

IRISH FA FOUNDATION CLUB MENTORING



Foundation



www.irishfa.com

INTRODUCTION

A mentor is a 'learning facilitator' rather than the person with all the answers.

Mentoring is about **empowerment** and helping coaches to control the learning processes themselves. With experienced coaches, it may focus upon challenging their values and beliefs to help them come to a deeper understanding of their role and tasks.

There is no set pattern for a mentoring relationship – each is unique to the individuals involved. Mentoring is a process rather than an event – mentors must see themselves as facilitators of a process rather than teachers or educators of the coach

Mentors step into the 'Coach Education gap' – coaching is practical and continuous in nature, therefore development needs to be in context.

Mentor-mentee relationships are not just one direction – both parties should be enriched by the relationship. Mentoring is about strengthening the link between knowing and doing.

Mentors can:

- Be a role model (someone whose styles/methods are copied)
- Build confidence (encourage the coach to believe in themselves)
- Be a resource (provide information and give direction on where to find help)
- Develop knowledge or skills (act as a coach)
- Challenge and question (confront beliefs and values)

THE INITIAL MEETING

Discuss the roles of mentor and mentee:

Practical topics for discussion to set the scene for the future relationship should:

- Include time constraints on mentor-mentee
- Set boundaries and air any concerns
- Raise confidentiality/conflict issues

Three Initial tasks:

(see mentor/mentee agreement form)

1. CLARIFYING EXPECTATIONS

The key start question is – ‘What would you like me to be able to do for you?’

The ensuing conversation will clear up any misconceptions and ensure the relationship is formed around the coach’s needs.

Roles of mentors develop through interaction.

2. AGREEING PRIORITIES

You should discuss the coach’s development priorities (the areas they see as most important). If your input is to be meaningful and relevant, it must refer to those areas that they have identified as important.

3. ESTABLISHING A GOAL

This will provide a focus for the relationship and will also set a benchmark to determine the effectiveness of each contact.

It could include :

- Current level of coaching and any qualifications gained
- Profile of team
- Coaching aims/philosophy
- Self-assessment – current coaching strengths and weaknesses
- Areas prioritised for development
- Coaching ambitions
- Attitude towards observer

PROFILING

To give the mentor a stronger picture of the coach as well as kick-starting the process of self-reflection, it is important to profile the mentee.

How to Profile –

1. IDENTIFY KEY COMPONENTS OF COACHING PERFORMANCE

Have the coach complete a self-reflective exercise – the components are identified by the coach.

CATEGORY	COMPONENTS
Knowledge	e.g. Knowledge of physiology
Coaching Skills	e.g. Planning
Coaching Skills	e.g. Planning

