How and when do we profit from mentoring?
A psychological perspective

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What we will talk about

1. Let’s remind ourselves… what was mentoring again?
2. What do you even mean by “profit”?
3. How do we profit from mentoring vs. how to profit from mentoring
4. Cornerstones of successful mentoring
5. Wrap-up
6. Q&A

Disclaimer: This is not meant to be an entirely scientific presentation, but a combination of a bit of psychological scientific groundwork and my practical experience as a consultant, trainer, and coach.
Let’s remind ourselves… what was mentoring again?

- From the kick-off-event, as shown by Urte Reckowsky*
  - Mentors have a non-judgemental role
  - A mentor advises the mentee
  - Functions of mentoring in literature:

  * Citations in that presentation
What do you even mean by “profit”?

“Albert Bandura defined self-efficacy as a person’s belief in his or her capability to successfully perform a particular task. Together with the goals that people set, self-efficacy is one on the most powerful motivational predictors of how well a person will perform at almost any endeavour. A person’s self-efficacy is a strong determinant of their effort, persistence, strategizing, as well as their subsequent training and job performance. Besides being highly predictive, self-efficacy can also be developed in order to harness its performance enhancing benefits.”

Heslin & Klehe (2006, p. 705)

[you might also find the self-assessment on page 708 interesting: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Peter-Heslin/publication/228210952_Self-efficacy/links/09e4150e7a1b51924e000000/Self-efficacy.pdf]
But it might not as easy as “giving someone self-efficacy”…

You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him discover it within himself.

- Galileo Galilei

Let’s train the “muscle”

“Confidence and leadership are muscles. You learn to use them or you learn not to. If you are afraid to speak up at a meeting, every time you force yourself to do it, you get better at it. If you’re afraid to take your seat at the table, every time you take your seat at the table and you realize no one tells you to go get back to the back row, you learn to do it.”

Sheryl Sandberg
The superpower: generalized self-efficacy

- **Generalized self-efficacy:**
  - “... general belief in oneself to solve problems and reach goals” (Stoet, n.d.)
  - vs. domain-specific self-efficacy
How **do we** profit from mentoring vs. how **to** profit from mentoring

• **How do we** profit = what will be the outcome of a good mentoring relationship
  – Larger network
  – Things to try out and/or good practices (advice)
  – Good experiences (someone was there for me, someone cared about me, someone supported me, … but also I took matters into my own hands, I drove this process, I made something out of it, I grew!)
  – Self-efficacy
  – …

• **How to** profit = a “life hack” (like cleaning a toilet with Coke – works quite well!)
  – But it is so much more…
  – Therefore, just seeing it as a “how to”, a “step by step guide” or a “recipe” would not do it justice
Cornerstones of successful mentoring (not the only ones, but important ones)
Cornerstones of successful mentoring I
Possible questions for self-reflection (examples)

• Self-responsibility
  – Am I making sure that I (will) profit from every mentoring session?
    – Making time
    – Preparation
    – Being fully present
    – Asking for feedback, listen to and truly consider feedback
    – Reflecting on what I contribute to my successes and also my failures
    – Being courageous and wanting to learn things about myself, my beliefs, my interpretations, my patterns…?
  – Am I concentrating on my “circle of influence” or “circle of control”? (vs. “circle of concern”)
    (Covey, 2004)
  – Am I systematically applying what I learn in the mentoring sessions?
Cornerstones of successful mentoring II
Possible questions for self-reflection (examples)

• **Relationship** (e.g. Rogers, 1950)
  – Am I being **empathetic** (in the mentoring sessions, but also beyond)?
    – With myself? – What is it that I feel? Why? What can I learn from this?
    – With my mentor? – What makes him/her the person he/she is? How does this influence our interaction? *How would he/she like to profit from our relationship? What can I give?*
    – With people around me? – What is it that I feel? Why? What can I learn from this?
  – Am I being **authentic**?
    – With myself? – Who am I, truly?
    – With my mentor? – I don’t have to please/impress him/her
    – With people around me? – …
  – Am I being **esteeming**?
    – With myself? – I am valuable and this value does not depend on my performance
    – With my mentor? – Can I value him/her even if he/she is giving me “a hard time”?
    – With people around me? – Can I separate a person’s value from his/her behavior? E.g., a “difficult supervisor”?
Cornerstones of successful mentoring III
Possible questions for self-reflection (examples)

• Coaching (mindset)
  – Mentee:
    – Am I willing to find my own way?
    – Do I believe (or am I willing to entertain the thought) that I have all the resources within me?
    – Am I willing to conduct little experiments (e.g. try out new behaviors)?
    – Am I able to take advice for what it is?
    – Do I know (and can I articulate) what I want (not just what I don't want)?
  – Mentor:
    – Am I asking enough questions? (If not: advice vs. coaching)
    – Do I believe that the mentee has all the resources he/she needs?
    – Am I aware that because something has worked for me, it does not have to work for the other person?
    – Can I show the mentee what might keep him/her from achieving his/her goals?
    – Am I doing all of this with a fundamental attitude of esteem?
Okay, I'll give you a “hack” nevertheless… (three “magic” questions)

**FROM THIS**

status quo – 1. What is the problem?

2. What are you going to do?

**TO THIS**

1. What do you want?

status quo – 2. What is keeping you from having it / being there?

3. What are you going to do?

Very often, the first answer to this is just the beginning of the conversation. By “drilling deeper” (Why do you want this? What would be different if you had this? …) and by step by step – uncovering the motivation (and also reservations!) of the mentee, both the mentor and the mentee get a clearer picture of where solutions could lie.
Literature


All the best for the mentoring process, your careers, and you personally!