relationship P5: M9 / M10

This relationship did not develop beyond *initiation*, *rapport-building* phase as identified by Kram (1983) and Clutterbuck (2004) and resulted in conflicting views as to the outcomes for both the participants and ultimate termination. There was a clash of personalities, language barriers, knowledge gaps, potential power issues and pairing mismatch. This relationship is therefore labelled as a **break-down** relationship. The **relationship mapping template** was used to plot the relationship as it built over time based upon interpretation, sense-making and analysis of the participants' comments. The resultant profile is presented below with the accompanying data as extracted from the semi-structured interviews at interview points, +3, +6 and +9 months.





## Interpreted as:

+3 months transcript data	Codes/Labels
<p><b><u>3 months: Mentor 9 - comments</u></b></p> <p><i>It's generally ok, I met the guy I'm mentoring, we had a chat for about an hour and we established a rapport, he contacted me again as I made suggestions about his research and he said that's fine and I sent him some images but the area of his research he wants to look at is a little awkward.</i></p> <p><i>He said, I'm ok, because he is a mature student member of staff, he said I'll contact you when I need more input. I haven't heard anything since so I think he is ticking over. He is driving the timings of the meetings at the moment... if I don't hear from him in a couple of weeks I will follow it up.</i></p> <p><i>From my point of view I'm beginning to understand where people struggle, it's about language, people use different language, people say use this as a methodology when in fact they mean method. In many cases we all need a mentor, I realise now that I might need a mentor in some areas to develop my own research.</i></p> <p><b><u>3 months: Mentee 10 - comments</u></b></p> <p><i>It's progressing rather slowly, I have met with my mentor and we've done some preliminary work, we've had a brief exchange of emails. I have been doing some further work around developing a research proposal but there has not been much of an opportunity to involve my mentor in that and I have some reservations as to how much help he is going to be to be honest.</i></p> <p><i>The meeting we had was useful in so far as it gave me an opportunity to think about where I was, the direction I was going in a rather different way.</i></p> <p><i>He's a great guy, he clearly has a fairly limited amount of time, he was pretty slow in responding to the email and his response was fairly sparse and wasn't a great deal of help to be honest.</i></p> <p><i>I felt my mentor didn't have sufficient relevant subject knowledge or research knowledge to be a great deal of help to me.</i></p> <p><i>It's part of my individual objective to actually get something into publishable form, I suppose I'm getting a certain amount of help with that at the moment but not from my mentor.</i></p> <p><i>I think at the moment, more attention needs to be given to the matching of mentors and mentees at an early stage, that's my gut feeling.</i></p> <p><i>I'm motivated at the moment as I have a deadline to submit a research proposal for a dissertation at the end of the week.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Rapport-building, initiation</p> <p>Interpreted as - Supportive mentor</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor reflective</p> <p>Interpreted as - Relationship mismatch</p> <p>Interpreted as - Direction-setting</p> <p>Interpreted as - Unsupportive mentor</p> <p>Interpreted as - Knowledge gap</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation, mentee gaining support from another source</p> <p>Interpreted as - Relationship mismatch</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentee motivation</p>
+6 months transcript data	Codes/Labels
<p><b><u>6 months: Mentor 9 - comments</u></b></p> <p><i>We met a couple of week ago I went over to his office... what happened was, when we first met my mentee is quite clipped, one of these guys who</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Relationship mismatch</p>



<p><i>will ask you a question when he wants something and when you get a response from him its always minimal its quite clipped, he's a lovely guy but... so I think that's quite important in terms of potential clash of personalities, we got on fine...</i></p> <p><i>I said why don't you just deconstruct what is in front of you and he said how, so we spent about half an hour deconstruction his film and he said I didn't think of any like that and I said why would you, you are a social scientist.</i></p> <p><i>Its hard work... he's like one of those students who you know has ability and you don't really get anything back, you out pour a lot of stuff but it's hard work... so, I said I'm open if you want to contact me at any point give me a shout it's not a problem and he knows that, he said I might well do that and I said let's leave it like that then...</i></p> <p><i>He's a nice guy, obviously enthusiastic but very cautious, so if you said to him have you done this he would say is that the right way we should go about this...it was good, it was constructive it was useful, its shaken things up a little bit.</i></p> <p><b><u>6 months: Mentee 10 - comments</u></b></p> <p><i>It has been ongoing, up to now but whether it will continue I am uncertain...I think probably the essence of the situation is that I was looking for advice about and support with a particular research project.</i></p> <p><i>Certainly gained some fresh ideas, my mentor was kind enough to attend one of my teaching sessions when I was trying out the new method, it was very welcome to have someone around... my mentor is a nice guy...so I certainly gained those things... broadly speaking it's a good idea and well intentioned idea, but it hasn't worked very effectively for me at the moment.</i></p> <p><i>I have given this quite a lot of thought and I think what I would probably say is that the essentially the distance between us as mentee and mentor is too great and it couldn't be bridged... it could be bridged up to a point... I think the question is really the extent to which either of us could usefully invest the time in building that relationship, I think the disciplines are so far apart that it doesn't really work very well...I'm quite highly motivated to make this work, I might have made more use of my mentor if I hadn't had support from my dissertation supervisor.</i></p> <p><i>I have a modest amount of support from my dissertation supervisor... I am self-motivated so if I need help I go out and find it which is one of the reasons for engaging on the mentoring programme...so I suppose in a sense I am not complaining... it just hasn't worked very efficiently from my point of view... I think the real issue is looking for someone of a closer disciplinary relationship between the two parties and a degree of confidence that the time spent together was going to be time well spent.</i></p>	<p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive, advising</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive?</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive?</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Relationship mismatch</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive, relationship mismatch</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Relationship mismatch, mentee motivation</b></p> <p><b>Interpreted as - Relationship mismatch, mentee gaining support from another source (mentor)</b></p>
<b>+9 months transcript data</b>	<b>Codes/Labels</b>
<b><u>9 months: Mentor 9- comments</u></b>	



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*what we do. Mentoring could be open to abuse of power. Important not to have preconceptions, not to score points from each other, get egos out of the way, it could be a power thing to be avoided'. Mentor 9*

The mentee conveyed a reasonable level of understanding of the term 'mentoring' and also made reference, at the outset, with regard to the potential of a mis-match of 'chemistry' between the mentor and mentee, which may intimate a level of concern, although at this point in time the pairing had not met. For example:

*'Mentoring is between peers but not a symmetrical relationship. The mentor has skills, expertise and experience which they are able to make available to their mentee to enable them to enhance their performance in identified areas. The advantages would be just having someone to explore and bounce ideas off to help clarify, to provide additional insights, provide new ideas. There needs to be an explicit and realistic understanding from each party about what they were expecting out of the relationship otherwise it could be problematic. The chemistry could go wrong wanting to keep one's own weaknesses a secret'. Mentee 10*

This relationship was difficult to interpret in respect to the phases of development. This relationship did not develop far beyond the *initiation, rapport-building* phase and resulted in conflicting views as to the outcomes for both the participants.

The mentor, although acknowledging limitations, perceived positive outcomes from the process and was reflective on his own knowledge and realising that he might benefit from being mentored.

*'The process has been challenging and I have benefited from the experience. The challenge is dealing with someone who is an equivalent from another discipline who is equally experienced and knowledgeable. Mentor 9*

He reflected on the disparity in understanding and the difference in language between disciplines. Eby (2000), identifies negative issues in mentoring relationships which include, differences in philosophy, personality, lack of expertise and each of these are evident in this relationship.



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*'We've built a rapport, communicated by email, so far generally ok, fruitful discussions. I feel my mentee is the driver of the intervention and I'm supporting, supporting my mentee to reach his goals. The relationship is 'professional informal', but there are problems with language, same words different meanings in different research domains'.*

**Mentor 9**

*'There is a clash of personalities, a mismatch of disciplines, terminology, language, I've shaken him to think differently, but he is risk adverse and traditional. Mentor 9*

The mentee felt that he had not gained from the experience; he felt there was too significant a gap in the knowledge of his mentor for what he needed and did not have confidence in his mentor, which is a critical factor in developing a mentoring relationship. The mentee conveyed dissatisfaction as to their pairing / matching, which is a critical enabler as identified by Cox (2005).

*'My particular project now completed, but I'm critical of the pairing, have gained some fresh ideas but the distance is too great between us, only bridged to a point, our disciplines are too far apart, a mentee needs confidence in their mentor which I don't have, he as well intentioned'. Mentee 10*

*'I haven't got out of it what I wanted. There is a disparity between the expertise of my mentor and the area I am researching in. I feel exposed to somebody so different he has not given me anything. If I had been needier it may have contributed more. I don't need much mentorship, just a bit. Being exposed to someone so different has not given me anything. I have certainly gained some fresh ideas when my mentor observed my teaching session'. Mentee 10*

The mentor was less experienced in peer mentoring and did not appear to have the necessary competences or knowledge to manage the relationship, as proffered by Clutterbuck (2005).

The mentor conveyed an understanding of mentoring but did not demonstrate his competence in managing the mentees expectations. The mentor may have been deluded as to his own competence not really understanding the process. He felt he was being supportive and enabling but this was not recognised by the



mentee. The mentee felt that his mentor was slow to respond. There was negative personal interaction and dysfunction.

*The main issue relates to my mentor's knowledge gap and slow response times from my mentor in receiving information back. What I needed was more guidance on research methods. The relationship has not really developed'. Mentee 10*

The mentor and mentee did not agree clear targets and direction, through negotiation which is perceived as a critical stage in building a mentoring relationship (Gibb 1994).

*'It was difficult in the beginning to find our position and roles. Only at the third meeting did I get to the point of understanding where my mentee wanted to go'. Mentor 9*

The mentee sought advice and support from outside the relationship in order to meet his objectives.

*'I don't think the process is working well and progress has been rather slow. I have reservations as to how helpful he might be to my research area. I have taken the opportunity to confirm the direction of my research with another, but not from my mentor. I might have made more of it if I hadn't had support from my dissertation supervisor.' Mentee 10*

The mentee was motivated and found other avenues to reach his objectives.

The mentor suggested that there was a power game being played out by his mentee. The mentor mentioned concerns regarding power at the pre-mentoring stage and he was the only participant to do so. There was evidence of transference and counter-transference between the participants as identified by McAuley (2003), which can lead to negative relationship experiences. The mentor felt that the power play was evidenced by the environment within which the mentoring conversations were undertaken, firstly in a neutral space, the coffee bar, secondly in a teaching space and finally in the mentee's office.

*'The meeting environment is important and I think there is a degree of power play going on'. Mentor 9*

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Although both the mentor and mentee appeared well intentioned the relationship terminated.

