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Literature Review on enterprise mentoring

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Contents

1 Mentoring Programmes in the MENA Region

Country	Organisation/ Programme	What they do	Partners/donors	Website
Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, UK	Mowgli	Mowgli delivers training and mentor matching programmes (MMEs) in partnership with local organisations. Mowgli recruits, screens, and trains mentors and entrepreneurs and facilitators match them, guide a contract agreement, and support a year-long mentoring relationship.	Consolidated Contractors Company Optimiza Salesforce.com SurveyGizmo.com	http://mowgli.org.uk
Egypt	Techwadi	Silicon Valley-based non-profit working to promote entrepreneurship and foster economic development in the MENA region. TechWadi focuses on building bridges between the United States and the MENA region through high-impact mentorship, entrepreneurship in education, and exchange programmes to Silicon Valley. Mentors coach entrepreneurs in business practices; counsel on business expansion opportunities; provide access to strategic partners, investors, or clients; and act as a sounding-board for new ideas and challenges. Techwadi aims to provide effective mentorship opportunities to over 200 MENA companies in the next 5 years.	Wells Fargo Microsoft Lahlouh CRDF Global PlugandPlayTechCenter.com Eltoukhy Family Foundation Advancedio Systems	http://techwadi.org
Lebanon	Bader Young Entrepreneur Programme	Bader has a Mentorship programme where they assign one mentor to one entrepreneur for a period of 2 years. They have a pool of more than 20 local mentors who have been trained. No information was provided about the number of mentees	Kafalat Deutsche Bank AbouSleiman & Partners Eastline Marketing	http://www.baderlebanon.com
Jordan	Oasis500	“Mentorship and Acceleration” is the third step of the Oasis500 programme. The mentorship includes industry experts, and a group of 250 mentors of local and international origins. Oasis500 creates matching events for	Arab Bank Angel Network	http://www.oasis500.com

		mentors and newly incubated start-ups to ensure that the companies get the best mentors for their needs. Oasis500 start-ups have weekly meetings with their dedicated mentor, and are usually mentored by 4 to 6 mentors who assist them in achieving their goals through key performance indicators spread throughout the acceleration period. The programme also sets monthly performance review meetings to overview and give feedback on the progress of each and every start-up.		
Egypt	Flat6Labs	Three month programme that immerses technology based start-up entrepreneurs into the real-world challenges of creating and managing sustainable enterprises, while being supported by a dedicated staff and a mentorship team. Flat6Labs offers one-to-one mentorship with high- profile seasoned professionals selected by Flat6Labs. The purpose of the mentorship is to give the start-ups access to the mentor's experience, network, and perspective whilst building their business	Sawari Ventures The American University in Cairo – School of Business	http://www.flat6labs.com/
Qatar	Qatar Science and Technology Park	Managers at small-to-medium companies at QSTP are offered the guidance of a professional mentor for 12 months (the individual manager is mentored, not the company). At the start of the relationship a formal, documented work plan and milestones are agreed. The mentor spends 30 days over the next year working directly with the manager in Qatar, with ongoing contact in between. The Mentoring Programme is available to small-to-medium companies (roughly fewer than 250 staff and sales under $50 million) at the science park. QSTP covers all costs of the programme.	Government of Qatar	http://www.qstp.org.qa
Based in New York, targets MENA region	Launchpad Programme	The Launchpad Programme is a 3-month hands-on programme where MENA start-ups with globally relevant and competitive technologies are plugged into Silicon Alley and Silicon Valley with access to mentors, partners, and investors to help them incubate and accelerate their business.		http://www.siliconbadia.com/launch

