

Transition to Leadership

Mentoring Conversation Map



Overview of Transition to Leadership

Making the transition from a technical or support role to a leadership role can be both a challenging and rewarding time. On the one hand, you are an experienced technical or support expert in your field but on the other hand, you are new to leadership. The way in which you approach this transition will play an important part in your first experiences of 'sole leadership' and the way in which you develop yourself as a leader.

The activity of transitioning to a leadership role is 'ripe' for the 70:20:10 learning approach, as you'll want to talk with others about leadership (70%), you'll need to act and try out your leadership (20%); and it's a great time to learn new knowledge or attend a training program about leadership (10%).

Vision for this Mentoring Conversation Map

Before you start, consider your vision for this conversation. These questions might help you to 'begin with the end in mind':

- Why are you interested in developing your leadership approach?
- What career position are you in that now requires leadership?
- What concerns do you have about making the transition to being a leader?
- What do you want to be different as a result of exploring and developing your approach to transition as a leader?
- How will you know/measure that you (we) have achieved this?

Questions to Facilitate Conversation (70%)

These questions contribute to the exploration of your **transition to leadership**:

- How do you view management and leadership in general?
- What do you know about theories and frameworks of leadership and management?
- How do you feel about the transition from a technical or support role to a leadership role?
- How will you handle the potential issue of leading or managing fellow team mates (if making an *in-team* transition)?
- What have been the characteristics of **effective leaders** whom you have worked with/for and why do you consider these have been present? What has been the effect on others of this leadership style?
- What have been the characteristics of **in-effective leaders** whom you have worked with/for and why do you consider these have been present? What has been the effect on others of this leadership style?
- What sorts of the above characteristics do you want to take forward as a leader and why?
- What development do you consider you need to step into the role of leader?
- What actions do you consider you might take to develop your leadership skill and style?
- What gaps do you consider you may have as a leader?
- What sort of leader do you want to be?
- What will be your leadership personal brand?
- What concerns do you have about making the transition to a leadership role?

Actions or Activities to Enhance Growth and Development (20%)

The following actions and activities can enhance growth and development of your **transition to leadership**:

- What opportunities are there in your own organisation to act up in a leadership role? Explore the options available to get some experience.
- Identify options to shadow and/or observe good leaders in practice. Ensure you build in time to debrief and talk with your leader about their leadership competency and style to learn more.
- In written format, describe the type of leader you desire to be. Create a vision statement for your leadership approach.
- Contact colleagues (female and male) who have recently made the transition to a leadership role. Organise time to talk with them about what they have learnt about themselves as leaders and what advice they might share with you.
- Identify any special interest groups that relate to you personally (eg. Women in leadership, first time manager etc) and professional associations. Find out how you might connect and learn from these groups and organisations.
- Complete a SWOT analysis for the transition – review the strengths you have to take forward and the weaknesses that may need developing. Consider the opportunities of the transition to leadership and the possible threats to your transition as a leader. Use the results for further discussion.

Research and Development AND/OR Formal Training that Contribute to Development (10%)

The following actions might help you to learn more about **transition to leadership** – **be sure to review, reflect, explore and apply what you learn with the support of your mentoring partner**:

- Explore contemporary theory about leadership – undertaking a quick internet search or asking others about their favourite websites and texts will give you ample information to get started.
- Review the journal and other publications that relate to your profession for articles on leadership. This can give you ideas about how others in your professional tackle leadership.
- Complete an online search for leadership writers and thought leaders – find out about their websites, blogs, Twitter feeds etc. You might start with websites such as TED, Harvard Business Review, Australian Institute of Management etc. Plus – you can search for leadership on Twitter and you'll find a range of thought leaders who use Twitter to share leadership thoughts, ideas, research and content.
- Identify a leadership training or development program that you might consider attending. In doing this – look both internally to your organisation and externally to private providers. Also – don't just look at leadership programs, consider the types of skill gaps that you have (eg. Crucial conversations) and identify training courses that focus on particular areas you want to develop as a leader.
- Identify a relevant leadership or related text that you can read eg. The Leadership Challenge (Kouzes and Posner). Ask your mentor or colleagues about leadership texts that they have found helpful. Read, review and reflect on what you read and your vision for the development of your own leadership competency and style.



