Abstract:
Is mentoring right for you? There are many different mentoring methods and systems for mentoring; some used in the library profession, others used elsewhere. This presentation considers three key questions: What are the benefits from being in a mentoring relationship or system, What kinds of mentoring methods and systems are there, and Which one is the right one for you or your organisation?

There are benefits to be gained from being mentored, and also from being a mentor. The benefits may focus on your current work, your longer-term career, your general growth and development in the profession or in leadership roles, or wider life beyond work. There is a wide range of mentoring methods and systems currently used in library, information and other professions: some will suit various stages of career, others for various types of personalities, and various working situations. There are mentoring methods and systems applicable for those in both large and small organisations, for those in cities and rural areas, for those beginning their working life and those who are well established in the profession.

Working out which mentoring method or system will be the best one for you will depend on what your needs are, what you want to achieve, and your individual circumstances and career path. Organisational needs are also catered for with some mentoring systems. A range of formal and informal mentoring methods and systems are described, and examples of successful methods and systems are given.
Introduction
There are four main questions surrounding the topic of mentoring for any individual or group considering this form of professional development. Firstly, what is Mentoring? There needs to be a shared concept or understanding of what Mentoring is before such a relationship can be entered into. Secondly, What are the benefits from being in a mentoring relationship or system? There needs to be some value, benefit or point from being in such a relationship, or there would be no point in participating. Thirdly, What kinds of mentoring methods and systems are there? This is an important question, because in this kind of relationship, there is no ‘one size fits all’ solution. There will be as many types and methods or mentoring as there are situations that require it. The last question seeks to put together all of these previous ones, and to come to a practical outcome: Which kind of mentoring is right for you or your organisation? The combination of the answers to these questions should provide a framework of types of mentoring and the benefits that comes from them, and this can be applied by those in the library profession to their own professional development.

What is Mentoring?
Various writers have described mentoring in various ways. It is necessary first to make a clear the distinction between coaching, counselling and mentoring. Traditionally these have been three distinct areas, but in recent times, and with the growth of the private coaching and mentoring sector, have begun to blur. Stone describes the differences between these three as:

**Coaching** – the process by which employees gain the skills, abilities and knowledge they need to develop themselves professionally and become more effective in their jobs.

**Counselling** – this is a supportive and non-punitive disciplinary process with one-on-one meetings with an employee, to get them to see the gap between actual and expected performance, identifying the problem, and developing and implementing plans to overcome the difficulty.

**Mentoring** - The traditional view can be described by The New Zealand Mentor Centre as “that of an older, more experienced manager fostering the hierarchical progress of a younger ambitious protégé”, and usually occurs in a non-reporting relationship, to “enhance professional practice, personal knowledge and organisational development .. [it] is a developmental alliance that is more broadly focused on the individual within the organization, linking the facilitation of individual development, learning and business performance”.

In recent years there has been a move away from this one-to-one passing on of professional drive and strategy towards a range of mentoring options suitable for not only individuals but also for organisations. As Katherine Clark and Kat Turner put it, “Mentoring is a process that emphasizes clarification and reflection, and focuses on the long-term.” The literature surrounding mentoring within the library and information management area is small but growing. With the rise of mentoring as a commercial business as well as an altruistic ideal, more is being written and contemplated in this field.

What are the benefits from being in a mentoring relationship or system?
There are benefits to be gained from being mentored, and also from being a mentor. There are benefits for the organisation and for the individual.
For the organisation, the benefits can be in increased morale, productivity, career direction and aspiration, learning and leadership. Yearout describes Herbert Kelman, a social psychologist writing on leadership and management, identifying three mechanisms by which people do things: compliance (where they are told to do something), identification (where they agree to do things because the idea is presented in an appealing way or by an appealing person), and internalisation (where they endorse a behaviour or goal on their own, and so ‘own’ the idea). In the workplace, compliance is primarily a management feature, but both identification and internalisation are ones where the individual is involved, and these commitment-based influences are leadership traits. Mentoring can be used to grow leaders within organisations, and programmes such as the ‘Leading from any position workshops’ give an excellent start for this, and coupled with ongoing mentoring, coaching and peer support, can ensure that growth and development takes place over the longer term, and that targets and achievements are sought and hopefully met over the longer term.

Stone identifies the benefits to the individual and to the organisation from traditional mentoring within an organisation as including the following:

• Faster learning curves
• Increased communication of corporate values
• Reduced turnover at a time when new recruits may be hard to find
• Increased loyalty
• Improved one-on-one communication and a sense of team within your work group
• Increased employee productivity
• Additional corporate information
• Creation of an innovative environment
• Allies for the future

For the individual, benefits may focus on current work, a longer-term career path, personal growth and development, growth and development in the profession or in leadership roles, or in wider life beyond work.