Syria	Syria Young Entrepreneurs Association (SYEA)	A national programme that supports the implementation of prominent small and medium business ideas in Syria. SYEA Ventures provides entrepreneurs with the basic toolkit to implement their business ideas and assigns industry expert mentors to participants.		http://www.syea.org/
MENA	YallaStartup	An initiative that aims to foster early stage entrepreneurship in the MENA region. Their goal is to address the gaps in the early stage entrepreneurial ecosystem both online and offline. Focuses on knowledge sharing, community building, mentorship, and assisting in finding seed investment.		http://www.yallastartup.org/
MENA	MicroMentor MENA	MicroMentor MENA (Middle East and North Africa) is a component of the Arab Developer Network Initiative (ADNI), a Mercy Corps initiative aiming to enhance economic opportunities for youth through technology entrepreneurship, content creation and software application development in the MENA region. Micromentor MENA matches entrepreneurs, content creators and software developers with technical and business mentors in the region or abroad	MercyCorps	http://www.micromentor.org
Egypt	AWTAD's (Association for Women's Advancement and Development) Mentoring Programme	The Start Me Up Programme seeks to empower young people embarking on a career path, and help them determine their career options, establish a clear perspective about their future goals and how they can achieve them by identifying their core competencies. Programme was launched in 2009.		www.awtadegypt.com
Egypt	Global Women's Mentoring Programme	Includes a four-day orientation and leadership and skills training in Washington, DC, where the participants meet with senior women in government, academia and business. The international participants are then paired with one of FORTUNE's Most Powerful Women Leaders for an approximately two-week mentorship assignment in cities across the United States and a two-day communications	U.S. State Department	http://egypt.usembassy.gov/fortune.html

		training and debriefing in New York City. The programme runs since 2006 and this year 12 women participated from Egypt		
Egypt/Lebanon	The Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women Entrepreneurship and Leadership Programme (WEL)	Is a five-year investment by Goldman Sachs and aims to provide 10,000 underserved women around the world with business and management education. In addition to classroom training, the programme also provides post-graduation business advising, mentoring, and networking services to entrepreneurs. The Spring 2011 cohort consisted of 34 entrepreneurs, owners of small and medium enterprises, who hailed from rural and urban hometowns across Egypt.	Wharton School of Business of the University of Pennsylvania The American University in Cairo – School of Business American University of Beirut	http://www.goldmansachs.com/citizenship/10000women/index.html?cid=PS_01_08_06_99_01_05_02
Egypt	Gemiza	Gemiza provides a one-on-one mentoring for early stage start-ups on the business aspects such as business ideas, business models, business plan writing, launching strategy and pitching. They have a especial focus on women		http://gemiza.net
Egypt	Google Ebda2 Initiative	Is a competition organized by Google in cooperation with Science Age Society to identify, mentors and rewards the best technology start-ups in Egypt. The idea/start-up can be either Internet or mobile based. The competition will award the winning team/individual with up to $200,000 worth of funding with no limitations, conditions, or strings attached. Over a period of seven months, Start with Google will mentor and train contesters to build a working and sustainable Internet-based or mobile business. Participating teams will develop a prototype, a complete business model, as well as a pitch to potential investors.	Google	http://www.startwithgoogle.com
Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, and the U.A.E.	Arab Women's Entrepreneurship Project (AWEP)	The program provides 80 women entrepreneurs from underserved backgrounds with training and support that will help them start a new business or expand an existing one. Citi assigns mentors to provide support and assistance, fielded locally as well as through Citi's global Women's Diversity Network.	CitiFoundation AMIDEAST	http://www.amideast.org/our-work/elt/entrepreneurship-training/arab-womens-entrepreneurship-project-awep

MENA	Cherie Blair Foundation for Women	The Cherie Blair Foundation for Women has developed an programme that combines mentoring with technology to offer cross-border support to women entrepreneurs in developing and emerging economies. Mentees are recruited three times a year in January, May, and September through local partner organisations. Mentors are recruited globally on a rolling basis. Once matched, mentors and mentees complete an online multi-media training session. When the training is successfully completed, mentors and mentees then undertake the 12-month one-to-one mentoring relationship, using our Google-designed web platform. Since 2010, over 500 mentees and mentors have joined the Mentoring Women in Business Programme	Google DHL Wireless Reach Clutterbuck Associates Marton House	http://www.cherieblairfoundation.org/our-work/mentoring-women-in-business
Algeria Egypt Jordan Lebanon Morocco Palestinian Territories Tunisia Yemen	TechWomen	TechWomen brings emerging women leaders in technology sectors from the Middle East and North Africa together with their American counterparts for a professional mentorship and exchange programme at leading companies in the United States. TechWomen Mentees will take part in three-week project-based mentorships at leading companies in Silicon Valley and the San Francisco Bay Area. Each Mentee is matched with a Professional Mentor who partners with the Mentee on a technical project at the host company and provides professional guidance and support. The TechWomen programme will occur over five weeks from early September through October 2012.	U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA). Institute of International Education (IIE) Anita Borg Institute for Women and Technology (ABI)	http://www.techwomen.org
Tunisia Algeria Morocco	Education for Employment Foundation	The Maghreb Startup Initiative runs boot camps, organizes competitions that reach the interior regions, and rewards innovative projects in each Maghreb country in the fields of biotechnology, green technology, and information and communication technology (ICT). Bringing together incubators and business angels from across the entrepreneurship ecosystem, Maghreb Startup provides training, mentoring and cash prizes of up to $30,000 to aspiring entrepreneurs.	Partnership for a New Beginning-North African Partnership for Economic Opportunities (PNB-NAPEO) Abraaj Capital Intel Gust Angelsoft	http://www.efefoundation.org/internal.php?url=entrepreneurship