*'My mentee is very traditional in his approach and not open to new ideas. That's where we left it, different approaches different ideas, it was a natural finish. The mentee was comfortable with what he was doing'. Mentor 9*

Both the mentor and mentee demonstrated a lack of **perspicacity** through their inability to enable the relationship to build and develop progressively over time, which ultimately resulted in the relationship terminating. They demonstrated a lack of **capacity** to undertake their complementary roles and responsibilities within the pairing. The mentor appeared not to possess the knowledge to meet the mentees needs. They demonstrated an ineffective **modus operandi** in terms of managing the process to enable progressive relationship building. The characteristics and factors, the **ingredients**, which appeared to influence the relationship were identified as: apparent lack of understanding of the mentoring process, particularly on the part of the mentor; a mis-match in terms of personalities and distance between the pairing in terms of knowledge and subject disciplines; a potential power play recognised by the mentor.

#### **4.18 Relationship P10: M19 / M20**

This relationship did not develop far beyond the *initiation, rapport-building* phase as identified by Kram (1983) and Clutterbuck (2004) and resulted in dissatisfaction for both the participants resulting in a break-down relationship which terminated. The mentee conveyed a limited understanding of the mentoring process and did not engage in the process of mentoring and the mentor felt that they were not being utilised as a mentor. This relationship is therefore labelled as a **break-down** relationship. The **relationship mapping template** was used to plot the relationship as it built over time based upon interpretation, sense-making and analysis of the participants' comments. The resultant profile is presented below with the accompanying data as extracted from the semi-structured interviews at interview points, +3, +6 and +9 months.

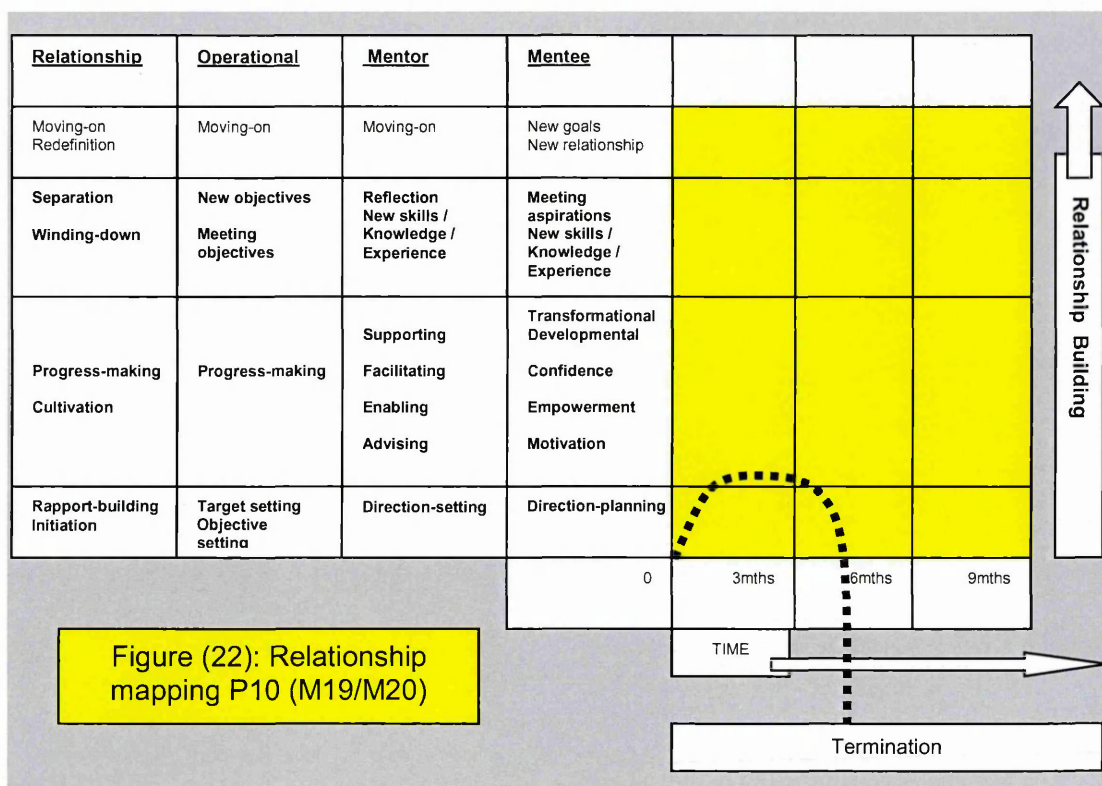


Figure (22): Relationship mapping P10 (M19/M20)

### Interpreted as:

+3 months transcript data	Codes/Labels
<p><b>3 months: Mentor 19 - comments</b></p> <p><i>Alright, although not a lot of frequent contact and quite instrumental I think on the part of my mentee... but that's interesting nonetheless in terms of how to get promoted and how to get published. I always respond straight away.</i></p> <p><i>I don't think it's about time it might be about the mentee defining their own needs and seeking instrumental answers to them where as my understanding of a mentoring process is really about an arc of development... it's a bit like my mentee having a shopping list.</i></p> <p><i>Well I think I am being a help because I'm coming up with answers to the questions I'm being asked, so it's obviously serving the perceived needs of the mentee... I think that's working... its working well in terms of relationship, we get along well.</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentor reflective, supportive</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor reflective</p> <p>Interpreted as - Mentor supportive</p>
<p><b>3 months: Mentee 20 - comments</b></p> <p><i>I have met my mentor and she said she would help in any areas that I wanted her to... I want to put forward a submission for full professorship so she is ideal for a mentor in that role. Having my mentor at hand so that I can ask her advice when I get round to putting something on paper.</i></p> <p><i>I think my mentor is ideally suited to me, we have met once and I am pleased with my mentor's guidance. I feel reassured having a mentor at</i></p>	<p>Interpreted as - Mentee direction-planning</p> <p>Interpreted as - Rapport building</p>



<i>hand to ask for advice and guidance, I think the process was going well and I am enjoying it.</i>	
<b>+6 months transcript data</b>	<b>Codes/Labels</b>
<u><b>6 months: Mentor 19 - comments</b></u> <i>Mentor not available for interview.</i>  <u><b>6 months: Mentee 20 - comments</b></u> <i>I don't really feel that I have learnt anything and indeed disagree with the advice given and have therefore done my own thing.</i>	          <b>Interpreted as - Moving-on, relationship terminated</b>

### **Analysis of P10: M19 /M20 – progression through the phases**

The mentor was a female academic (Professor) and the mentee was a female academic (Principal Lecturer) both experienced academics in their own field of expertise and the mentor possessed doctoral qualifications. The mentor was 50-59 years of age and had been with the organisation for 21 years and the mentee was 50-59 years of age and had been with the organisation for 14 years. The mentor had previous positive experience of a mentoring process through their doctoral training and research supervision of others.

This relationship did not develop far beyond the *initiation, rapport-building* phase and resulted in conflicting views as to the outcomes for both the participants. The participants conveyed initial satisfaction as to their relationship.

*'I feel my mentor is ideally suited to help me. We have met once and I'm pleased with her guidance. I feel reassured having her at hand to ask for advice and guidance. I think the process was going well and I'm enjoying it'. Mentee 20*

The mentor was experienced in mentoring and demonstrated a sound understanding of her role and the process. The mentor was supportive but felt that she was being used and not fulfilling a mentoring role.

*'I feel my mentee is using the process as more a question and answer session, a shopping list, seeking instrumental answers. I'm disappointed not to have the opportunity to discuss more widely personal developmental issues. I'm not fulfilling my role'. Mentor 19*



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The mentor provided advice but ultimately this was dismissed by the mentee and the relationship terminated with no obvious outcomes. Cullingford (2006) identifies relationship issues developing where one of the participants uses the process for their own ends and does not engage in the spirit of the mentoring process, stating that the relationship will not work. This appears to be the case in this relationship which was dysfunctional and broke-down.

*'I've not learnt from mentor and disagreed with the advice and have done my own thing'. Mentee 20*

The mentee demonstrated a lack of **perspicacity** through their inability to enable the relationship to build and develop progressively over time, which ultimately resulted in the relationship terminating. The mentee demonstrated a lack of **capacity** to undertake her role within the pairing. They demonstrated an ineffective **modus operandi** in terms of managing the process to enable progressive relationship building. The characteristics and factors, the **ingredients**, which appeared to influence the relationship were identified as: apparent lack of understanding of the mentoring process and lack of engagement on behalf of the mentee; a misuse of the process by the mentee recognised by the mentor.

#### **4.19 Summary - Determinants influencing 'Break-down' Mentoring Relationships**

The relationships which are labelled by this research as 'break-down', support the findings from the 'progressive' mentoring relationships described in the earlier section since where certain features, factors and determinants are compromised or absent the mentoring relationships failed to build successfully and terminated. The relationships floundered within the early stages or phases of the relationship building as proffered by Clutterbuck (2004) and Kram (1983) and did not progress or build to a subsequent stage.

The determinants, factors and characteristics which were evidenced in the 'break-down' relationships include: lack of readiness by either the mentor or mentee to engage in the process of mentoring; not utilising the process of

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mentoring, using it more as a question and answer session; knowledge gaps to complement the needs of the mentee; lack of mentee motivation; mis-match within pairing (chemistry, personality); potential power play; perceived lack of timely support by the mentee's mentor; disparity in use of language between disciplines leading to potential lack of understanding between the participants; lack of time to engage effectively to allow the relationship to build.

In the break-down relationships, there was an identified lack of perspicacity on behalf of one or both of the participants, i.e. their inability to make sound judgements in terms of building the relationship. There was a lack of capacity to undertake their role and responsibilities effectively and a lack of a coherent *modus operandi*.

Having presented an analysis of each of the relationship types labelled by this research as **progressive**, **flat-lining** and **break-down**. The next section presents a **mentoring relationship building framework** drawing on the systematic analysis outlined above.

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## 4.20 Developing the Mentoring Relationship Building Framework

The previous sections analysed those relationships which built progressively over time, those which faltered and those which failed and terminated. Key determinants, characteristics and traits which influenced these relationships were identified. This research labels these types of mentoring relationships as **progressive**, **flat-lining** and **break-down**, respectively.

This section provides further sense-making of the findings from the analysis of the individual mentoring relationship pairings and presents a **mentoring relationship building framework**. The framework presents key elements which support the building of mentoring relationships. Objective 5 of this research investigation was to analyse the role and responsibility of the mentor and mentee in contributing to the building of the mentoring relationship. This analysis is presented in the previous sections of this Chapter. The framework builds on the analysis of each mentoring relationship and interpretation of the three identified types of mentoring relationship: progressive, flat-lining and break-down relationships. The framework builds on the initial relationship mapping template, (previously introduced on pages 94-99). The framework illustrates the process of building a mentoring relationship and as such provides a practical reference for participants to consider at what point their relationship may have reached in the process and, therefore, what the next steps might be. This may be used as a reflective tool if the relationship is faltering and provide a route map to the next step in the process. The relationship building framework presents a practical representation of mentoring relationship building. The framework is complementary to the derived themes of **perspicacity**, **capacity**, **modus operandi** and **ingredients**, (previously introduced on pages 81-88).