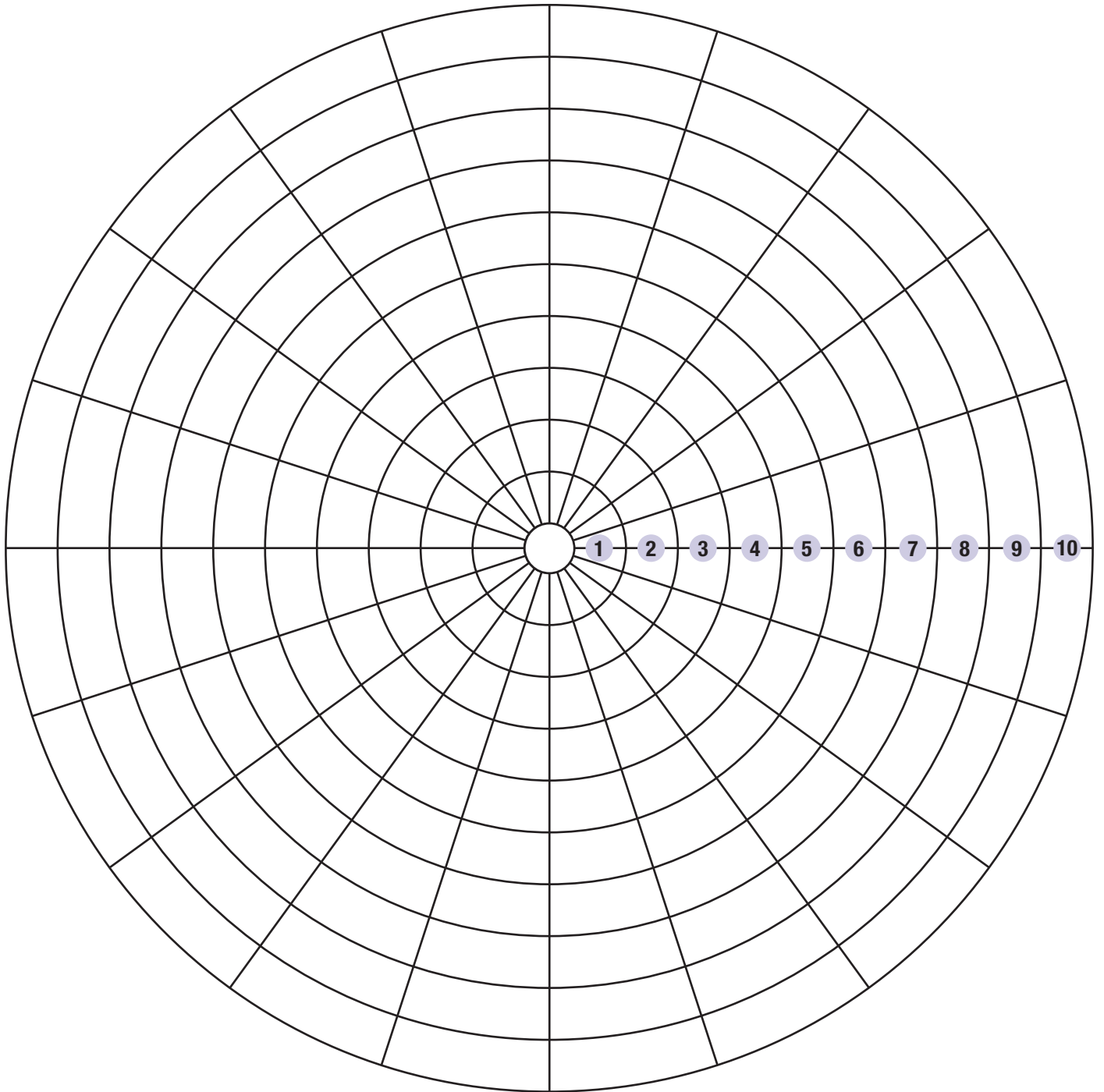
2. CLARIFYING THE MEANING OF EACH COMPONENT LISTED BY THE COACH

Making sure there is no misunderstanding in terminology and making it easier for the coach to assess their performance.

4. PLOTTING THE COACH'S PROFILE ON A CHART

PROFILING FORM

Now insert the components on the outer section of the chart. Indicate the score of the component by shading the required number of sections.



DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Do not attempt to develop too many areas simultaneously. The coach will still primarily need to focus upon the development of the players.

(See mentoring development plan form)

Having highlighted the areas that the mentee wants to develop – the mentor can write a draft **Development Plan** that will then be agreed upon in **consultation** with the mentee.

The long term goals are usually provide the basis for short and medium-term goals.

This process is collaborative. The Plan should follow similar headings as:

Long term Goal	Short-Medium	Process Goals	Achieved	Comment
-----------------------	---------------------	----------------------	-----------------	----------------

Remember Goals should be –

Specific – directly relevant to the mentee’s needs.

Measurable – quantifiable goals that can be measured and assessed.

Acceptable – mentee’s must believe they can be achieved.

Realistic – challenging but within the mentee’s capabilities.

Time-phased – a specific timescale should be set per goal.

Exciting – mentee’s should be pleased and excited about achieving their goals.