2 Introduction

The focus of this review is on mentoring for businesses and/or entrepreneurs. However, we have also incorporated insights from a broader mentoring literature when appropriate due to the fact that some general aspects of the good practice and key lessons learnt of mentoring that are relevant are not necessarily covered in the enterprise mentoring literature.

It is important to underline that we have found no specific research studies conducted in the MENA region about enterprise mentoring programmes and/or impact assessment of existing programmes, but many of the lessons learnt proposed in this literature review are particularly relevant to the region, especially when conducting matching of mentors and mentees and the importance of taking into account gender, race and religious values when doing so.

The literature review highlighted programmes such as Mowgli, Techwadi, Oasis 500 and Bader Young Entrepreneur Programme as good examples of mentoring the in the MENA region. Egypt is by far the country with the most developed entrepreneurial support ecosystem, providing a wide range of support programs to inspiring entrepreneurs. Most of these programmes have been established for several years and have a very well thought mentoring framework with clear processes and stages, particularly Mowgli, which has also developed a series of successful case studies. Unfortunately more in-depth research about impact, success rates and factors and lessons learnt from the region were not available. This might be due to the fact that mentoring is often packed into more complex support programmes and is not evaluated as a standalone project.

A list of enterprise mentoring programmes being implemented in the region can be found in section one of this document, providing more details about the organisation, country of implementation, and a brief description of the programme itself along with donors/sponsors.

2.1 Methodology

The approach taken by this literature review includes conducting a broad and relevant search of content, keeping a strict record of search strategies, inclusion/exclusion criteria, etc. The literature review covers academic literature, research and technical papers, government reports and working papers; all of which are considered to be useful to answer the main research question.

The existing evidence on enterprise mentoring appears to be solid and robust, including several programme evaluations and impact assessments looking at mentoring from both, quantitative and qualitative perspectives.

3 Literature Review

3.1 Definition of mentoring

Even though the number of mentoring programmes has grown exponentially during the past years, the phenomenon in itself is not new. The meaning derives from Homer's epic, *The Odyssey*, written around 700 B.C. In the story, Ulysses entrusts his son Telemachus to his good friend Mentor before leaving on a trip. Mentor was to be responsible for Telemachus' education and development of his identity in the adult world. In present days, a mentor is 'someone in a position of authority who oversees a younger person, giving advice and support.' (St-Jean and Audet, 2009).

It is difficult to find universally accepted definitions of mentoring. According to Brown (1990) "mentoring is the process in which an experienced veteran helps to shape or guide a newcomer…true mentoring is an extended, confidential relationship between two people who have mutual growth and corporate success – as common goals."

Gravells (2006) defines entrepreneurial mentoring as mentoring support provided to owners of small business, both at start-up and beyond.

Harrington (1999) defines entrepreneurial mentoring as the relationship that involves one entrepreneur acting as a 'critical friend' or 'guide' helping to oversee the career and development of a less experienced entrepreneur.

St-Jean and Audet (2009) describe entrepreneurial mentoring as a form of support relationship between a novice entrepreneur (the mentee) and an experienced entrepreneur (the mentor). Through the relationship the mentee is able to develop as both an entrepreneur and a person. Entrepreneurial mentoring can also be viewed as a business development process for owner-managers (Gold et al 2003). This is based on the premise that there is a direct link between entrepreneurs' actions and capabilities and the performance of their businesses.

3.2 Role of mentoring

Sullivan argues that the developmental functions provided by mentoring fall into two categories: career functions that enhance learning of skills and knowledge including the political and social skills required to succeed and psychological functions. Psychological functions are those aspects of the relationship that enhance a sense of competence, clarity of identity and effectiveness in the professional role (Sullivan, 2000).