With all of the above – why not build your own personal leadership library or portfolio? This is a great activity to do in conjunction with the above so that you have your own library on hand as you develop as a leader.

Personal Branding

Mentoring Conversation Map



Overview of Personal Branding

Personal branding is about the marketing and positioning of yourself as a brand. A personal brand might be made up of elements such as ‘thoughts, feelings and perceptions’ as experienced or perceived by other people. Developing your personal brand is about associating your personal profile with qualities, characteristics and results. In essence – your personal brand is about what you offer to others – be that colleagues, managers, leaders, clients, customers or organisations – on a consistent basis. Developing your personal brand also means exploring this across three areas: **in person, in writing and online.**

Vision for this Mentoring Conversation Map

Before you start, consider your vision for this conversation. These questions might help you to ‘begin with the end in mind’:

- Why are you interested in developing your personal brand? What has led you to want to develop your personal brand?
- What concerns do you have about tackling the topic of personal branding?
- What do you want to be different as a result of exploring and developing your personal brand?
- How will you know/measure that you (we) have achieved this?

Questions to Facilitate Conversation (70%)

These questions contribute to the exploration of your **personal brand** across three areas: **in person, in writing and online:**

- What is your current personal brand?
- How do you know this is your personal brand?
- What would you like your personal brand to represent?
- What is positive and successful about your personal brand?
- What is less positive and less successful about your personal brand?
- What tools do you use to represent your personal brand? (eg. Business card, resume, LinkedIn profile etc)
- How consistent are you in your personal brand ‘message’ across all three areas: in person, in writing and online?
- What impact do you consider your current personal brand is having on your work? Your career? Your future?
- What people or businesses do you admire in relation to their personal branding and why?

Actions or Activities to Enhance Growth and Development (20%)

The following actions and activities can enhance growth and development of your **personal brand**:

- Complete a SWOT analysis – get to know yourself first.
- Undertake a review of your last few years of performance appraisals – complete a ‘theme analysis’ to identify trends in how you are written about by others.

Actions or Activities to Enhance Growth and Development (20%)

- Over a defined period of time (eg. One week), record down all the types of questions that you get asked in the workplace (and other places) that **do not** relate to your position title. This might give you more ‘data’ about how you are perceived by others.
- Review your personal brand from the viewpoint of **in person, in writing and online**. Identify areas upon which you might improve or develop.
- Reflect on the networking relationships that you have – consider how you might grow or expand these, both internally and externally to your current role (eg. Identify relevant professional bodies or events that you can join or attend).
- Identify the key online tool you are going to use (eg. LinkedIn, Twitter, blog writing etc) and develop this – either refreshing what you have OR starting from scratch.
- Look ahead to a possible role that you are interested in. Access the job description for this role and identify the personal brand elements of what this role is seeking. Identify any gaps that you could start working on now to increase your chance of success in the future.

Research and Development AND/OR Formal Training that Contribute to Development (10%)

The following actions might help you to learn more about **personal branding – be sure to review, reflect, explore and apply what you learn with the support of your mentoring partner:**

- Explore the theory about personal branding – undertaking a quick internet search will give you ample to read!
- Undertake a 180 or 360 degree review – get feedback on your personal brand from others. This is more formal than your own personal SWOT analysis as you get valuable ‘data’ about yourself from others.
- Research what recruiters are looking for in terms of resume, covering letters etc – be up to date with your knowledge in this space.
- Identify a few people who you feel have strong personal brands – look at how you might meet these people and explore how they have developed their own personal brands.
- Find out whether there are any short courses on developing your personal brand OR sub-elements of this. For example: look at courses that help you develop in person, in writing and online.
- Identify and research any formal training programs that will help you to expand your knowledge and qualifications personal brand. Complete a return on investment (ROI) about the potential impact of this formal training on your future personal brand and effect on your career aspirations.

General Notes

Next Career Steps

Mentoring Conversation Map



Overview of Next Career Steps

When considering your next career step, it's a good time to consider how you actually view the term career. The My Future website (www.myfuture.edu.au) has this definition for the term career: 'A career is the sum total of paid and unpaid work, learning and life roles you undertake throughout your life. The term 'career' was traditionally associated with paid employment and referred to a single occupation. In today's world of work the term 'career' is seen as a continuous process of learning and development.' As part of your focus on taking the next career step, it's also important to fundamentally take responsibility for your career. While a single employer may provide career development avenues, don't leave the responsibility of your career development to someone else – own, manage and drive this yourself.