The relationship building framework presents common characteristics towards building a successful mentoring relationship as derived from the data. Each pairing represents a unique relationship and each participant has a role and responsibility within the mentoring process which changes over time. These roles and responsibilities are inter-related, they complement and work off each

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other as the mentoring relationship builds. This process is incremental, and the roles change as the relationship builds, representing a complex interaction. The time frame for each mentoring relationship to build varies but there are common characteristics in the cycle, which are suggested from the analysis of each of the relationship types. From the analysis of the relationships, apparently common relationship enabling factors are identified and conversely those that hinder the process. These characteristics are supported by the participant's perspicacity and capacity to undertake the role of mentor or mentee, how they manage the process (modus operandi) and the ingredients within the mix which may enhance or hinder mentoring relationship building. The mentoring relationship building framework, (Figure 27, page 183), developed from the analysis of the mentoring relationship pairings, illustrates features which support the successful building of mentoring relationships and key characteristics which enable mentoring relationships to build over time.

The mentoring relationship framework, presents four inter-related strands which emerged from the data which appeared to support the process of building a successful mentoring relationship. Each of the four strands are now described so that we can see the key elements within a strand. The strands are, however, interlinked, inter-related and interdependent, so the mentoring relationship building framework presents all four strands with the elements positioned to illustrate complementary adjacency. These elements within these strands support and enable the mentoring relationships to build and aid our understanding of the mentoring process. This research labels these strands as:

- Relationship Phases / Stages
- Operational Process
- Mentor Engagement
- Mentee Engagement

Under the heading, **Relationship Phases / Stages**, the progressive mentoring relationships built through the following stages: initiation, rapport-building, direction-setting, relationship building, cultivation, progress-making, winding-down, separation, redefinition, moving-on / professional friendship. The



relationship building aligns to key conceptual frameworks proffered by Clutterbuck (2004) and Kram (1983) which present the phases / stages of a mentoring relationship, as illustrated in Figure 23.

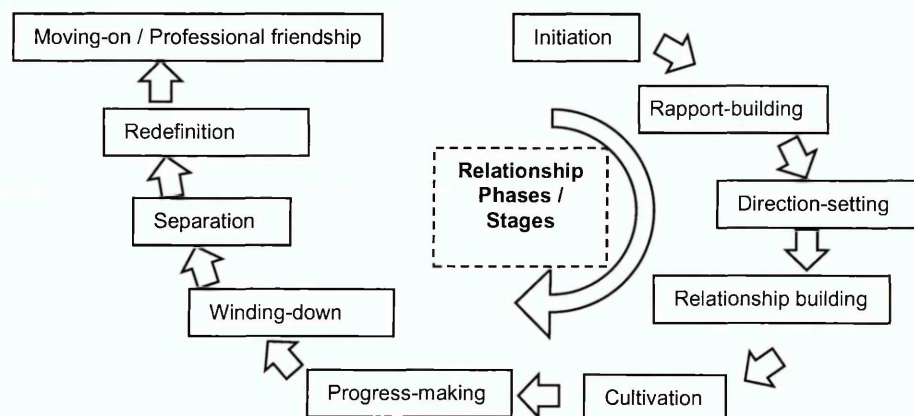


Figure 23: Emergent 'Relationship Phases / Stages' in developing a Mentoring Relationship Building Framework

The **operational process** represents features which are identified within the progressive relationships and are considered as being supportive of relationship building within the relationship. These features appear to enable the relationships and grow and build over time. Under the heading, Operation Process, the progressive mentoring relationships engaged in the following identifiable steps: contracting, objective setting, progress-making, meeting objectives, completion, new objectives, new contract (redefinition of relationship). These are represented in Figure 24.

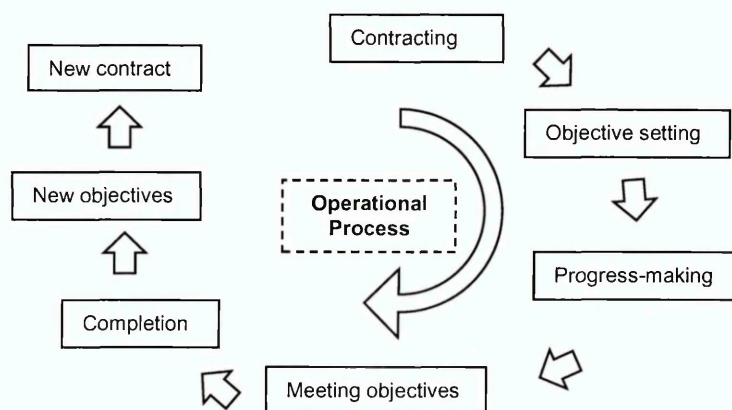


Figure 24: Emergent 'Operational' steps towards developing a Mentoring Relationship Building Framework

**Mentor engagement** in the process is characterised by a range of attributes derived from the data sets which include: listening, discussing, advising, setting boundaries, direction setting, relationship building, enabling, facilitating, supporting, reflection / new skills / knowledge / experience, development, moving-on. They also encompass relationship building skills (perspicacity and capacity), acting as a sounding board, reflecting on the process (gaining new knowledge, skills and experience through the process), benefiting from the process, managing the separation and moving-on. The mentor's ability to support the process of relationship building is further influenced by their experience, knowledge, expertise, skills and competence.

These are represented in Figure 25.

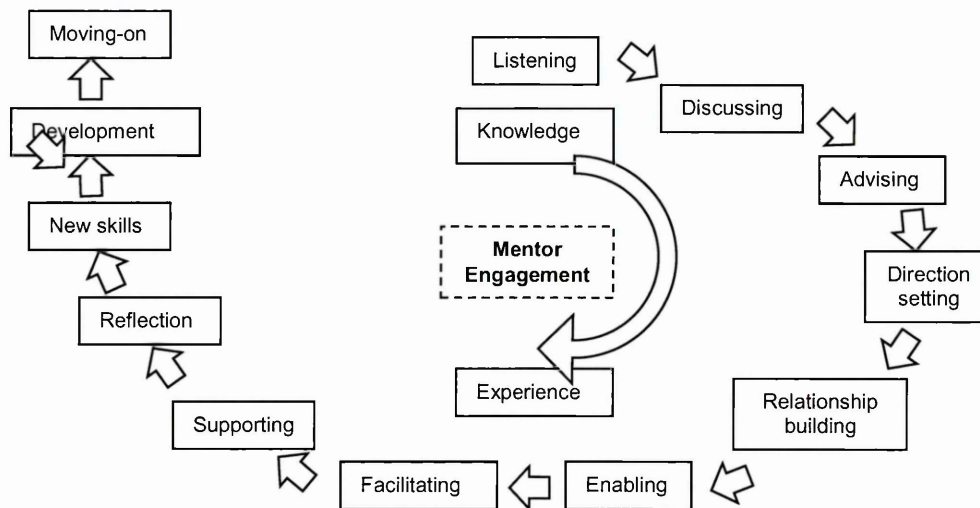


Figure 25: Emergent 'Mentor Engagement' characteristics towards developing a Mentoring Relationship Building Framework

**Mentee engagement** in the process of building a successful mentoring relationship is characterised by a range of factors derived from the data sets which include: discussing, direction planning to meet objectives, engagement, relationship building, motivation, confidence, empowerment, development, transformational development, new skills / knowledge / experience, meeting aspirations independence, new relationship, new goals. These are represented in Figure 26.

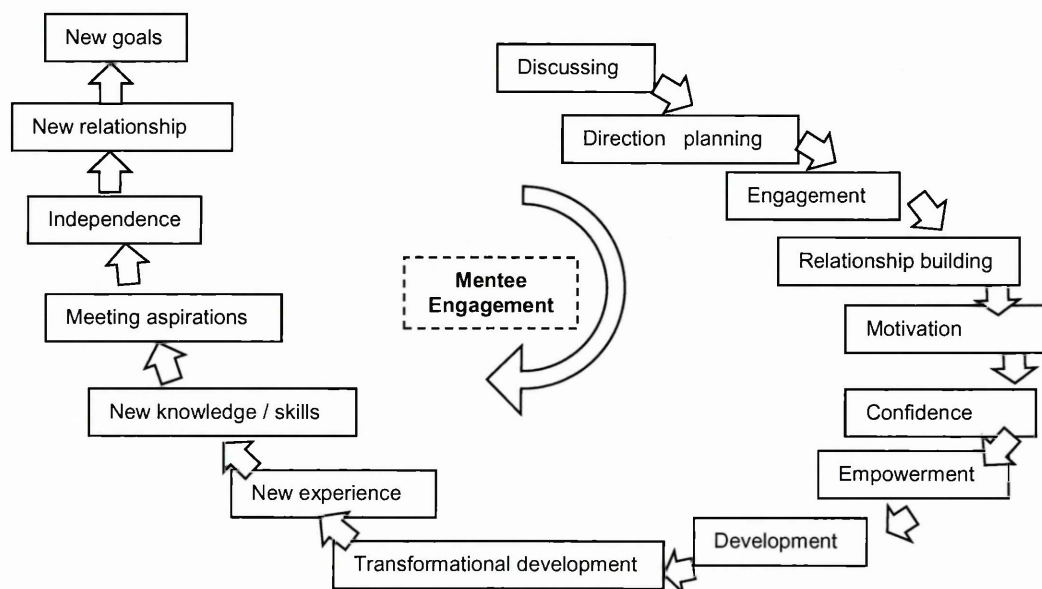


Figure 26: Emergent 'Mentee Engagement' characteristics in developing a Mentoring Relationship Building Framework

The **mentoring relationship building framework**, illustrated in Figure 27, page 183, represents the key features (derived from the data analysis) towards building a successful mentoring relationship over time and the critical adjacency of the key characteristics required for the benefits of the mentoring process to be realised. These are considered as critical enablers, factors, characteristics and determinants within the process of mentoring and relationship building.