Mentors are defined as influential, highly placed individuals with a high level of knowledge and experience, who undertake to provide upward mobility and career support for their protégés (Scandura and Ragins 1993 and Bouquillon et al. 2005). In this context, the role of the mentor is to enable the entrepreneurs to think and learn from their own actions in critical situations, so that they can change their behaviour in the future, or at least draw some lessons from it (Bisk 2002; Sullivan 2000). Mentoring is "about the facilitation that enables the entrepreneurs to dissect, reflect and learn from what could be termed as "critical incidents" (Sullivan, 2000). This approach is supported by Cope and Watts (2000) who mentioned the importance of mentor support in helping entrepreneurs to commit to reflexive learning following significant events in the enterprise, in order to help them avoid or mitigate such critical periods in the future. They pointed that mentoring allows entrepreneurs to examine their enterprises from a more objective standpoint, while continuing to play their role as its leaders and think about its development.

Cos and Jennings (1995) suggest that what distinguishes bad from good entrepreneurs is their ability to learn from mistakes. Mentoring relations can play an important role in facilitating feedback loops – helping the entrepreneurs reflect on their learning and mistakes and to develop forward strategies that are informed by these experiences.

Kruger Wilson (1998) argues that entrepreneurs need mentors due to the complexity and range of tasks they are required to perform. Mentoring is also highly relevant to the personal development of entrepreneurs (Hudson-Davies et al. 2002) since mentors can become positive role models, inspiring their mentees to emulate them (Lockwood et al. 2002).

Mentoring is an appropriate form of support, which provides mentees with the possibility to improve their management skills and learn through action with the support of a person with extensive business experience (St-Jean and Audet, 2009). Gravells (2006), in his research found that mentoring was considered not only important but the most effective source of help for entrepreneurs in topics considered most crucial such as financial planning, marketing and pricing, regulation and access to information. Enterprise mentoring was seen as effective relative to other forms of support.

All these definitions imply the close relationship that the mentoring process entails and the experience/skill transfers that set mentoring apart from other types of development support or training (Nesta 2009).

3.3 Mentors and Mentees Characteristics

The mentoring literature indicates that for successful mentoring relationships to take place, both, mentors and mentees, should display certain characteristics. They both need to fully buy-in to the relationship, have a sufficiently strong professional link and get on at their inter-personal level (Nesta 2009).

Mentors

Mullen (1994) pointed to the importance of mentor's characteristics when assessing the success of a mentoring relationship. Sullivan (2000) identified the importance of empathy and the ability to listen as being important for mentors in developing the relationship. Mentees also recognised the importance of mentors being able to adjust to the specific context of their mentees, especially in terms of culture, communication models and learning styles. Cunningham and Eberle (1993) assembled a list of essential mentor skills and characteristics:

- Personal security and confidence
- Willingness to trust
- Ability to communicate
- Introspective and open
- Innovative
- Patient and tolerant
- Accessibility

The mentor's expertise, experience, knowledge of the mentee's specific context, and availability seem to be crucial to the success of the mentoring relationship.

Common problems associated with mentors are lack of time, lack of training, professional expertise/personality mismatch, the extra burden associated with mentoring, frustration with the mentee, and a competitive mentor, all of which can result in problems of incompatibility (Ehrich et al., 2001).

Mentees

Research conducted by several authors have proven that usually entrepreneurs do not like asking for help and tend to be prejudiced against external advisors, believing that their advice is not practical enough, not tailored to the situation, too costly or given by people who are not familiar enough with small businesses (St-Jean and Audet, 2009). Even if the mentor has all the ideal characteristics, the mentoring relationship can only succeed if the mentees are open to this type of learning. Cunningham and Eberle (1993) also put together a list of skills and characteristics for effective mentees:

- Desire to learn
- People oriented
- Goal oriented
- Conceptual ability
- Introspective
- Initiative
- Assertiveness

Common problems associated with mentees are gender/race problems, negative mentee attitude, jealousy and pressure.

3.4 The mentoring relationship

Psychological characters of both, the mentee and the mentor, can affect their relationship. According to Engstrom (2004) the relationship has better chances of being perceived as successful where “agreeableness” is similar for both partners, mutual liking is also important, since it helps the mentor to exercise psychological and career-related functions (Armstrong et al. 2002). As Kram (1985) rightly pointed out, trust is a vital component of the mentoring relationship and enhances both its quality and its efficiency. Trust needs to be mutual and generate protégé satisfaction with the mentoring relationship.

