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UNDERSTANDING MENTORING

SeaMentors Project Members



Introduction

The issue of the mentoring process and its complex and dynamic evolution, bring into debate two types of approaches: some mythical, of empirical essence and the others scientific, integrative, highlighted by systematic studies in the specialized literature.

Homer (Odyssey) &
Fenelon (The Adventures of Telemachus)



Mentor, as the wise counsellor who guides and protects Odysseus' son until his father's return, becomes the symbol of moral authority, a landmark of the Good suggestively evoked in the sense of the perennial sapiential teachings

Learning, as a unitary universal phenomenon, can be defines its dual purpose: informative through the active summarization and memorization of valid informational contents and another purpose, a formative one that mainly refers to the transformative evolution of the psychic structures assigned to this objective, namely those cognitive, affective, volitional, conative.

"Nothing grows in the shade of big trees"
Constantin Brancusi

Often, the psycho-pedagogical literature claims as an important limitation of this concrete learning program based on directing and controlling the learning actions of young people, obtaining "a well-filled head" instead of "a well-formed head."



Hence, the rhetorical question of educators if the school prepares pupils/students by focusing on a certain specialization and omits or is less involved in preparing them to face the challenges of real life.

From this perspective, the process of continuous adult learning, throughout life in the andragogic system based on the exploration and experimentation of life situations, can be encountered in various forms: continuous training courses, as an employee who assumes norms, values, rules on the spot of work, as a disciple of a professional in the field "stealing the job", as a passionate autodidact with the need for performance or, simply, as an adult actively involved in his own personal and professional development and maturation.

Mentoring Process

Referring to the context of growth, concurrently with the well-structured and linear cognitive learning process, the phenomenon of development, of psycho-behavioral maturation unfolds, which is non-linear, heuristic, individualized

It is generated in particular by socialization - a complex process through which norms, values, psychosocial interactions, traditions, customs are internalized, processed in one's own psycho-motricity and then exported in the form of behaviors, attitudes, principles about the world and life, in agreement with the socio-cultural and professional environment.



The main forms of social learning such as: trial and error, reinforcement, imitation, role learning are practiced consciously and voluntarily but also unconsciously throughout life ensuring the development of personality

"Mentoring is a special relationship in which one person (the mentor) supports the learning process and progress of another person (the disciple). A mentor provides support by providing information, advice, and assistance so as to empower the disciple."

Using the metaphor of the journey similar to the sailing of sailors who individually set their starting point and destination, mentoring appears here as a "path" travelled to a time, sprinkled with obstacles, deviations but also satisfactions, which creates a context of personal and professional growth. Mentoring thus reveals itself as a rich source of self-learning and personal development.

The mentoring process facilitates the development of personal identity and the sophistication of coping mechanisms through the practical application of mentoring principles and the empirical experimentation of various growth situations.



“age does not guarantee wisdom just as youth does not indicate its lack”