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The framework further illustrates critical influences on the mentoring relationship building process. These were identified within the study as having an influence on the process and represent key determinants in the relationship building process and maybe described as:

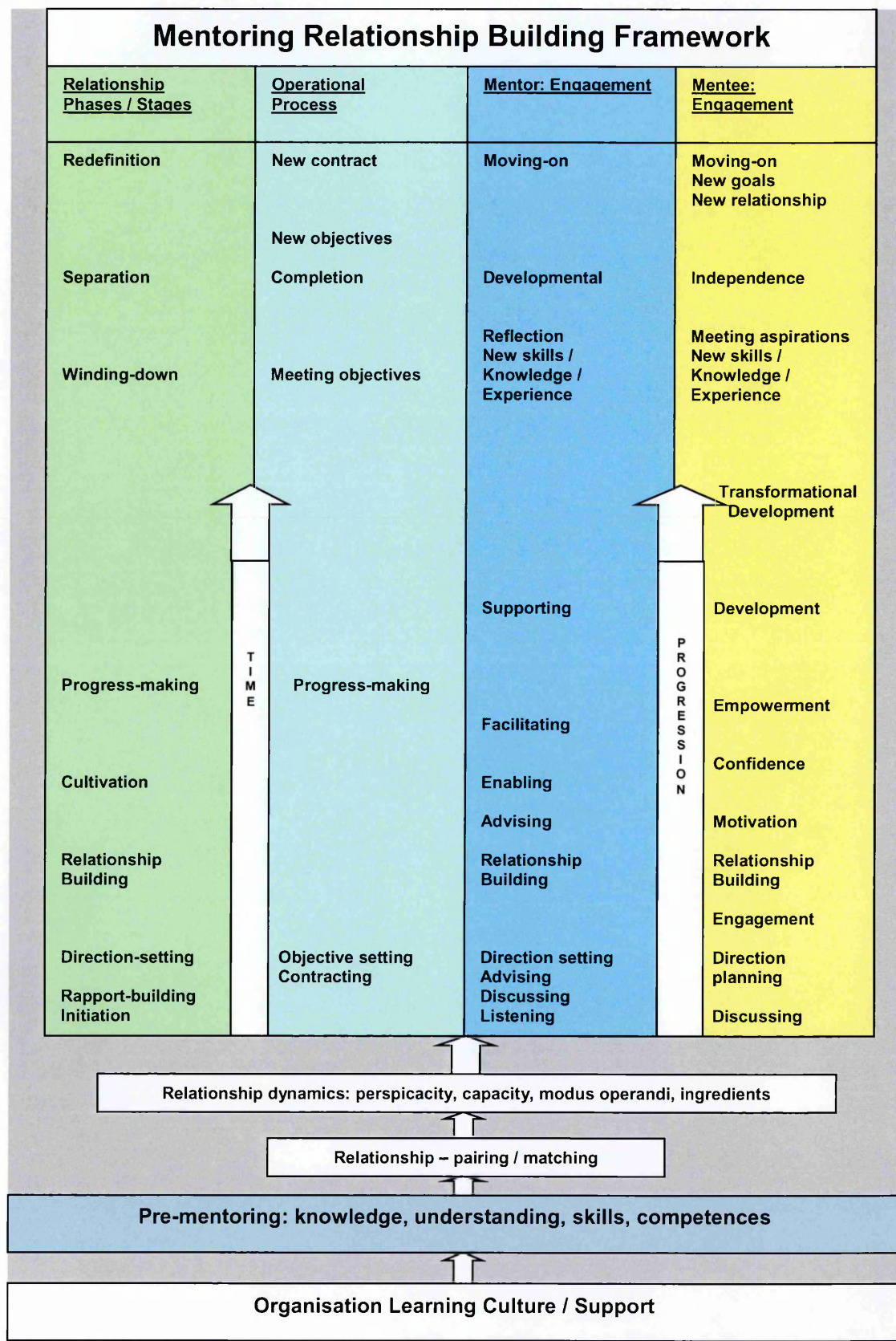
- Organisation learning culture and support
- Pre-mentoring: knowledge, understanding, skills, competence
- Relationship: pairing / matching
- Relationship dynamics: perspicacity, capacity, modus operandi and ingredients

These critical influences are illustrated as feeding into the framework. The mentoring relationship building framework, therefore, encapsulates key findings from this research portraying influences on the process of mentoring relationship building. The process is complex, illustrated by the interconnected nature of the influences and suggests that building successful mentoring relationships is a combination of many factors and determinants which support the process. Having an overview of the process and gaining insight into the intricacies of mentoring relationship building may provide opportunities to develop and inform practice.

The framework may support our understanding as to what point participants are at within a mentoring relationship and provide a reflective illustration of the next stages and inform those that might be faltering, flat-lining in a relationship. An aide memoire to practitioners and participants.



Figure 27: Mentoring Relationship Building Framework



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The framework may be used to inform practice as it represents an illustration of the key elements towards building successful mentoring relationships. It provides a useful tool and insight to inform participants preparing to embark on a mentoring programme, illustrating the interconnected and progressive nature of mentoring relationship building over time. It illustrates how both the mentors' and mentees' roles and responsibilities change as the relationship builds and that there is a corresponding adjacency of characteristics and determinants which are evident in progressive mentoring relationships. There is a connectedness between the role of the mentor and mentee and an interdependence of these roles. If the roles and responsibilities do not coincide the relationship may falter. The framework illustrates that the mentee has an equally important role to that of the mentor in enabling the relationship to build over time.

In conclusion, what emerges from the data analysis is an in-depth understanding of the process towards building successful mentoring relationships and the determinants that support the process. For practice, the identification of three types of mentoring relationship may enable better understanding for practitioners and participants as to what type of relationship they are engaged in and point to where they are in the process. If faltering, what the issues might be which need to be addressed to carry on building the relationship. Through investigating what is happening inside mentoring relationships the process that supports mentoring relationship building have been presented in the framework. These outcomes provide practice with conceptual tools to support understanding of the process.

Having considered the organisational learning culture, to provide context to the environment within which the research was undertaken, presented a systematic analysis of the progressive, flat-lining and breakdown relationships and developed a mentoring relationship building framework, the next chapter considers the findings and conclusions which can be drawn from this investigation.

## Chapter 5: Findings and Conclusions

### 5.01 Introduction

The previous chapters have presented the research focus and context. The research methodology has been explained in detail and the systematic analysis of each mentoring relationship has been described and interpreted.

This chapter discusses the outcomes of this research. This research set out to explore what happens within mentoring relationships and whether, determinants, distinguishing features, characteristics and traits which differentiate successful and unsuccessful relationships can be identified. A number of key objectives were identified, (as shown on pages 6-7), these have been met and are now discussed in this chapter. The literature review identified gaps in knowledge which this research addresses. These were identified on page 48, and are now considered in this chapter.

This research has identified key determinants within mentoring relationships which influence the process of mentoring relationship building. This has been achieved through analysing the *lived* experiences of the participants engaged in the process of mentoring over a period of time, from inception to completion. There is an identified lack of in-depth, longitudinal, empirical research in the field of mentoring and this research investigation tackles these concerns. What has been identified, through undertaking this research are: determinants which influence the process of mentoring relationship building, a conceptual framework, a typology of relationships, a mentoring relationship building framework – these key contributions help us to understand the process of mentoring relationship building.

A conceptual understanding of mentoring and the process of mentoring has emerged from the data. Four themes emerged from the data analysis which conceptualise and present an abstraction from the complexity surrounding mentoring relationship building; these are labelled, for the purposes of this research as: **perspicacity**, **capacity**, **modus-operandi** and **ingredients**.



These are introduced within the thesis (pages 81-88). These themes may be viewed as *pillars* supporting the process of mentoring to aid our understanding and these concentrate on the participants (perspicacity and capacity), the operational aspects towards meeting objectives (*modus-operandi*) and a broad range of determinants which influence the process (ingredients). These themes help conceptualise the complex process of mentoring relationship building and provide an opportunity to start to identify what is going on within or has influence on the mentoring relationship. Is it the participants themselves in terms of their perspicacity and capacity? Is it how the process is being managed (*modus operandi*), or is it a range of other factors which may be described as ingredients?

The analysis of the *lived* experience of each mentoring relationship pair (case) resulted in an in-depth understanding of how each of the mentoring relationships built over time and how successfully or otherwise. Through mapping the process three distinct types of relationship emerged. This research presents a typology (classification of types) as: **progressive**, **flat-lining** and **break-down** (pages 88-100). This suggests that we can now start to describe what sort of relationship one might be engaged in, what the determinants are which are either supporting or hindering the process of building successful mentoring relationships. Further analysis of the role and responsibility of the mentor and mentee in contributing to the building of the mentoring relationship has been represented in the overarching relationship building framework. This framework builds on the relationship mapping and provides a simple illustration of what is a complex process. The **mentoring relationship building framework**, Figure 27, page 183, (described in pages 177-184), illustrates the inter-related roles of the mentor and mentee as they build their mentoring relationships over time.

The conclusion is that these insights provide a contribution to professional knowledge and inform practice. The research provides insight into what happens within mentoring relationships and what factors contribute to building a successful mentoring relationship. This empirical research focusses on the *lived* experiences of participants within a mentoring relationship over a period of time.



The research outcomes suggest what constitutes a successful mentoring relationship and how it may be achieved. The research provides insight into the indicators that enable a mentoring relationship is building successfully. The outcomes provide *tools* that can be adapted to aid participants and practitioners to identify and gauge how well a relationship is building.

The next sections focus on some specific findings and reflections on the process of building successful mentoring relationships, these include: organisational enabling structures, readiness to mentor, mentoring relationship building, tangible outcomes, longitudinal analysis.

## **5.02 Organisational Enabling Structures**

The organisational learning culture to support mentoring was found to be a potential determinant in influencing participant engagement in the process of building a mentoring relationship. This aspect was considered in Section 4.02, (pages 105-108) and is shown on the Mentoring Relationship Building Framework, Figure 27 (page 183), as having a potential influence, feeding into the mentoring relationship building process. A number of participants, both mentors and mentees, identified concerns as to the organisational culture in terms of supporting employee learning. The enabling structures within an organisation were found to have an influence on the effective engagement of the participants in the process of mentoring which impacted on mentoring relationships. As identified, the participants (particularly the mentees), experienced a lack of time, conflicting priorities and workload issues which adversely influenced their ability to fully engage and make progress. There was a view that the organisational culture was more focussed on outcomes and not the process of achieving them. Silverman (2003) identifies the importance of organisational enabling structures and culture to foster a learning environment.

An example of this is that none of the participants were given additional time allocation to participate in the process and their engagement in the mentoring programme was over and above existing workloads. These time pressures and other work priorities, in some cases, adversely influenced the building of the

relationships. It is therefore considered important for organisations to acknowledge that there is a resource allocation requirement to enable mentoring programmes to be implemented to increase the likelihood of participant engagement and satisfactory outcomes. Kirkpatrick (2008), Ehrich (1999) highlight the importance of careful planning, implementation and organisational support to enhance the benefits of formal mentoring programmes. If formalised mentoring is considered by an organisation to be an effective means to develop their employees then it is suggested that it is considered as a strategic priority to develop an effective mentoring culture. Within an organisation, the culture, context and environment influences participant engagement in mentoring schemes and therefore the potential outcomes. There are opportunities to investigate how organisations can create the space, suitable environments and appropriate support mechanisms to enhance and add-value to the mentoring process and the potential benefits derived from implementing mentoring interventions.