Vision for this Mentoring Conversation Map

Before you start, consider your vision for this conversation. These questions might help you to 'begin with the end in mind':

- Why are you interested in planning for your next career step?
- What concerns do you have about tackling the topic of your next career step?
- What do you want to be different as a result of exploring and developing ideas about your next career step?
- How will you know/measure that you (we) have achieved this?

Questions to Facilitate Conversation (70%)

These questions contribute to the exploration of your next career step:

- How do you fundamentally see the term career? Reflect on this in light of the above definition and explore in more detail.
- How did you get to this point in your career? Reflect on the drivers that led to your current career position – are they still the key drivers for you today?
- Why do you want to take this next career step?
- What's the timeframe for this next career step (and why)?
- What's your future career vision in the next 2-3 years? How about the next 5-10 years?
- What type of career next step are you seeking? In her book, *Up is Not the Only Way*, international author, Beverly Kaye lists 10 alternatives to 'up'. Have you considered all the possibilities for your next career step? Here's a link to some articles from Kaye that might help you to reflect on this aspect of your conversation:
 - **Lose the Career Ladder and Hit the Wall:** www.astd.org/Publications/Magazines/TD/TD-Archive/2012/09/Lose-the-Career-Ladder-and-Hit-the-Wall (2012 article)
 - **Up is Not the Only Way:** www.spisolutions.com/Up-Is-Not-Only-Way.pdf (An older article - but still good to reflect on your options).
- What are the personal circumstances that you need to balance in taking your next career step?
- Where are the possible next career steps? Internal to your organisation? External to your organisation?
- How will you find the next career step? Networking? Advertising? Recruitment Agency?
- What are your qualifications, education and experience gaps for your next career step? How will you address these?

Questions to Facilitate Conversation (70%)

- How do you feel about taking the next career step?
- What support will you need to take this next career step? Manager? Mentor? Coach? Advisor? Sponsor? Advocate?
- How will your next career step be perceived by others? Is this relevant and/or important to you?
- How do your personal branding tools (eg. Resume, cover letter, selection criteria, LinkedIn profile) represent you in writing and online to take the next career step?

Actions or Activities to Enhance Growth and Development (20%)

The following actions and activities can enhance your ability to prepare to take the next career step:

- Identify people who are already holding the type of next career position that you'd like to move towards. Organise to speak with them about their own career journey and any advice they might provide to you in taking your next career step.
- Identify an opportunity to shadow someone in your next career role. This gives you an opportunity to see what the role or position is actually like.
- Complete a strategic career plan – one that looks at both short term and long terms steps and goals. Use this as your vision map as you make decisions about your next career step.
- Review the networks that you engage in – both internal and external. Identify an action plan to seek out and engage with new networks that could contribute to your next career development step.

Research and Development AND/OR Formal Training that Contribute to Development (10%)

The following actions might help you to learn more about preparing to take the next career step:

- Research and consider short or formal education and training courses to increase your skills and/or academic knowledge gaps.
- Identify potential opportunities for you to be involved in other projects or roles in your workplace that will provide you with extension learning avenues. Put yourself forward for development opportunities that connect with your overall career plan – in short, flag your interest in roles.
- Identify opportunities to hear people that you admire/trust/value speak about their career pathways.
- Research the types of roles that you like to achieve – get hold of a job description or selection criteria if you can. Complete a 'gap analysis', to identify how competitive you would be now for the role/position and what you need to do to be competitive in the future.
- Research the types of companies that you would like to work for. While a role may be important – the 'value fit' is also an important part of your decision making. See what you can find out/identify about the values and corporate culture – is it the 'fit' for you?

Negotiating with Confidence

Mentoring Conversation Map



Overview of Negotiating with Confidence

The ability to negotiate is a key skill for you both personally and professionally. Negotiating with confidence requires you to understand not only the process of negotiation, but also the ability to manage your emotions when negotiating and to remain focussed on the outcome. While negotiation is effectively dialogue with the intent of reaching a resolution, the pathway to successful negotiation can be made more productive by negotiating with skill and confidence.