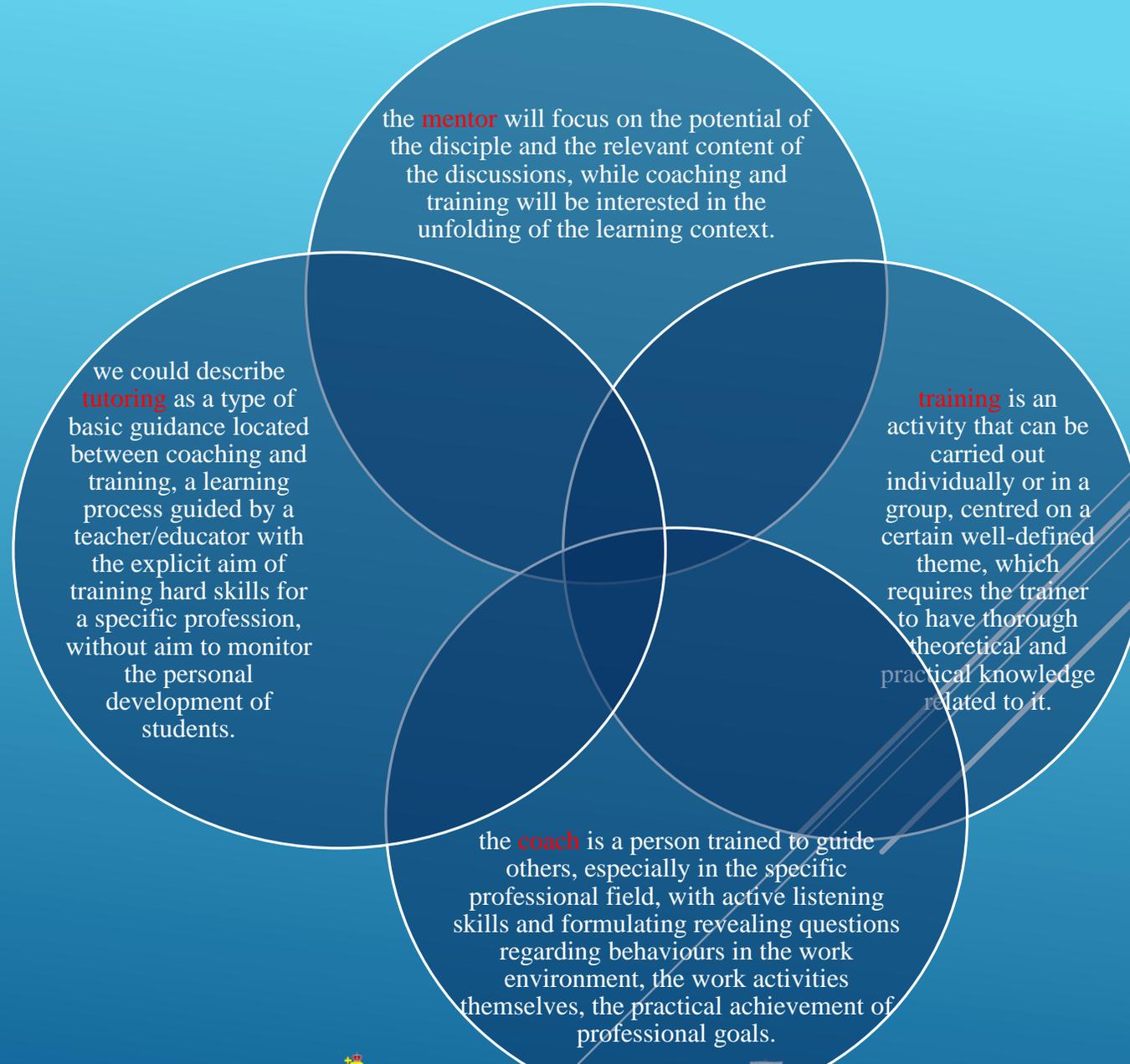
says an old proverb emphasizing that there is no age considered optimal to be a mentor because the maturation of the personality which requires the biological age to be as close to psychological age is a laborious process that takes place throughout life and is influenced by a number of factors, the potential of becoming is individualized.

"Mentoring is a consensual relationship between two individuals where both can benefit and grow. Mentoring is a mutual relationship of respect regardless of the professional position of the people involved."

in the conceptualization of the mentoring process, the focus shifts to the nature of the mentor-disciple relationship even if it is a vertical, unequal relationship, the transmission of knowledge, skills or expertise taking place from mentor to disciple.



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Informal mentoring relationships can be described, initiated according to the immediate interest of the disciple and supported by sympathetic affinities, based on mutual respect and trust from the initial stage, or formal mentoring relationships, developed by organizations through mentoring programs.

In addition to the traditional direct mentoring model, other forms of mentoring



In these particular situations, the role of the mentor is focused on providing psychosocial support based on teamwork or facilitating the integration of the newcomer in the profession, with an emphasis either on acquiring skills or on supporting the achievement of the level of aspiration, with a direct impact on the value growth of the organization.

- co-mentoring
- mutual mentoring
- peer-mentoring
- group mentoring
- team mentoring
- professional insertion mentoring

Although the mentoring relationship is professional in nature, it has both a career-oriented function and an important psychological function

From a career perspective, individuals who experienced a mentoring relationship reported "career satisfaction, opportunities for advancement and compensation gained, increased power in the organization, level of engagement, and effective socialization"

On the other hand, the psychological benefits inherent in the mentoring process cannot be denied

validation

confidence in solving new and challenging tasks

psychological comfort

confirmation

emotional support

acceptance

facilitating self-exploration

"adequate assistance" offered by the mentor throughout the process



sharing his experience and knowledge

creating the learning context in which the disciple can express his thinking critical

self-reflective

giving constructive feedback

understanding the disciple's vision and aspirations

appropriate recommendations or advice

willingness to share influence and the network of contacts built over time

The explicit goal of any mentoring approach is the formative restructuring of the disciple's vocational personality, achieved through the consolidation of learning and the sustained development of a professional identity.



This involves the systematic integration of a set of variables: personality attributes (attitudes, values, perceptions), profession-specific characteristics (assumed roles, professionally desirable behaviors, ethical considerations), the exploration and reframing of learning by doing experiences (predominantly in the andragogic system), introduction to the professional community in the naval industry.

Organizational mentoring can be conceived as a "triadic" mentor-disciple-university relationship, as a "peak" (apogetic) learning process in which these important factors have distinct but synergistic roles: the mentor/teacher/educator reinforces learning and models effective vocational behaviors, the disciple/student/subordinate learns to know and develop his own potential and our institution creates the framework, the system, the learning situations that allow the dissemination of the results of the entire mentoring process promoting human and professional value and excellence.

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