### **5.03 Readiness to Mentor**

It was found that those participants who conveyed a sound understanding of the process of mentoring, prior to the commencement of the intervention, built their relationships more progressively and sustainably. Prior mentoring experience was a key determining factor towards building a successful mentoring relationship. Neither Kram (1983) nor Clutterbuck (2004) identified a **pre-mentoring phase** in their models, which this research highlights as an important stage prior to the participants engaging in the mentoring process. Prior experience or understanding of the mentoring process is considered as a critical phase in enabling mentoring relationships to build over time; to provide understanding of the interdependency of the roles and responsibilities of each party.

The participant's readiness to engage in the process is identified as a crucial determinant within of the process of building successful mentoring relationships and the findings align with the work of Garvey (2008) and Alred (1998). Key factors, therefore, relate to the competence of the mentor and the motivation and proactive nature of the mentee. At the pre-mentoring stage an

understanding of the critical path through the phases to provide the underpinning knowledge of the process appears to be important. Without this prior knowledge and experience the relationships floundered, either flat-lining or breaking-down. Participants articulated an understanding of the meaning of mentoring which attuned to the *family resemblances* of mentoring as identified in the literature review (pages 21-24), however, they did not convey an acknowledgement of the progressive nature of a mentoring relationship within which their skills and competences would be employed and change over time to enable the relationship to build and grow.

In conclusion, it is considered important therefore that participants are fully inducted into the process of mentoring prior to the intervention commencing. To aid this process reference to the Mentoring Relationship Building Framework, Figure 27 (page 183), derived from this research provides a useful reference point.

It was found that at the pre-mentoring stage, prior to the mentoring commencing, both the mentors and mentees were in the main, '*optimistic*', '*positive*', '*excited*' and '*enthusiastic*' at the prospect of undertaking the mentoring programme, some described a little trepidation being a '*little nervous*' and '*apprehensive*', particularly the mentees. The mentors and mentees were all academic members of staff but it was evident that the mentors differentiated themselves from the mentees through appearing more confident in their ability to support and provide guidance. The mentors were more secure in their knowledge and experience; it was evident that they tended to engage in reflective practice on a regular basis. The mentees tended to be less sure and less confident, realising they needed to fill gaps in their knowledge and identified the need to gain greater experience. The mentees acknowledged the need for support in areas which they felt were holding back their research development. The thesis identifies a lack of meaningful research into the prior feelings of the participants which potentially have an influence on the mentoring relationship and how they might develop. These may relate to, for example pre-mentoring: anxiety, fears, and confidence issues. Further study on these issues may further inform our understanding of how these might influence the process



of mentoring relationship building and thereby influence programme design and training for the future.

There are opportunities for further study to investigate best practice in developing suitable training programmes to convey this aspect of the mentoring process and enhance relationship building skills through the different phases of the mentoring process.

#### **5.04 Mentoring Relationship Building**

This research focusses on gaining insight into how mentoring relationships built overtime and the determinants, characteristics and traits which impacted on the individual pairings ability to build a successful and positive relationship. To aid the analysis a simple relationship mapping template, Figure 09, page 96 (introduced in pages 94-100), was derived based upon the phases of the mentoring process and characteristics associated with each which related to the organisational management of the process and mentor and mentee roles and responsibilities. Each relationship was mapped through interpretation and sense making of the transcript data, representing the participants' experiences, (an example is provided in pages 88-94). Three types of relationship were observed and labelled by this research as: progressive, flat-lining, break-down. The outcome was that five pairings presented a profile of being progressive, two flat-lined and three may be described as break-down and terminated prematurely. The characteristics, determinants and traits were then analysed to gain insight into what was happening within these relationships to establish the influences on these profiles. The rationale is that by gaining this insight and understanding opportunities arise to inform and potentially improved practice.

The process of building a successful mentoring relationship is complex with a broad range of variables and factors. There are, however, key enablers and determinants which influence the process such that a progressive relationship can be described in terms of identified key characteristics. Equally significant is the identification of the determinants which influenced the mentoring relationships which flat-lined or resulted in break-down. By gaining an insight



into these characteristics, traits and determinants and how they manifest themselves, highlights issues to be considered when embarking on the implementation of future mentoring schemes.

The principal influence on mentoring relationship building was the ability of the participants to engage in the dynamic complexities of the process. It is inappropriate to consider putting two people together and hope that the process will work. The implication for mentoring practice relate to the importance of the the induction of the participants into their roles and responsibilities within the relationship, which change and evolve as the relationship builds. This aspect highlights the importance of this research, providing insights into what happens within mentoring relationships and may inform participants. Where the relationships built over time progressively, the mentors were experienced in mentoring, knowledgeable in their subject and supportive of their mentee's development needs and demonstrated a range of skills and competences to enable the relationship to evolve. These attributes were complemented by the mentee's ability to engage and their high level of motivation and commitment to the process. Where the relationships floundered there were issues of incompatibility, knowledge gaps, lack of understanding in the process of mentoring, lack of engagement and lack of motivation and prioritisation. These represent adverse factors which may be mitigated through careful consideration at the planning and implementation stages of a mentoring intervention.

From this research it is suggested that the progressive relationships, ones that built over time, moved through the identified phases of a relationship, as described by Kram (1983) and Clutterbuck (2004). This research affirms, that the phases are sequential and that the conceptual framework proffered by Clutterbuck (2004), does indeed reflect the pattern of mentoring relationship building. The progressive relationships were found to map to the five phases suggested by Clutterbuck (2004): *rapport-building, direction-setting, progress making, winding-down, moving-on / professional friendship*. These phases appear to align and support the developmental approach to mentoring, which is the focus of this study. Kram's (1983) four phases of mentoring: *initiation, cultivation, separation, redefinition*, were identifiable but the underlying

descriptors of the phases do not align themselves as well with the developmental approach. The alignment is more closely associated with career sponsorship.

Patterns or profiles were observed and common characteristics identified enabling the relationships to build. The progressive relationship pairings had interconnected complementary characteristics and traits which were identifiable within this study and are illustrated in the resultant Mentoring Relationship Building Framework, (Figure 27, page 183), which is based on the finding from this research. This adds to Clutterbuck's work (2005 p7) where mentor and mentee competences are framed against mentorship relationship phases by presenting identified characteristics which run in parallel, are progressive, evolve and critically have an adjacency which support the process of mentoring and relationship building. These characteristics support relationship building and relate to complementary attributes in both the mentee and mentor which create the environment for progressive relationship building through the phases and stages of mentoring. The pairings that progressed and developed through all the phases had a commonality which was observed. These common characteristics and features were able to be interpreted and described. In the pairings which made incremental progress both the mentor and mentee made positive comments about their pairing / matching (*rapport-building*) and there was evidence of mutual respect between the participants and an understanding of what each was contributing to the relationship and this aligns with the work of Cox (2005) who references the importance of the matching process. There were common characteristics described by the participants, for example: the mentees valued the knowledge, expertise and experience of their mentor; the mentors acknowledged the mentees engagement, motivation and commitment to the process. There was mutual respect by each party as to what each was contributing to the relationship which enabled progress to be made and the relationship to build.

Where relationships did not progress well there were issues and concerns raised by either the mentor or mentee or both as to their matching. These issues related to, for example, the mentee perceiving knowledge gaps in their

mentor which did not complement and support them in achieving their objectives. Other issues related to a mentee concluding that the advice being given by their mentor was unhelpful. In this particular relationship the mentor felt that they were being used by their mentee in a cynical and strategic manner which was not conducive to building a positive mentoring relationship. This concurs with Eby (2000) in terms of potential dysfunctional relationships. There were issues in relation to language and understanding of terms with the coming together of different research domains, an issue identified by Garvey (1999). Some found this aspect interesting and challenging in a positive way and learnt from the process and resolved the differences, but not in all cases. There may be perceived advantages of bringing together participants with different perspectives but is there a point at which the differences are too great. Consideration of the use of language, understanding of terms and difference in meaning between subject disciplines was apparent in some relationships and how this might influence mentoring relationship building is an area for further study.

Where the relationships built progressively with impetus, the mentors acknowledged the proactive commitment and motivation on the part of their mentee to engage, prioritise and focus on achieving their objectives and make tangible progress. From the point of view of the mentee it was the recognition that the mentor had the appropriate and relevant knowledge and experience to guide them through the challenges to meet their objectives. These observations align with those of Clutterbuck (2005). These attributes were found to be particularly important in the transition from the *initiation* and *rapport-building* phases into the *cultivation* and *progress-making* phases.

In the *rapport-building* and *initiation* phases the relationships which built effectively it can be seen that the participants engaged in constructive conversations which involved the mentee discussing their current circumstances and situation and outlining what they would wish to achieve through the process. In these relationships the mentor engaged and listened and advised as to what might be achievable. At this stage there is evidence that boundaries relating to how the relationship might evolve were discussed, setting



the framework for how the pairing would work together and outlining and agreeing the rules of engagement – forming a contract. This aspect of negotiation supports Gibb (1994), who proffers the importance of this stage in enabling the foundations of the relationship to be formed upon which the mentoring relationship builds. Based on this foundation the pairings agreed on the aims and objectives to be achieved. The mentors in the progressive relationships were able to support the process of mutual *direction-setting* and the mentees were enabled to *direction plan*, described as *target-setting*. This phase was based upon negotiation and agreement of a mutually acceptable contract between the parties.

From the *initiation* and *rapport-building* phases there is evidence that those relationships that negotiated the *rapport-building* phase successfully built into the *cultivation* and *progress-making* phases, during which the relationship builds through the interplay of the participants. The mentors and mentees undertake crucial and complementary roles and responsibilities in order to enable progression within these phases. The mentoring roles change as the relationship evolves, and this supports the ideas of Bullough (2003), Clutterbuck (2005), Le Maistre (2006), Ambrossetti (2010). For the progressive momentum to be maintained, it is seen that the mentee needed to be proactive, engaged and motivated towards achieving their goals. Without these characteristics the relationship and process faltered. The role of the mentor evolved into one of a guide, sounding board, in terms of providing advice and guidance, and managed the developmental process of the mentee through enabling, facilitating and supporting. It was evident that these roles needed to correspond to enable the relationship to build; this aligns with Morton (2003), Ambrossetti (2010). In the pairings which maintained impetus it was the mentees that drove the process, through their motivation supported by their mentor and this resulted in empowerment, development and noticeable growth in confidence in the mentees as they derived new skills, knowledge and experience. Walkington (2005), Kamvounias (2007), Paris (2010), identify the importance of the proactive mentee in relationship development. Growth in mentee confidence is a key enabler within relationship building and this aligns with Clutterbuck (2005), Morton (2003), De Vries (2005), Klarson (2002).