Vision for this Mentoring Conversation Map

Before you start, consider your vision for this conversation. These questions might help you to 'begin with the end in mind':

- Why are you interested in developing your skills in negotiation?
- What concerns do you have about tackling the topic of negotiating with confidence?
- What do you want to be different as a result of exploring and developing your ability to negotiate with confidence?
- How will you know/measure that you (we) have achieved this?

Questions to Facilitate Conversation (70%)

These questions contribute to the exploration of **negotiating with confidence**:

- What does negotiation mean to you?
- What do you understand about the theory and process of negotiation?
- What role do emotions, in your opinion, play in negotiation?
- What experiences/outcomes have you had – both positive and negative – in regards to negotiation?
- How would you describe your negotiation style?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses in relation to negotiation?
- What activities do you undertake that require negotiation now?
- What's coming up in the future where you might need to negotiate with others?
- What is your ideal negotiation experience – visual and describe this.
- What would you like to improve upon in relation to being able to negotiate with confidence?

Actions or Activities to Enhance Growth and Development (20%)

The following actions and activities can enhance growth and development of your ability to negotiate with confidence:

- Identify someone who you consider is a good negotiator – organise to speak with them about how they have developed their skills and what advice they might provide to you.

Actions or Activities to Enhance Growth and Development (20%)

- Reflect on a past negotiation experience. Go through the experience from a number of perspectives: process, emotions, skill, outcomes etc – pull it apart thoroughly with the help of a mentor or trusted colleague to uncover your positive and negative approaches.
- Identify an upcoming negotiation activity. With the help of a mentor or trusted colleague, complete a ‘walk through’ or rehearsal of your approach. Be sure to work through any areas where you feel your emotions may inhibit your success. If possible – debrief after the event to review yourself ‘in action’.
- Monitor your negotiation interactions (even the most basic ones) over the course of a week. Consider your approach, skills used, emotions (before, during and after), and results. Review the results with your mentor or a trusted colleague to see if you can uncover any ‘themes’ that emerge from your day to day negotiation type activities. Work on these.
- Seek out the opportunity to observe another person in negotiating action. If possible – see if you can organise to debrief your observations to learn more from the experience.
- Consider how well you know yourself – especially your emotional intelligence. Emotions can play a large part in your ability to negotiate with confidence – so consider how you can get to know yourself better (eg. Identify diagnostic tools or other activities that may help you with this).

Research and Development AND/OR Formal Training that Contribute to Development (10%)

The following actions might help you to learn more about negotiating with confidence:

- Complete an online research activity. There’s a great deal of information about building your negotiating skills online. Take time to absorb the theory and balance this with your past and future negotiating activities.
- Identify the type of negotiation style that you might lean towards and explore this. For example, this article (<http://viaconflict.com/2012/12/16/five-negotiation-styles/>) describes Shell’s five styles of:
 - Avoiding
 - Accommodating
 - Compromising
 - Collaborating
 - Competing.
- Identify a short course that you might attend to develop a deeper understanding of the process and skills of negotiating.
- Seek an opportunity for your mentor or a trusted colleague to observe you in action in a negotiating activity. Make time to debrief after this event.
- Create a vision chart or checklist list of pre, during and post strategies that you want to take forward into your negotiating practice. Review these prior to your future negotiating events.

General Notes

Create a Support Network

Mentoring Conversation Map



Overview of Create a Support Network

There is a great deal written about how you can take your career and development forward. In this 'mix' of writing are theories about obtaining mentors, coaches, sponsors and advisors. As you grow your own career and take the next career steps, having a support network of trusted coaches, mentors, sponsors and advisors that you can turn to for guidance is a great way to achieve your personal, professional and career aspirations. Like having the 'right tools for the job', creating a support network means that you don't over rely on any one person and that you approach the 'right person with the right question', as you navigate your career and development.

Vision for this Mentoring Conversation Map

Before you start, consider your vision for this conversation. These questions might help you to 'begin with the end in mind':

- Why are you interested in creating a support network?
- What concerns do you have about tackling the topic of creating a support network?
- What do you want to be different as a result of exploring and developing your support network?
- How will you know/measure that you (we) have achieved this?