Gay and Stephenson (1998) argue that the mentoring relationship can move through a continuum of roles. Relationships can be, on one end of the continuum, supportive in nature and involve activities such as exploring, guiding and advising. And on the other end relationships can be affirmative and even confirmative, involving activities such as teaching, training and directing.

While several models exist explaining the structure of the mentoring relationship, the majority of these models recognise that the mentoring relationship follows some sort of development cycle or transformational path – it is a dynamic rather than a static relationship.

3.5 The benefits of mentoring

While mentoring has increased in popularity and the literature consistently reports on its benefits as a valuable tool both in business and personal development, there are extremely few articles citing specific measurable benefits and impacts. This is probably due to mentoring being essentially a qualitative in nature, not prone to more quantitative research; or to the lack of longitudinal studies, or the fact that mentoring is often packed into more complex support programmes and is not evaluated on its own.

However, research has highlighted several positive impacts from the mentoring relationship, for both the mentee and the mentor. Garvey and Garrett-Harris (2008) carried out a systematic review or over 100 studies and evaluations of mentoring schemes across a range of industry sectors, they compiled a list of the most regularly quoted benefits for mentors and mentees.

- Benefits for the mentee include improved performance and productivity; improved knowledge and skills; greater confidence, empowerment and well-being; improved job satisfaction and motivation; faster learning and enhanced decision-making skills; improved understanding of the business; improved creativity and innovation; encouragement of positive risk-taking; development of leadership abilities
- Benefits to the mentors include improved performance through enhanced understanding and knowledge; increased business activity, sales and networking; increased ideas’ generation and knowledge enhancement; enhanced confidence and job satisfaction; new knowledge and skills; leadership development; fulfilment of human psycho-social needs; rejuvenation and improved motivation; positive attitude to change
- Benefits to the enterprise included strategic change, facilitation of partnerships, innovation and change, problem solving and better project management.

On the other hand, Noe (1998) argues for caution in assessing the impact of mentoring. He found that mentors tend to overestimate the value and impact of their support and attributed a greater proportion of the business success to the mentoring, than protégés did.

3.6 Main causes of failure of the relationship

Failure in the relationship between mentor and mentee can be due to one or several causes including differences in business culture and especially in how the enterprise is managed (Dalley and Hamilton, 2000). Particular characteristics such as personality of the mentor and/or mentee can also inhibit the on-going relationship. Hansford et al. (2001) found that personality mismatch, ideological differences or expertise differences caused problems in the mentoring relationship. Motivation and trust are also key elements of the relationship (Kram, 1985).

3.7 Types of mentoring

Traditionally, two main types of mentoring have been identified: formal and informal, but as mentoring programmes develop and evolve other types have also started to appear over time.

- ***Formal mentoring:*** this type of mentoring is characterised by clear guidelines and well defined objectives, and usually take place on a one-to-one basis (Hudson-Davies et al. 2002), where the process of matching mentors and mentees is usually conducted by a third party (company, institution, agency) (Bisk 2002). Formal mentoring programmes began to emerged in the 1970s, not only because organisations started realising the benefits of mentoring, but also because it was seen as an affirmative action strategy that ensured that women and minority groups had access to the mentoring process (Hansford et al. 2003)
- ***Informal mentoring:*** this type of mentoring is characterised by individuals (either the mentor or mentee) making the selection on their own, even if a third party has encouraged the process (Bisk 2002). Informal or traditional mentorship can be a highly selective and elitist process since selection is dependent upon the mentors discretion and interest in the mentee. Is probable that some mentors will exhibit biases towards some potential mentees and no others based on their own cultural background (Odiorne 1985).
- ***One-on-one mentoring:*** probably the most common mentoring model, this type of mentoring matches one mentor with one mentee. It allows both, the mentor and the mentee, to develop a personal relationship and provides personal support for the mentee (Management Mentors).
- ***Group mentoring:*** requires a mentor to work with 4-6 mentees at one time. The group can meet once or twice a month to discuss various topics. Group mentoring is limited by the difficulty of scheduling meetings for the entire group and the lack of personal relationship that most people prefer (Management Mentors), but has the advantage of providing an opportunity for individuals to discuss situations with people that had similar problems (Hudson-Davies et al, 2002).
- ***Training-based mentoring***: this model is directly tied to a training programme. A mentor is assigned to a mentee to help that person develop the specific skills being taught in the programme. This type of mentoring is limited because it only focuses on the subject at hand and does not seek to help the mentee develop a broader set of skills (Management Mentors).
- ***Web-based mentoring:*** blends the formal mentoring with technological advances to create a twenty-first century process. The process is not limited by the pre-existing social or professional network of the entrepreneur to find the help he/she needs. Mentors complete an online profile that identifies their areas of skills and expertise and provide details of their professional histories. Mentees then go online, complete their own user profile with pertinent data about what skills or learning areas they want to improve and find a mentor who can help them address that specific need. Most web-based mentoring programmes help mentees identify potential mentors by providing them with a list of people with the