Mentee motivation appears to be a key determinant for successful mentoring relationships and this aligns with Cullingford (2006). Toward completion of the *progress-making* stage the mentees experienced transformational development as they worked towards meeting their objectives. This is further evidenced by the pairing that did not effectively maintain progress, for example, where the mentee was unable to prioritise their commitment to the process as a result of other priorities diverting their attention. Douglas (1997) identifies conflicting priorities as a potential drawback in relationship building. In these circumstances the relationships lost momentum and ultimately terminated. The reasons given for this loss of momentum included lack of time to commit to the process, geographical locations making it difficult to maintain regular contact and in one pairing the growing disparity between the mentees' needs balanced against the knowledge of the mentor to support the mentee's growth towards meeting their objectives. In one of the pairings it appeared that the mentee did not experience transformational development and independence and remained in the *progress-making* phase, being caught in a non-progression cycle, not appearing to acknowledge the opportunity to *move-on*. The mentor considered that there may be issues regarding dependency and chose to resolve this by extending the period of future meetings. This issue of dependency aligns with the views of Megginson (2004), Clutterbuck (2004), Kram (1983). One of the mentors felt that there were potential power games being played and found this most noticeable in relation to the venue in which the mentoring discussions were being undertaken. He felt that the initial interaction in the coffee bar was on neutral territory, but was aware of the change in dynamics as the meetings moved to the mentee's own office. Issues of power are similarly raised by Eby (2000), Hansman (2002), McAuley (2003), Garvey (2014). A number of contributory factors (ingredients) were identified within the thesis which appeared to influence the building of the mentoring relationships and these included: time pressures, geographical location, dependency, territory within which the mentoring took place, perceived power issues, mentor and mentee understanding of different subject disciplines – communication issues, potential clash of personalities, clash of egos, transference between individuals. Any one of these aspects could form the basis for further in-depth research.

In the progressive relationships it was seen that as the mentees became more empowered, confident and approached completion of their objectives the relationship dynamic began to change with the mentee becoming more independent. For the mentee developmental and transformational learning had taken place and they appeared more self-assured. These characteristics mapped to the *winding-down* and *separation* phases, this aligns with Clutterbuck (2004). On completion of the objectives it is evident that the relationships were *redefined*. At this point it is noted that the mentors became more positive as their mentee outcomes were being realised, recognising their role in enabling their mentee in achieving them. This adds support to the work of De Vries (2005) and Ehrich (2004). The mentors were able to reflect on their skills, knowledge and experience through the process and articulate their derived benefits and learning. None of the progressive relationships terminated they were *redefined*; the pairings *moved-on* and described their *new relationships* as '*professional friendship*', '*critical friends*', resulting in a successful outcome to the process of mentoring.

The findings suggest that if the *direction-setting, initiation* phase is not negotiated successfully progress and transition into the subsequent phases does not develop and translate into tangible outcomes. This aligns with Gibb (1994) and was apparent in three of the relationships. Despite the fact that some of the pairing did not develop beyond the initial stage it was interesting to note that benefits were perceived to have been gained by both the mentor and mentee through their interaction. The conversations they had were considered beneficial in identifying issues that were preventing their development, such as carving out time and prioritisation. Seeing where the blockages were, but being unable to progress at this stage, they perceived as beneficial. These outcomes being reflective and intangible, but helpful to the individual. The conclusion from this is that the process of mentoring does not have to progress through all the stages for the participants to perceive benefits. Even where the relationships did not develop through all the identifiable phases the mentees stated that they had derived benefit and the mentors also reflected on the process to that point and

derived reflective learning and considered how they might develop their practice in the future from the experience and lessons learnt.

Some of the relationships did not develop beyond the *rapport-building*, *initiation* stages since there was a lack of determination at this stage as to the *direction-setting* which underpinned the progression to the next stage. The inability of the participants to develop clear objectives and clarification of their roles and responsibilities hindered progression. It was evident that both parties have a role to play, through their interactions to ensure the growth of the relationship and these enablers relate to skills and competences which were found to be different within each of the stages, as described above. There is interconnectedness between the roles and an interdependence of the interactions.

The research confirms that mentoring is a dynamic process and that mentoring relationships develop through distinct phases. These phases are identifiable and closely align, for developmental mentoring, to those proffered by Clutterbuck (2004): rapport-building, direction-setting, progress-making, winding-down, moving-on / professional friendship. Not all the phases require to be progressed for the participants, mentors and mentees, to derive benefit over time. Some of the relationships were progressive and others may be described as dysfunctional and the factors which influence this are identified.

It is important to acknowledge that this research has been undertaken with a unique sample of academic staff, in a particular context and therefore the findings may have limitations. The participants being mature, professional academic staff. It would be interesting to take the finding from this research and undertaken similar research investigations within different contexts and settings with a variety of different population groups to compare the outcomes. The participants volunteered to take part in the mentoring programme. If the participants were not volunteers and conscripted onto the programme it is likely that their responses would be focussed differently and this needs to be considered. This research is based on a relatively limited sample within a particular context and there are, therefore, opportunities for further research



with different pairings and within different contexts. Mentoring interventions occur in many organisations in a variety of settings and there are opportunities to undertake similar longitudinal studies to provide further insight into the phenomenon and mentoring relationship building to provide additional insight to inform practice.

### **5.05 Tangible Outcomes**

Those relationships which were progressive derived tangible benefits for the mentee and the mentors gained from the experience. The tangible benefits manifest themselves in terms of mentee outputs, which were described, for example as: winning a research scholarship, completing papers accepted for a conference, completing a journal paper, developing a reflective writing style, progressing a research project, developing new networks, completing a research project, delivering a paper, bidding for funding. The mentees achieved a number of tangible outcomes resultant of the mentoring intervention and in the majority of cases the relationships enabled the mentees to meet their objectives. This implies, that formal mentoring programmes can support academic lecturing staff in developing their research.

This research also found that in those relationships which flat-lined the participants, particularly the mentees stated that the experience had been beneficial, but these benefits were less tangible and related more to reflection on-self and the individual's own current position and state of being. An example of this is where the pairing did not progress beyond the rapport building and initiation stage and the outcome was that the mentee realised that what they needed to do was to prioritise their workload to create space to develop their research. This encounter with mentoring created a realisation and not a tangible outcome. The ultimate outcome from this mentoring intervention was that the mentee created space in their workload and enrolled on a professional doctorate as part of their personal development.

In the relationships which may be described as 'break-down' and ultimately terminated the participants were reflective of their experiences and two out of



three pairings acknowledged some benefits, even if it meant that they had learnt from a less than satisfactory relationship.

The implication and conclusion of this is that mentoring is in the main beneficial whether the relationship builds progressively through all the stages or not, but if tangible outcomes are the desired aim then a progressive relationship as described in this thesis is the goal to be achieved. This thesis identifies potential benefits for both the mentee and mentor derived through their engagement and participation in the mentoring process. There are opportunities to further investigate both the short-term and long-term outcomes for the individuals concerned in terms of their learning development and growth.

### **5.06 Longitudinal Analysis**

Through undertaking a longitudinal study, gathering data at four points during the mentoring relationship building process, it was possible to interpret how the relationships built over time through understanding the *lived* experiences of the participants. It was noted that the experiences and views of the participants changed overtime and if one had relied on the data gained at just one point in time, without considering the broader time scale, the data would be potentially misleading. For example, at three months into the mentoring intervention some of the participants were positive as to how their relationships were building and yet at six months into the intervention some of those relationships had dissolved with little further progress and terminated. The methodological approach to this thesis, therefore, presents a holistic view of mentoring relationship building based on empirical evidence of the *lived* experience and therefore adds to our understanding and contributes to our knowledge of the mentoring process. There is an identifiable lack of in-depth, longitudinal, empirical research in this field of study. Through undertaking the longitudinal study it was possible to elicit and gauge the participants' experiences over time and therefore monitor the change that occurred.

At the stage three months into the programme, it was found that the participants were positive of their experiences. For example the mentors comments: 'very

*positive*, *'enjoying the process'*, *'challenging'*, *'very happy'*, *'going well'*, *'enjoying it more'*. Mentee comments: *'very good'*, *'happy with progress'*, *'fairly good so far'*, *'taken control'*, *'chuffed'*, *'building confidence'*. At this stage, however, the participants, particularly the mentees, were beginning to cite feelings of being under time pressure from other priorities which were adversely influencing their commitment to progress towards meeting their objectives and the level of their participation. This aspect aligns with Douglas (1997) who cites lack of time and neglect of core job as potential drawbacks to mentoring interventions. The mentors appeared to be more positive as to the progress of their mentees than the mentees were themselves as to the progress they were making. The mentors were able to reflect on the process and experienced learning from the process. For example the mentors identified: learning from their mentee working in areas that were new to the mentor, feeling really stretched outside their comfort zone in a positive way, realising on reflection that the mentor was good at being a mentor, learning from the different language of the different disciplines, learning how to switch paradigms, learning to work outside their discipline and build networks, reflecting on the own practice. These benefits align with Klasen (2002) who identified benefits of mentoring. One of the mentors commented that they now realised that they may benefit from being a mentee to develop gaps in their own knowledge in the future.

It was found that the participants were experiencing positive reactions to their relationships at this stage with the exception of one mentee who felt that the relationship had not yet developed. Mentors described their relationships as, for example, *'professional informal'*, *'open and honest'*, *'open and fluid'*, *'supportive peer relationship'*, *'positively challenging'*, *'comfortable'*. The mentees described their relationships as, *'supportive and positive'*, *'equal basis'*, *'very supportive'*, *'professional'*, *'close'*, *'encouraging'*, *'tuned and relaxed'*. The general consensus was that the process was working well to this point.