Questions to Facilitate Conversation (70%)

These questions contribute to the exploration of **creating a support network**:

- What support systems do you already have in place?
- How do these work for you?
- Why do you want to develop a more broad support network?
- How do you see the differences in mentors, coaches, advisors and sponsors?
- How have you engaged with all of these support systems in the past?
 - What has worked well?
 - Not worked well?
- Ideally, what will be the makeup of your support network?
- What sort of people are you looking for?
- How will you find the right people to be part of your support network?
- What will you 'give back' to members of your support network?
- Will you pay your support network?
- What are your expectations of members of your support network?
- What sort of commitment will you expect from members of your support network?
- How will you ensure a mutually beneficial relationship exists with your support network?
- What sort of communication strategy do you have in mind – face to face, email, etc – reflect on how you'd like to engage with your support network.
- What groups, networks or organisations do you belong to that will enable you to find the right people to be part of your support network?

Actions or Activities to Enhance Growth and Development (20%)

The following actions and activities can enhance growth and development for creating your support network:

- Identify colleagues who have a support network – talk with them about how they foster and manage these multiple relationships.
- Create a vision of your ideal support network – perhaps three to five people.
- Reflect on your own network – identify a short list of possible people who you might approach.
- Identify possible networking or professional groups that you might connect with to broaden your own network and to meet possible members of your support network.
- Talk with others about possible people you might connect with – use the support of your existing networks to meet new people. Let others know who and what you are looking for.
- Identify your approach, expectations and goals – be ready to be able to provide information on what you are asking from people.
- Create a contact list/communications database – this helps you to keep track of people that you have spoken with as you create potential new relationships.

Research and Development AND/OR Formal Training that Contribute to Development (10%)

The following actions might help you to learn more about **creating a support network** – **be sure to review, reflect, explore and apply what you learn with the support of your mentoring partner:**

- Strengthen your knowledge about the various roles of coaches, mentors, advisors and sponsors – get online and talk to others so that you really understand the scope and boundaries of each role.
- Develop your understanding and skills of networking – consider attending a course on how to build and nurture your relationships. Remember – you need to give to get!
- Talk with other colleagues and leaders about their own support networks – learn more about how they have engaged the support and advocacy of others to help craft their careers.
- Work on your personal brand (see the Personal Brand Mentoring Conversation Map).



Plus – you might like to read these articles relating broadly to this topic:

- <http://magazine.amstat.org/blog/2013/11/01/mastersnov2013/>
- www.right.com/blog/careerpluswork/2013/one-mentor-is-no-longer-enough-create-your-personal-board-of-directors/
- www.fastcompany.com/62556/create-personal-board-directors
- www.jimcollins.com/article_topics/articles/looking-out.html
- <http://blogs.hbr.org/2010/10/forget-mentors-employ-a-person/>
- www.huffingtonpost.com/caroline-dowdhiggins/mentors-vs-sponsors_b_1001816.html
- www.theaustralian.com.au/business/opinion/sponsorship-can-propel-a-career/story-e6frg9if-1226744840954

(Note: articles are provided for information purposes only.)

Handling Conflict

Mentoring Conversation Map



Overview of Handling Conflict

Does the thought of handling conflict make your stomach tighten or do you relish the opportunity to say it like it is? Whatever your own style, approach and frame of reference to handling conflict, it's an important skill to be able to conduct yourself in a way that brings out the best in you and others and, where possible and appropriate, leads to a win-win outcome for all parties. There is a great deal written about conflict resolution and how this can impact on our roles both within and external to the workplace. As you take your career and personal/professional development forward, embracing a confident and knowledgeable approach to handling conflict will be of true benefit to you and others.

Vision for this Mentoring Conversation Map

Before you start, consider your vision for this conversation. These questions might help you to 'begin with the end in mind':

- Why are you interested in understanding more about handling conflict?
- What concerns do you have about tackling the topic of handling conflict?
- What do you want to be different as a result of exploring and developing your knowledge, skills and approach to handling conflict?
- How will you know/measure that you (we) have achieved this?