expertise they are looking for. Mentees can view mentors' profiles and select the person they are interested in. Once the match has been made the web programme will support material to the participants in order to help them stay connected. These types of programmes help reduce implementation cost and reach a higher number of participants (Emelo 2009)

Many authors highlight the benefits of informal and formal mentoring programmes, but concerns about groups who otherwise would not have access to mentoring need to be taken into account as well. In their research, Raggin and Cotton (1999) found that formal mentoring tended to be more career-focussed while informal mentoring tended to have a great element of psychological support

3.8 Mentoring programmes

Hudson-Davies et al. (2002) argue about the importance of implementing mentoring in a systematic way in order to work effectively. The foundations of any mentoring programme should include identifying the need and formulating appropriate goals for the development of the programme. Next steps include recruiting mentors and mentees, providing inductions and conducting the matching. The final part of the programme includes providing support mechanisms for both, mentor and mentee and evaluating the programme.

3.9 Key learnings

When developing a mentoring programme taking especial consideration to some aspects of the planning can maximise the likely success of the mentoring relationship

Clarification of aims, rules, and expectations

Douglas (1997) recommends outlining and discussing the aims of the programme with mentees. The programme aims should not only be defined but also clearly communicated with potential mentors and mentees and programme coordinators. This communication would help reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings about roles and expectations of the programme participants. Mentors and mentees need to clearly understand what their role in the programme is. Tovey (1998) suggests that in order to minimize misunderstandings a basic set of rules needs to be developed. While these rules are expected to vary from programme to programme, Tovey suggests the following:

- The mentee's personal life and experiences will only be discussed by invitation of the mentee
- Mentors will not make excessive demands on the time of mentees
- Mentees will not make excessive demands on the time of the mentors
- Mentors will assist mentees to obtain their goals but will let them run their own show
- Knowledge of the mentee will only be passed on with the permission of the mentee.

Rules will probably be developed after discussion between the participants, but both, mentors and mentees might need to agree to some rules covering their association to the programme.

Training of mentors

Many mentees mentioned the lack of preparation of mentors as one of the main reasons for failure of the relationship; the mentor role needs to be outlined by the programme coordinator.

Mentors need to be aware and know the kind of questions they will be asked, the type of tasks they can ask mentees, and the time restraints on them and their mentees (Hansford et al. 2003). While the type and length of training will vary from programme to programme, Tovey (1998) recommends conducting an in-depth training to mentors and making participation in training a pre-requisite to become part of the programme. In-depth preparation covers practical, theoretical and psychological elements of mentoring as well as an introduction to the specific goals and objectives of the programme. One of the components Tovey (1998) recommends including in mentors preparation is the knowledge of *scaffolding* and *fading*. Mentors need to clearly know they are expected to provide support to mentees in the form of scaffolding. The scaffolding is constructed in accordance with the skill and knowledge levels of individual mentees. At the same time, mentors must be aware of the need to fade or gradually remove the scaffolding as mentees become more accomplished.

Less intense forms of training include guidelines and self-preparation techniques. Authors like Garvey and Alred (2000) recommend a two-day programme induction for mentors.

Regardless the type, research shows that training of mentors is a success factor in mentoring programmes. Clutterbuck et al. (1999) tried to quantify the benefits of mentor training and in his research found that in programmes introduced without any training resulted in no more than 33 per cent of relationships delivering any significant benefits to the participants. Training the mentor can double the success rate to 66 per cent.

Some programmes have reported positive results on encouraging mentors to get to know and meet the other mentors who are also involved in the programme in order to share experiences of mentoring and reflect on their various strategies to support the enterprise (SQWConsulting, 2010).