At the stage six months into the programme, the participant's experiences were more noticeably differentiated and varied. Some of the relationships had terminated and others were continuing. A number of factors were identified

which adversely influenced the development of the relationships and these included issues relating to prioritisation of time and other work pressures (Douglas 1997), mentee motivation (Cullingford 2006), gaps in mentor knowledge to support the mentee development (Eby 2000), mismatch of relevant expertise (Cox 2005), concerns by a mentee as to the advice given by the mentor, difficulty in meeting up to progress the relationships and more obvious factors where the mentee had left the organisation, which aligns with Kram (1983) as a reason for relationship termination and where illness had prevented further mentee participation. Where a mentee experienced a mismatch in his pairing he received mentoring from another, his dissertation supervisor, to achieve his objectives but acknowledged that he had gained fresh ideas from his original mentor. The experiences expressed by the participants, however, remained positive as did their commitment to the concept of mentoring. There was a general consensus by the mentees that it was a good experience to be mentored by someone who was not their line-manager and slightly removed from their immediate work environment and associated colleagues, this aligns with Megginson (1995), Ragins (1997) who support off-line mentoring. This they felt it allowed them to be more open and candid in revealing their gaps in knowledge, skills and competences and exposing their perceived weaknesses.

Towards the end of the process of mentoring the participants, in the main, remained positive as to their experience. Mentee comments included, for example: *'very, very useful'*, *'only saw benefits'*, *'I think it was very useful but we need time'*, *'what I had was really, really good'*, *'welcomed the chance to talk to somebody from another school with a different perspective'*; *'I have gained confidence, an understanding of how the process works which enable me to make decisions with confidence'*, *'better contacts and networks'*, *'meeting people and discussing more openly than I might otherwise have done'*; *'last year I couldn't do it but this year I can'*; *'I have got out of it professional motivation as much as anything'*. Mentor comments for example: *'I think it has worked well'*, *'I would be happy to take part again and I don't always say that'*; *'I have really enjoyed working with someone from a different discipline it makes*



*you really look at yourself and your own practice'; 'my mentee has achieved largely what she wanted to do and has flown the nest'.*

The longitudinal approach to the study has provided a richness of data and enabled the phenomenon to be investigated in-depth through the *lived* experiences of the participants.

## **5.07 Summary**

The aim and objectives of the research have been met with the focus of this investigation to develop a greater understanding of what happens 'inside' mentoring relationships, how they build and whether, determinants, characteristics and traits which differentiate 'successful' and 'unsuccessful' relationships can be identified. The research deepens our understanding of mentor / mentee relationship building, participant experience and appreciation of the mentoring relationship building process.

This research presents a conceptual understanding of mentoring and the process of mentoring. These emergent themes this research labels as; **perspicacity**, **capacity**, **modus operandi** and **ingredients**. This insight enables the complexities of mentoring relationship building to be more readily comprehended. These themes may be viewed as *pillars* supporting the process of mentoring and help us identify what is going on within a mentoring relationship and offers new insights, new ways of thinking about how the complexities of mentoring relationships interplay.

The analysis of the *lived* experience of each mentoring relationship pairing has resulted in an in-depth understanding of how each of the mentoring relationships built over time. Through mapping the process three distinct types of relationship emerged. This research presents a typology (classification of types) as: **progressive**, **flat-lining** and **break-down**. This classification means that we can now start to describe what sort of relationship one might be engaged in, what the determinants are which are either supporting or hindering the process of building successful mentoring relationships.



Further analysis of the role and responsibility of the mentor and mentee in contributing to the building of the mentoring relationship has been represented in the overarching relationship building framework. This framework builds on the relationship mapping and provides a simple illustration of what is a complex process. The **mentoring relationship building framework**, (Figure 27, page 183), illustrates the inter-related roles of the mentor and mentee as they build their mentoring relationships over time.

The conclusion is that these insights provide an important contribution to knowledge and practice. The research provides insight into what happens within mentoring relationships and the factors which contribute to building a successful mentoring relationship. This empirical research focusses on the *lived* experiences of participants within a mentoring relationship over time. The research outcomes suggest what constitutes a successful mentoring relationship and the determinants that support the process.

The next chapter considers the contribution for professional knowledge and implications for practice.

## Chapter 6: Contribution to Professional Knowledge and Practice

In the previous chapter the overall conclusions and findings derived from this research were presented. In this chapter the case for how this research contributes to professional knowledge and practice is made. To reiterate, the focus of this research was to develop a greater understanding of what happens 'inside' mentoring relationships, how they build and whether, determinants, characteristics and traits which differentiate 'successful' and 'unsuccessful' relationships can be identified.

The most significant contributions to professional knowledge and practice relate to: the identification of a typology of mentoring relationships; a mentoring relationship building framework and relationship mapping; themes which provide a conceptual understanding of the influences on the process of mentoring relationship building; the importance of pre-mentoring (considered as a new phase in the process), in supporting participant understanding of the process, roles and responsibilities. The process of undertaking this longitudinal investigation into the *lived* experiences of the participants has resulted in a unique understanding of the intricacies and determinants toward mentoring relationship building and provides further insight into the phases and stages of the mentoring process.

This study has identified a classification, a typology of relationships, which this research has labelled as: **progressive, flat-lining, break-down**. From a practical point of view this enables the conceptualisation and recognition of three distinct types of mentoring relationship, those that progress and build over time, those that falter and flat-line, and those that fail and terminate. The research has identified contributory factors; determinants which are likely to influence and contribute to the different mentoring relationship types. The identification of these three types enables practitioners and participants to be more aware as to what type of relationship is being considered or that they are

a part of. The typology presents a useful descriptive tool for practitioners and participants to reference. The questions may be asked, what type of relationship is this, is this relationship progressive, building through the stages / phases of the mentoring process? If so, what are the key determinants and characteristics? Has the relationship faltered and flat-lined or has it failed and broken-down. By understanding the nature of the relationship and type of relationship, adverse determinants may be identified earlier in the process and their influence mitigated, increasing the likelihood of building a successful mentoring relationship. A typology has not been presented previously within the field of mentoring and this is seen as a contribution to professional knowledge. From a professional practice perspective these differences are important to recognise, since they can be used to inform participants, to make them aware of what type of relationship they may be engaged in and potentially to support their understanding of their role and responsibility in building successful mentoring relationships.

The **relationship mapping process** undertaken in this research and resultant mentoring relationship building framework, conveys the process of mentoring and mentoring relationship building. The mapping process provides a template from which to identify the different types of relationship, described above. From a practice perspective, the mapping process could provide a useful tool for participants and practitioners to reflect on how a relationship is building. The framework identifies the engagement of the mentor, the complementary engagement of the mentee and the operational nature of the relationship which is important in enabling the mentoring relationships to build progressively. How the operational side of the relationship is managed appears to be a key determinant in the process of relationship building. This aspect is important to highlight to participants engaged in the process. This mapping process may potentially identify remedial action to promote the process of continuing to build a successful mentoring relationship. The process could also be used to point to the next stages in the process to support effective mentoring relationship building. The mentoring relationship building framework, illustrates the inter-related roles of the mentor and mentee as they build their mentoring relationships over time. These insights into the process of building mentoring

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relationships contributes to contemporary understanding and may inform practice and support participant training and the implementation of future mentoring interventions.

This research has identified determinants which may support progressive mentoring relationship building and those which may be detrimental and may lead to flat-lining or break-down relationships. By gaining knowledge of these determinants, derived from the *lived* experiences of the participants, this has enabled a deeper understanding as to what is happening within a mentoring relationship to be appreciated. This understanding and insight has changed the way I practice and manage work based relationships, recognising the process of mentoring and the progressive nature of building a relationship which enables the mentee to meet their objectives and move-on. I recognise the determinants, those which support the process and those which hinder the process, enabling me to be more reflective and effective in my role. This research provides insight into the determinants which influence the types of mentoring relationships and increases understanding of impact factors which may determine the outcome of a mentoring intervention. This may allow adverse influences, traits and characteristics to be recognised and potentially addressed within a mentoring relationship. This is likely to improve the prospect of positive relationship building and draws our attention to those progressive influences which enable relationships to build.

This research identified four themes derived from the data. These themes offer practice new insights, new ways of thinking about how the complexities of mentoring relationship building interplay. The themes are labelled as **perspicacity**, **capacity**, **modus-operandi** and **ingredients**. In summary, perspicacity refers to the participant's understanding and insight and their aptitude to make sound judgements to enable the mentoring relationship to build over time. Capacity refers the participant's ability and capability to undertake their complementary roles and responsibilities to move the relationship on. Modus-operandi refers to the approach and praxis, the process and operational management of the relationship. Ingredients refers to characteristics and factors which may impact on the ability of the relationship to



build over time and these are many and varied and potentially relate to, for example, personalities, time pressures, egos, lack of process understanding, internal and external influences. This conceptualisation has enabled me to interpret more readily what is going on within a mentoring relationship. This insight contributes to our understanding of the process which supports mentoring relationship building. By gaining an understanding of these themes we start to think about how the process of building a mentoring relationship is supported and the mechanisms which need to be in place to enhance the process, which includes appropriate training and support for the participants and support from the organisation. This research identified the importance of participant understanding of the process of mentoring and suggested a pre-mentoring stage to be considered to concentrate on providing insight into mentoring relationship building. The outcomes of this research provide tools to support this process.

This research identifies an additional **pre-mentoring stage** or phase, which adds to the conceptual framework of the phases of the mentoring process proffered by Clutterbuck (2004), since it is identified as critical to the overall process. A pre-mentoring stage or phase is not identified in contemporary models and is therefore put forward as a new and relevant phase to be recognised. The pre-mentoring stage is to ensure that the readiness of the participants (mentor and mentee) to engage in the process. The participants, in this study, did not demonstrate an understanding of the dynamic nature of the mentoring process nor that different skills and competences are required to enable mentoring relationships to build and as they evolve through different phases over time. The importance of identifying a pre-mentoring phase is that it focuses attention on the need to carefully induct participants preparing to engage in a mentoring programme and introduce them to the process of mentoring, the operational management, their roles and responsibilities and how mentoring relationships build over time. This is an insight which may influence future scheme design, training and induction.

The phases of the mentoring process, proffered by Clutterbuck (2004), *rapport-building, direction-setting, progress-making, winding-down, moving-on /*

*profession friendship* were identifiable and representative of the findings within this research. Kram's (1983) four phases of mentoring, *initiation*, *cultivation*, *separation* and *redefinition*, were identifiable but the underlying descriptors do not align themselves well and are more closely associated with career sponsorship. The findings indicated that distinct phases of the mentoring relationship can be identified but that not all the phases need to be progressed for the participants to derive benefit. It was noted that even if the participants did not develop beyond the rapport-building phase benefits were still experienced through conversational engagement without tangible outcomes. The direction-setting stage appears to be pivotal in enabling mentoring relationship building; if this stage is not effectively negotiated the relationships lose momentum. The phases appear sequential and progressive and for the mentoring relationships to build there are distinct characteristics and enablers which support this process. The findings suggest the sequential nature of the phases and that one is a prerequisite of the next. This further emphasises the importance of the participants pre-knowledge in understanding their role in the process which changes as the relationship builds through the phases and therefore through time.