Recorded – goals should be recorded for mentor and mentee reference.

The mentee’s score form the profile can be used to track these goals.

ACTION RECORD

(see mentor action form)

All the interactions with the mentee should be recorded by the mentor – this will give a reference point for actions taken and initiate the reflection process to determine the effectiveness of each step

An entry into the record should include –

- Date of Interaction
- Type of Interaction – phone call, email, meeting, observation of training etc.
- Initial reason for Interaction
- Issues raised/discussed
- Reference to Development Plan
- Action points on both parties' part

Observation is a key skill of the mentor. Skilled observation will make your input more focused and effective.

Observation is about narrowing focus –

- Knowledge of the coach's aims of the observation – this will provide a context
- An understanding of the appropriateness of the coaching
- Minimise the strain of being observed

GIVING FEEDBACK

Objective feedback as means of guided self-discovery is essential – not critical nor even as advice as that assumes that there is a correct way of doing things.

Be careful of how you praise – labelling an action as good often assigns the label 'bad' to another action – try to use effectiveness or consequence as the basis for evaluation.

ACTIVE LISTENING

As you receive a spoken message, you interpret it – this requires you to listen to the tone, body language, facial expression as well as the context of understanding in which the words are used.

Reflective Journals would be a positive step – that can be reviewed by the Mentor.

TIMELINE

There is no hard and fast rule or schedule but the following can act as a guideline:

- 1. Initial Meeting** Mentor/Mentee
- 2. Profiling by mentee** Mentee
- 3. Profiling Meeting** Mentor/Mentee
- 4. Draft Development Plan** Mentee
- 5. Agreement of Development Plan** Mentor/Mentee
- 6. Period of Observation, Interaction, Action Recording & Reflection**
- 7. Quarterly Review of Relationship; Profiling & Development Plan**
- 8. Repeat 6 & 7**
- 9. End of Mentoring Relationship** Mentor/Mentee

GROWING AS A MENTOR

There is no ideal profile of a mentor.

However, we need to actively reflect upon our role as a mentor and the capacity we have for development also. Reflect on the extent to which you possess these qualities:

Empathy: can you see things from the coach's point of view? Are you able to facilitate and empower coaches without forcing your style or thinking upon them?

Patience: can you avoid giving excessive direction and allow the coach to learn at their own pace?

Objectivity: are you able to see the benefit of other approaches to problems and realise that your way is not the only one?

Time: do you have the time to give a coach the proper mentoring experience?

Knowledge: do you have (or have access to) sources of knowledge that the coach does not?

Experience: Have you undergone the process the coach is going through? Can you see the bigger picture?

Challenger: As a mentor you must be ready to challenge preconceived beliefs and practices, both of yourself and the coach.

Steps to take to grow as a Mentor

1. Complete the **Profiling process** about yourself as a mentor.
2. Write a **Development Plan** – focusing upon 1 area you will prioritise over the next year.
3. Evaluate your mentorship by receiving Feedback from the coach.

Individual Mentor form

Coach's Name			
FAN Number:		Licensed Coach Yes/No	
STRENGTHS			
KEY AREAS TO IMPROVE			
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE DEVELOPMENT			
Date:		Time Period:	

MENTOR AGREEMENT FORM

The undersigned do hereby agree to enter into a mentoring relationship for a period of months

The mentee's goals for this relationship are:

- ---
- ---
- ---

The parties hereby agree and acknowledge:

- To be available for consultation by telephone or email during regular business hours, and occasionally in person
- To meet in person quarterly to review the progress of the relationship and to discuss how the relationship can be improved
- That they will meet in person to deal with any events or circumstances that may make continuing the relationship difficult or awkward
- That all matters discussed in the course of the relationship shall be confidential, unless both parties agree that disclosure can occur.

_____ as mentor

Date: _____

_____ as mentee

Date: _____



Foundation

Irish Football Association Foundation
The National Football Stadium
Donegall Avenue
Belfast BT12 6LU

www.irishfa.com