Exercise 2. Roles and responsibilities of the coach/ mentor

Thinking about your own role, complete the following table:

|  |
| --- |
| **You as a coach/ mentor** |
| Things I ***will*** do: | Things I ***will not*** do: |
| **The Apprentice** |
| Things I expect the apprentice ***will*** do: | Things I expect the apprentice ***will not*** do: |

The mentor will help their apprentice to:

* Agree and set goals
* Identify development opportunities
* Aim to get the job done better
* Consider carrier aspirations and needs
* Create opportunities
* Encourage the apprentice to self reflect

What the apprentice expect from the mentor:

* Does not blame, stays neutral
* Be honest
* Easy to approach
* Be experienced at work
* Gives constructive and positive feedback
* Shows empathy

Should managers be mentors?

The table below outlines some benefits and risks of managers acting as mentors:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Benefits**  | **Risks/issues** |
| Managers well placed to provide mentoring as and when required Managers will understand organisational culture, strategic goals and prioritiesCoaching and mentoring skills are part of managers’ skill setManagers will have understanding of team members skills and expertise | Power relationship between manager and apprentice may inhibit development of trust and openness Manager may not understand organisational culture, strategic goals and priorities any better than apprenticeManager may  have poor coaching and mentoring skillsPrevious experiences may affect manager’s and apprentices’ perception of capability and could hinder impartiality |

Barriers and boundaries

Sometimes, the relationship will not go as smoothly as you had hoped. Along the way, you may meet barriers and obstacles that prevent progress. It is important to identify and anticipate these so that you can overcome them.

Exercise:

List barriers under the following headings:

Coach/ Mentor Apprentice Environment

From your list identify how you will overcome these barriers and what support you will need.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Barriers for the Coach/Mentor | Barriers for the Apprentice | Barriers from the environment |
|  |  |  |
| How to over come these barriers |
|  |  |  |

Some examples of overcoming barriers

 

Barriers include:

* poor matching of mentors or coaches to their protégés
* lack of managerial support at higher levels
* resentment from those not chosen to participate in mentoring and coaching programs, perhaps due to a perception of favouritism
* creation of unrealistic expectations as to what mentoring and coaching can achieve
* blurring of role boundaries, for example, between the role of manager and mentor.

Exercise: How far do you go?

It is important to set boundaries with your apprentice and being clear about what you will do, and what you won’t.

Consider the following statements, what would you do as a coach/ mentor confronted with the following circumstances:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Your apprentice is constantly being distracted by other workers | Your apprentice is not showing any interest in completing their goals |
| Your apprentice is not cooperating with others in their team | Your apprentice has just started to turn in late for work |
| Your apprentice has repeatedly had the last three Fridays off sick | Your apprentice has got into a fight with a co-worker |
| Your apprentice is working below their potential | Your apprentice is all too quick to give up trying new skills |
| Your apprentice tells you they are being bullied at work | You suspect your apprentice is experimenting with drugs |
| Your apprentice tells you that he has got into trouble with the police at the weekend | Your apprentice tells you they have left home |
| Your apprentice asks you for your home phone number | Your apprentice sends you a friend request on facebook |