Much of the contemporary literature on mentoring tends towards retrospective and anecdotal accounts, often unsupported by empirical evidence. There is an over reliance on single point samples and few attempt to track and gain insight into understanding mentoring relationship building. This research contributes to professional knowledge and practice, through gaining an in-depth understanding of how mentoring relationships build over time based on the *lived* experiences of the participants. The research presents a holistic view of relationship building and identifies key characteristics and determinants within a relationship which supports progressive mentoring relationship building and provides insight into why some relationships flourish and others falter and terminate. This insight is useful to practitioners and participants to aid our understanding of mentoring relationship building and provides opportunities to improve on current practice.

This research affirms the importance of providing enabling structures to support the mentoring process. From a practice perspective this particularly relates to providing time for the participants to engage in the process. Mentoring should not be viewed as an add-on to current workloads but should be valued and integrated within a learning organisation. Some of the mentees in this study struggled with prioritising their time commitment to the scheme and this adversely impacted on their ability to fully engage in the process. This research, however, confirms that benefits were derived from the process for both the mentee and mentor. It was found that the participants valued being part of a mentoring intervention and perceived benefits through being engaged in the process.

From a scheme design and implementation point of view it was found that the duration of the relationships varied dependent upon the needs of the mentees and the effectiveness of the relationship interactions. The implication of this for practice is that time limits vary, recognising that mentoring relationships are unique constructs and build overtime and need to run a natural course, provided they are progressive, learning takes place and there is an end point.

These aspects are important since organisations need to consider the impacts of implementing mentoring schemes and consider what the benefits may be for their employees in terms of employee satisfaction and learning opportunities. Many organisations implement mentoring schemes which absorb time and resource and the insights which this research presents may enable more successful outcomes to be achieved which may be beneficial to the participants and organisation.

This research is already being disseminated and utilised to encourage debate and interaction. A member of the research supervisory team, an eminent figure in mentoring, has adopted the mentoring relationship building framework and the mentoring relationship mapping process to support staff development webinars within a large public sector organisation. The feedback has been very positive and it has enabled participants to reframe and rethink mentoring

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relationships and in particular the pre-engagement phase and the participant's role and responsibilities.

The contributions to professional knowledge and practice are therefore: a typology of mentoring relationships; a conceptual framework; a mentoring relationship building framework and mapping process; the addition of a pre-mentoring phase (emphasising the importance of establishing participant prior awareness of the process); an identification of the determinants, characteristics and traits towards building successful mentoring relationships.

The insight presented by this research helps us to understand and interpret the practice of mentoring differently and advances our knowledge of the practice of mentoring and may inform future practice training, the implementation of mentoring programmes and promote further research.



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## **Appendix A: Semi-structured Interview – aide-memoire**

### **Interview 1 (sample) - Pre-mentoring**

#### **Introduction**

This interview is to form part of the data collection process to inform my Doctorate of Business Administration thesis which is an investigation into the perceived benefits (or otherwise) of a mentoring intervention to support personal development and adaptation to new or existing environments within an organisational context. The information will be treated with strict confidentiality and anonymity. The interview is being recorded to enable a transcript to be produced to assist data analysis. Your views, experiences and perceptions are highly valued as is your time in providing the information.

This is the first of four interviews; the second will be at a time during the mentoring process, the third at the end of the process and the fourth 3-6mths after.

The purpose of the semi-structured interviews is to:-

- highlight the issues which effect individuals through their experience of undertaking a mentoring programme
- establish the benefits (or otherwise) of the mentoring process
- consider the potential influences which impact on the process of mentoring
- consider the extent to which the mentoring intervention supports mentee and mentor development
- establish consensus or divergence with the findings in relation to contemporary theory relating to the phases of mentoring



## **Semi-structured Interview Aide-memoire**

### **Interview 1 (prior to the commencement of the mentoring intervention)**

Interviewee Number:	Male / Female
Age:	20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60+
Describe your main role and responsibilities (main functions)?	
How many years have you worked in the organisation?	
Do you have experience of mentoring or coaching, if yes, please describe.	

- What is your understanding of the term 'mentoring', your role and the mentoring process?
- How do you feel about undertaking a mentoring programme?
- What do you perceive to be the advantages and disadvantages of 'mentoring'?
- Does your organisation support and encourage you to seek help and support from other colleagues?
- How would you describe the 'culture' of your organisation?
- What do you hope to gain from undertaking a mentoring programme?
- Are there any particular issues you would like to explore and develop through the mentoring process, if yes, please describe?
- Are there aspects which might be of concern to you but you feel unable to raise even to your mentor, if so, why and are you able to say what aspects these are?
- Do you have any concerns about undertaking a mentoring programme, if so please describe?
- Is there anything else you might like to add?

### **Interview 2 (midway through the mentoring process)**

- How is the mentoring progressing?
- Which aspects are working well and why?
- Which aspects are not working so well and why?
- What are your perceptions of the process so far?

- 
- How would you describe your relationship with your mentor?
  - How are you feeling about the process at the moment?
  - What aspects are you exploring in the process?
  - Are these helping you deal with your role and responsibilities more effectively?
  - Is there anything else you might like to add?

### **Interview 3 (on completion of the mentoring process)**

- How was the mentoring experience?
- Which aspects worked well and why?
- Which aspects did not work so well, and why?
- What are your perceptions of the process?
- How would you describe your relationship with your mentor?
- How did you feel about the process overall?
- Did the process help you resolve some issues?
- Can you say what these issues were and how did the process help?
- Is there anything else you might like to add?

### **Interview 4 (3-6 months after completion of the mentoring process)**

- On reflection, how was the mentoring experience?
- Which aspects worked well and why?
- Which aspects did not work so well, and why?
- What are your perceptions of the process, now?
- How would you describe your relationship with your mentor?
- How did you feel about the process overall?
- Has the process helped you deal with your role and responsibilities more effectively?
- Can you describe what impact the researcher had on the process?
- Is there anything else you might like to add?

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Similar questions asked of the mentors.

## Appendix B: Transcript log

No.	Mentor	Mentee	Recording	Date	
1	Female		11110707	07.11.11	1
			12022702	27.02.12	2
			12061901	19.06.12	3
			12100903	09.10.12	4
2		Female	11111101	11.11.11	1
			12022704	27.02.12	2
			12071701	17.07.12	3
			12102303	23.10.12	4
3	Male		11110804	08.11.11	1
			12030205	02.03.12	2
			12071101	11.07.12	3
			12101801	18.10.12	4
4		Male	12022701	27.02.12	1
			12072601	26.07.12	2
					3
					4
5	Female		11110803	08.11.11	1
			12021303	13.02.12	2
			12062201	22.06.12	3
					4
6		Male	11110807	08.11.11	1
			12022003	20.02.12	2
					3
					4
7	Male		11110807	08.11.11	1
			12022003	20.02.12	2
					3
					4
8		Female	11110801	08.11.11	1
			12022703	27.02.12	2
			12072602	26.07.12	3
					4

<b>9</b>	<b>Male</b>		<b>11110903</b>	<b>09.11.11</b>	<b>1</b>
			<b>12021302</b>	<b>13.02.12</b>	<b>2</b>
			<b>12070502</b>	<b>05.07.12</b>	<b>3</b>
			<b>12102302</b>	<b>23.10.12</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>10</b>		<b>Male</b>	<b>11111403</b>	<b>14.11.11</b>	<b>1</b>
			<b>12021305</b>	<b>13.02.12</b>	<b>2</b>
			<b>12070302</b>	<b>03.07.12</b>	<b>3</b>
			<b>12101701</b>	<b>17.10.12</b>	<b>4</b>

<b>11</b>	<b>Male</b>		<b>11110902</b>	<b>09.11.11</b>	<b>1</b>
			<b>12021301</b>	<b>13.02.12</b>	<b>2</b>
			<b>12060801</b>	<b>08.06.12</b>	<b>3</b>
			<b>12101503</b>	<b>15.10.12</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>12</b>		<b>Male</b>	<b>11110703</b>	<b>07.11.11</b>	<b>1</b>
			<b>12022001</b>	<b>20.02.12</b>	<b>2</b>
			<b>12062801</b>	<b>28.06.12</b>	<b>3</b>
			<b>12111902</b>	<b>19.11.12</b>	<b>4</b>

<b>13</b>	<b>Female</b>		<b>11111402</b>	<b>14.11.11</b>	<b>1</b>
			<b>12033003</b>	<b>30.03.12</b>	<b>2</b>
			<b>12062701</b>	<b>27.06.12</b>	<b>3</b>
			<b>12101001</b>	<b>10.10.12</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>14</b>		<b>Female</b>	<b>11110709</b>	<b>07.11.11</b>	<b>1</b>
			<b>12022401</b>	<b>24.02.12</b>	<b>2</b>
			<b>12070501</b>	<b>05.07.12</b>	<b>3</b>
			<b>12101502</b>	<b>15.10.12</b>	<b>4</b>

<b>15</b>	<b>Male</b>		<b>11110805</b>	<b>08.11.11</b>	<b>1</b>
			<b>12021701</b>	<b>17.02.12</b>	<b>2</b>
			<b>12062703</b>	<b>27.06.12</b>	<b>3</b>
			<b>12100902</b>	<b>09.10.12</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>16</b>		<b>Female</b>	<b>11111402</b>	<b>14.11.11</b>	<b>1</b>
			<b>12033033</b>	<b>30.03.12</b>	<b>2</b>
			<b>12062701</b>	<b>27.06.12</b>	<b>3</b>
			<b>12101001</b>	<b>10.10.12</b>	<b>4</b>



<b>17</b>	<b>Male</b>			<b>Does not want to be interviewed</b>	
<b>18</b>		<b>Female</b>	<b>11110708</b>	<b>07.11.11</b>	<b>1</b> <b>2</b> <b>3</b> <b>4</b>

<b>19</b>	<b>Female</b>		<b>12022402</b>	<b>24.02.12</b>	<b>1</b> <b>2</b> <b>3</b> <b>4</b>
<b>20</b>		<b>Female</b>	<b>11110803</b> <b>12021303</b> <b>12062201</b>	<b>08.11.11</b> <b>13.02.12</b> <b>22.06.12</b>	<b>1</b> <b>2</b> <b>3</b> <b>4</b>

<b>21</b>	<b>Male</b>		<b>11110705</b> <b>12030201</b> <b>12072701</b>	<b>07.11.11</b> <b>02.03.12</b> <b>27.07.12</b>	<b>1</b> <b>2</b> <b>3</b> <b>4</b>
<b>22</b>		<b>Female</b>	<b>11110904</b> <b>12030206</b> <b>12070901</b>	<b>09.11.11</b> <b>02.03.12</b> <b>09.07.12</b>	<b>1</b> <b>2</b> <b>3</b> <b>4</b>