

## **MRS Mentoring Review Day – 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

### **Led by Frances Wills**

A review day for the MRS Mentoring Scheme was attended by over 40 current mentors on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019. This document collates their thoughts and recommendations under various headings.

#### **What changes have you noticed in your Mentee as a result of mentoring?**

- They have become more confident - personally, opened up, wider awareness of where they fit. More confident with career choices, more self-reliant.
- They take action, make the most of different opportunities.
- Confidence
- Self-awareness
- Able to make the right decisions
- Handling criticism
- Transferable skills
- Life Coaching – where are you going?
- Introspection.
- Inspired (eg Reading/Book Club).
- Confidence – taken more seriously by colleagues.
- Feel more confident if they are a sole researcher, less isolated.
- Skills in MR techniques and leadership (voice within organization).
- Progression/career
- Questioning is this the career for them
- Learning from mentor – sounding board
- Working out the next step for their career
- Developing mindset/thinking
- Strategic thinking
- Tools to develop career
- Building confidence.
- Perspective – how to broaden it.
- Visibility.
- Framework.
- Rules of engagement.
- Self-awareness.
- Enabling.
- Progression.
- Broadening their prospective outside their immediate world.
- Impartiality.
- Safe Space –which they might not have at work.
- Human moral support.
- Upskilling.
- Access to mentors black book of contacts –open doors.
- Feel more able to manage pressure.
- More skills for career.

## **What benefits do you think mentoring has brought to individuals, organisations and the profession as a whole?**

### **For individuals**

- It's a sounding board.
- Stops fretting.
- Non-judgemental feedback.
- Will experiment/approaches.
- Different viewpoints.
- Clarity of thinking.
- Confidence boost.
- Professional development guidance.
- Career progression.
- Opportunity to speak to someone who is impartial.

### **For Companies**

- The scheme is not intended to support a company.
- Gives employees the confidence to ask for support and say no if needed.
- Developing skills and capabilities to the companies benefit.
- Positive disruption.
- Offering newly discovered skills.
- Leading to retention.
- Productivity/culture/relationships.
- Happy and supported staff.
- External resource.
- Organisation gets clarity/steer.

### **For the Profession**

- Adds to the status/profession.
- Shows your experience is valued.
- Feel proud of the industry.
- Emotional brand values – MRS.

## **What have you personally valued most about being a Mentor?**

- Becoming aware of other people/situations/stories.
- Affirmation of self/not lost touch.
- Giving something back.
- A sense of pride.
- Helped me realise how much I know!
- The value of my experience/advice.
- MRS Membership more valued.
- Reinvigorated coaching skills.
- Wider view of different organisations/industry.
- Learning new tools, methodologies, ways of approaches/insights.
- Developing people, seeing progress, satisfaction, pride.
- Understanding perspective of younger generation – life stages, attitudes to work.

- A different perspective (stops us being insular).
- Honesty.
- Keeps finger on the pulse.
- Warm fuzzy feeling when mentee achieves their objectives.
- Bring our learnings back into own working lives.
- Getting the best bits of managing people (without the day 2 day).
- CPD/own development goals.
- Confidence – forget what you know and how you can help.
- Self-awareness.
- Satisfaction of helping others.
- Reflect on own cultural practices.
- Get to share views with someone – feel part of a team.
- Goes beyond training/experience.
- Sharing beyond formal environment.
- Keeps good people in the profession.

## **What advice would you give to new Mentors and Mentees?**

### **Mentors**

- Try not to suggest solutions.
- Listen not suggest.
- Need to flex approach/goal/problem.
- Ensure your mentee takes responsibility for writing notes and arranging next meeting.
- Define and communicate 'rules of the game'.
- Have regular check-ins.
- OK if inconsistent.
- The closure can be tricky – stick to no more than 12 months.
- Learn about sectors.
- Rather than provide answers, discuss options.
- Keep focus on mentee not organisation
- Ensure you understand what career stage your mentee is at
- Set out clear objectives – clarify early on
- Get the mentee to solve their "need"
- GUIDE NOT LEAD
- Always take a step back, don't assume knowledge
- Set boundaries from the beginning, share with mentee and then give them the responsibility to steer the following meetings and take responsibility to make notes to share with you.
- Face to face meetings are ideal BUT do what works for you.
- Venue should be comfortable for both – sometimes coffee shops don't always work.
- Set up clear objectives (mentee) ask them what they want to learn from you.
- Set up clear expectations.
- You can't solve everything – prioritise – easy wins vs long term goals.
- Be realistic about what is achievable.
- Mix it up – F2F/Phone/Email.
- Short sessions may work – 3-6.

## **Mentees**

- Don't expect your mentor to tell you all of the answers
- Reflect
- Be prepared to work/think
- Work between sessions
- Take responsibility for keeping notes
- Have an agenda and goals
- Be professional
- Do your homework
- Set the agenda for your meetings with your mentor
- Mentee needs to own the process