Matching of participants

SQW Consulting (2010) argues that mentoring is essentially about human relationships and for those relations to work they need to be based on respect, honesty and trust. Successful relations will be those who are able to manage these three aspects, preferably at an early stage. Some authors consider the mismatch between mentor and mentee as one of the most crucial barriers to effective mentoring. MacCallum and Baltiman (1999) have stressed that 'mentoring is not always successful and unsuccessful matches can be worse than no mentoring at all.'

Mismatches can be due to difference in values between the mentor and mentee, inexperienced or untrained mentors, differences between the goals of the programme and the expectations of the mentee. Race, sex, social class and religious values also seem to play a role in the success of the mentoring relationship (Hudson et al. 2000). Gender problems are more likely to arise from the pairing of female mentees with male mentors, while racial problems tended to be encountered by black mentee and white mentor pairs (Hansford et al., 2001). Motivation on the part of both players as well as trust is also seen as important elements of the maintenance of the relationship (Kram, 1985).

Douglas (1997) also argues that voluntary participation and a sense of choice in the decision making process can help in the effectiveness of the programme. Tovey (1998) suggests that when possible mentors and mentees should choose each other but taking into account gender and cultural differences. Douglas (1997) on the other hand favours a matching process based on programme objectives and goals and a set of criteria that takes into consideration similar interests, personalities, location and functional area.

Some of the main methods of matching used include:

- A business diagnostic that identified companies' individual requirements and matches these to mentor skills and expertise
- Matching based on company traits (e.g. operating in similar sectors, client base)
- Matching based on personality traits (psychometric tests were used)
- Matching by the programme manager (no specific criteria used)

No conclusive research on the most effective matching method has been found.

Matching learning styles

Mumford (1995) pointed out the relationship between learning styles and mentoring. Mumford identified four learning styles (activist, reflector, theorist and pragmatist) and argues that same or different approaches to learning could affect the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship. Mumford argues that while the benefits of matching different learning styles might be compelling at first glance, actually similar learning styles work better in practice.

Frequency and structure of meetings

Different pairs will have different needs in terms of frequency of meetings, for some there was a more intense period at the beginning where the mentor met with the mentee on a more frequent basis in order to either address a pressing issue or better understand a particular business. After the initial period, meetings became less frequent and also included contact by email or phone (SQWConsulting 2009). Research conducted by St-Jean and Audet (2009) showed that there was no “ideal” frequency, since mentee satisfaction was obtained in cases where meetings were held as often as twice as month and as rarely as once every two months.

On the other hand efficiency of meeting proved to be an important aspect in mentee satisfaction revealing the importance of formalization (St-Jean and Audet, 2009). Evaluations from different mentoring programmes also indicate the positive results of structuring the mentoring relationship, while this can vary from one mentor/mentee to another, most include at least some kind of agenda or informal list of topic areas for discussion. Successful meetings result in plans of action that can then become a new set of agenda items (SQWConsulting 2009).

Exit strategy

Studies also seem to indicate positive results in determining the period of the mentoring relationship and in offering potential exit strategies. SQW Consulting (2009) argues about the importance for both, the mentor and mentee, to acknowledge the end of the programme and to be able to re-negotiate their relationship. Some options that are available after the end of the relationship include:

- The mentor taking a more formal role as a non-executive position in the enterprise
- The mentor taking a specific consultancy role in the business
- The mentoring relationship being extended
- The mentor continuing to work with the mentee but in a less frequent or formal basis/

4 Conclusions

The literature review conducted provides plenty of evidence that mentoring programmes have real benefits, providing a relevant and appropriate source of support for entrepreneurs. The opportunity of having an experienced and respected outside expert working directly with the needs of the business and the entrepreneur has proven to be a considerable added value.

None-the-less, some of the crucial factors that need to be taken into account when designing mentoring programmes include:

- Balancing a formal approach (in terms of goals and expected outcomes) with an informal one that can provide enough flexibility and openness to the needs of the entrepreneur.
- Matching mentors and mentees is a considered an important factor for the success of the mentoring relationship, considering experience, personal aspects, learning styles and socio-economic factors can have a considerable impact on the outcome of the relationship. While taking into consideration these aspects can help reduce potential mismatches, mentoring programmes need to be aware that this is still a possibility and provide exit strategies for both the mentor and mentee.
- Training of the mentor and clarification of expectations and rules can help frame the relationship and reduce the level of frustration from both parties.

Despite the amount of research conducted on this topic, some of the basic questions of what works best, where and why for the MENA region, where in-depth and evidence-based research is still needed, still remain unanswered.

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