Questions to Facilitate Conversation (70%)

These questions contribute to the exploration and general discussions about **handling conflict**:

- **What do you perceive as conflict or a situation or conflict?**
 - *Before you get into how you handle conflict – take time to discuss what you perceive as conflict. The conflict spectrum can be very broad for different people. While some see an abrupt remark as conflict, others see this as nothing more than the normal 'rough and tumble' of daily life. What is your conflict spectrum?*
- **How do you handle conflict?**
 - *Take time to reflect and discuss on how you have generally handled conflict. Consider situations both in and external to your work roles.*
- **What do you do well in a situation of conflict?**
 - *Reflect on times when you feel (or you have had direct feedback) that a situation of conflict has 'gone well'. Consider how you felt (emotions) and what you did (actions, strategies and behaviours).*
- **What don't you do well in a situation of conflict?**
 - *Reflect on times when you feel (or you have had direct feedback) that a situation of conflict has 'not gone well'. Consider how you felt (emotions) and what you did (actions, strategies and behaviours).*
- **What happens to your emotions during a situation of conflict?**
 - *For example – emotions can 'show' in different ways in different people during situations of conflict and can inhibit us from dealing with situations in a way that we would like. Some people respond with anger; some respond with tears; some respond with silence. Delve down to identify your triggers and what role your emotions might play in how you handle conflict – now – and what you'd like to be different in the future.*

- **When you see other people handle conflict well, what do you observe?**
 - *Consider situations that you have either been in or observed – aim to identify strategies, behaviours, approaches or frameworks that you ‘observed in action’ that led to an approach to handling conflict that you felt led to a positive outcome.*
- **When you consider the future, how would you like to handle conflict or situations of conflict?**
 - *When you discuss your vision – consider how you will ‘feel’ (emotions) along with what you will ‘do’ (actions, strategies and behaviours).*

Actions or Activities to Enhance Growth and Development (20%)

The following actions and activities can enhance growth and development for handling conflict:

- **How well do you know your own style?** You might consider undertaking a self-diagnostic to understand more about yourself and others as a first step to reflecting on your own role in handling conflict. Sometimes one of the most powerful things we can do is to **handle ourselves better** in a situation of conflict. You might consider some of the mainstream diagnostics such as Myers Briggs and DISC, but also explore diagnostics that deal with emotional and social awareness etc. [See the R&D note on theories of conflict.]
- **Talk with colleagues, friends and your support network about how they handle situations of conflict.** Spend time learning how others approach conflict and what you can embrace in your own development.
- **Create a vision for how you want to handle conflict in the future.** Consider the actions you will take before, during and after situations of conflict.
- **Observe yourself ‘in action’ (and others).** As you work towards your own development, it will take time. Being in touch with situations by ‘observing yourself in action’ is a powerful way to get to know yourself, your trends in behaviours, and ultimately how you are conducting yourself in situations of conflict.

Research and Development AND/OR Formal Training that Contribute to Development (10%)

The following actions might help you to learn more about **handling conflict – be sure to review, reflect, explore and apply what you learn with the support of your mentoring partner:**

What do you understand about the theories that ‘sit behind’ conflict? Develop your knowledge base about the ‘science’ of conflict. This helps you to move from a purely emotive base to a more science based approach. For example, Kenneth Thomas and Ralph Kilmann (1970s) developed the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument that helps people to identify the tendencies during situations of conflict. Thomas and Kilmann, as part of their early work, identified five main styles of dealing with conflict including: competitive, collaborative, compromising, accommodating and avoiding. Developing your knowledge of the theory that sits behind situations of conflict can help you to feel more confident about how you can approach conflict. It can also help you to help others by building their knowledge and skill base, which in turn can help improve your team and workplace.

After your conversations have you identified any developmental gaps where you could attend a course or training activity? Consider taking action on these gaps via either formal or informal learning/training opportunities.

What framework do you use or know to handle situations of conflict? For example – you might look at:

- The 12 Conflict Resolution Skills by the Conflict Resolution Centre
- The Six Hats Meeting Method by Edward DeBono (while it is a meeting method – it’s also handy to help people think together in conflict)
- Or even the Crucial Conversations book by Vital Smarts. All of these frameworks and tools can help in situations of conflict.



Working with Senior Management/Key Stakeholders

Mentoring Conversation Map



Overview of Working with Senior Management and Key Stakeholders

Working well with senior management and key stakeholders is essentially about relationships and communication, and some might say, leading without a title. Key aspects of these activities including your ability to communicate well, identify the priorities of others, and work towards the common purpose. Working well with senior management and key stakeholders requires the ability to look and understand situations from a number of angles. Therefore, this conversation map provides ideas around questions, activities and further development that can encourage you to explore the topic from a number of perspectives.

Vision for this Mentoring Conversation Map

Before you start, consider your vision for this conversation. These questions might help you to 'begin with the end in mind':

- Why are you interested in understanding more about working with senior management and key stakeholders?
- What concerns do you have about tackling the topic of senior management and key stakeholders?
- What do you want to be different as a result of exploring and developing your knowledge, skills and approach to working with senior management and key stakeholders?
- How will you know/measure that you (we) have achieved this?

Questions to Facilitate Conversation (70%)

These questions contribute to the exploration and general discussions about **working with senior management and key stakeholders**:

- **What experience have you had in working closely with senior management and key stakeholders?** Take time to reflect on your past experiences – both personal and professional – where you have actively worked alongside senior management and key stakeholders. As you reflect on your experiences, consider the following aspects to each situation:
 - What was the situation or experience?
 - What positions did you work with in terms of senior management and stakeholders?
 - What environment was this in – eg. Internal to the business and/or external – or both?
 - What did you do well?
 - What areas do you feel you could have strengthened and why?
- **What does working with senior management and key stakeholders mean to you at this point in time?** Take time to discuss your current working situation. As part of this, you might consider reflecting on these questions:
 - How do you currently work with senior managers/key stakeholders?
 - What do you currently do well?
 - What feedback have you had that suggested you have areas to develop in?
 - What have you done with this feedback?
- **Consider the skills, knowledge and attitudes that you currently use to work with senior management and key stakeholders.** Ask yourself and discuss:

- What skills do you use that enable you? Disable you?
- What knowledge do you demonstrate or apply that enables you? Disables you?
- What attitudes to you show that enable you? Disable you?

The above questions are designed to get your conversation about working with senior management and key stakeholders started. Don't forget to note down where this conversation heads and identify any strategies or further action points that come from this question and conversation activity.

As part of this activity, you might like to check out the links on the following page as information to support and expand your questions and conversation on this topic.

Actions or Activities to Enhance Growth and Development (20%)

The following actions and activities can enhance growth and development for working with senior management and key stakeholders:

- **Who are your senior management/stakeholders?** One activity you can undertake is a stakeholder analysis. Effectively this is an activity to identify, prioritise and understand who your senior management and key stakeholders are and how you intend to work with them. To assist you in this activity you might look at the MindTools article and resources on this activity - www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_07.htm
- **Talk with colleagues, friends and your support network about how they work with senior management and key stakeholders.** Spend time learning how others approach this aspect of their working role to identify strategies that you might incorporate in your own role.
- **Create a vision for how you want to work with senior management and key stakeholders.** When you envision what you'd like an activity to look like, you can then conduct a mini 'gap analysis' to identify areas that you may need to develop in further.
- **Observe yourself 'in action' (and others).** As you work towards your own development, it will take time. Being in touch with situations by 'observing yourself in action' is a powerful way to get to know yourself, your trends in behaviours, and ultimately how you are conducting yourself when working with others. Don't forget too – ask for feedback as that is a powerful way in which to understand the experience of working with you from another person's point of view.

Research and Development AND/OR Formal Training that Contribute to Development (10%)

The following resources/links might help you to learn more about **working with senior management and key stakeholders** – be sure to review, reflect, explore, discuss and apply what you learn with the support of your mentoring partner:

- **Understanding Your Stakeholders – A Best Practice Guide for the Public Sector.**
www.ipsos.com/public-affairs/sites/www.ipsos.com.public-affairs/files/documents/understanding-stakeholders.pdf
- **What you Must Know About Stakeholder Management.**
www.corpedgroup.com/resources/pm/WhatMustKnowStakeholder.asp
- **Some Practical Tools for Stakeholder Management**
www.brainmates.com.au/brainrants/some-practical-tools-for-stakeholder-management