Benefits to the individual from a mentoring process can be wide-ranging, and may be dependent on what the individual seeks to gain from the process. The list below from Stratus Consulting covers many benefits which are common to other lists of potential benefits to the individual from mentoring:

• Greater clarity around their objectives and how to achieve them.
• Improved leadership, communication and relationship skills.
• Improved motivation for themselves and their team.
• Greater ability to lead and facilitate change.
• Ability to get beyond challenges and to optimise opportunities.
• Reduced stress and greater levels of resilience and work life balance.
• Increased confidence and ability to take effective action.
• Optimised thinking, attitude, and behaviour.
• New levels of performance and results on a personal and team level.

What kinds of mentoring methods and systems are there?
There are a number of different methods and systems currently used to provide mentoring. Some are available within organisational structures, some within professions, and some available individually or via external providers. Clark’s description of mentoring within the
New Zealand Library context is “Mentoring can be an informal relationship, or part of a structured programme. Mentoring can be a one-to-one relationship, or group or whanau based. Mentoring in the workplace can occur face-to-face, or virtually across the Internet. Mentoring can be in-house, or involve people across different organisations. Mentoring can take place between people who were previously strangers, or with familiar peers and colleagues. Mentoring can be aimed at increasing skills, providing support, and/or facilitating personal development and awareness. In most cases, mentoring is used to guide people through a time of change.” A number of these are explored below, with descriptions of what the mentoring system is like, what it seeks to achieve, and examples of where these systems are current in practice.

Mentoring within an organisation – senior to junior staff member
This method of linking together a mentor and mentee can happen either formally or informally within an organisation. This can include the classic mentor-protégé relationship, or a less formal arrangement between senior and junior staff members. These pairings may be formally and deliberately identified and initiated, and others may simply evolve within the workplace. Some of these relationships work best when the partners in this relationship can choose each other, as the relationship between the two is itself an important part of the success of the process. Some junior staff are identified early as potential future leaders, and these are good candidate for mentoring. Others who require some direction, or some motivation, are also good candidates. Where staff are identified as needing some assistance, this relationship can also be used, although coaching should also be considered, as this slightly different approach may be more successful in achieving the overall results desired.

Mentoring within an organisation – within or across teams
Examples of this are found within some libraries and parent bodies, but are not yet common to many. Linda Palmer conducted a pilot of mentoring at Massey University Library in 2005: this “was one attempt to address a difficulty faced in attracting professional staff. Was Massey best to ‘grow its own’ “. Some other libraries are also fostering their own internal mentoring schemes. Generally mentoring within or across teams is an organised system, where mentors and mentees are ‘paired’ together with a formal relationship existing between them. Where mentors and mentees are within a team, contact between them can be quite close and constant, which may be difficult, but the advantage is that the specific area of professional work for the mentee is well understood by the mentor, and guidance can be given within a specific field of librarianship and at a level not able to be given by any other form of mentoring. Where mentors and mentees are in different teams or areas of work, the contact between the two will still be close but not so constant, and the relationship can focus more on general areas of the workplace, organisation, professional work and career.

Peer mentoring
This is a system of mentoring where mentors and mentees of around the same level and standing are matched across teams, across organisations, or across professions, and is a formally arranged system; also known as buddying.

The graduates of the library and information management courses at Victoria University are invited to join the MLIS Alumni Mentoring Programme. The “informal scheme will allow current students to discuss their course and career thoughts and aspirations with someone who has recently completed the MLIS and is practicing in the information profession”. Although guidelines are given on what is expected from both parties in the relationship, the
exact goals and the nature of the relationship itself is set by the two people involved in each partnership.

Another example is the peer mentoring within the profession as initiated in some LIANZA Regions. Palmer and Price-Ewen report that the Ikaora Region held a meeting in 2005 to discuss mentoring, with librarians in the region having been involved in mentoring research and pilot schemes. Others, such as Aoraki, held Library Assistant Days in past years, culminating in the pairing of assistants to form peer-mentoring or buddy relationships.

**Mentoring within the profession**

Mentoring within the profession can include systems and schemes which allow for information and library professionals to mentor others within their profession but not within their own organisation, giving the mentee the benefit of a wider view of the profession, access to experience within the wider context of the field, and a mentor who is a bit more removed, detached and possibly more objective than someone within the mentee’s own organisation. Mentoring within the profession can be conducted in various settings and relationships from the traditional senior-junior pairing through to peer-mentoring.

Examples include the Aurora Leadership Institutes, in which the mission is “to assist future leaders in the library and associated cultural and information industry to maximise their leadership skills and potential” Within this programme, “the mentors are a key part of the Institute. They are leading Australian and New Zealand librarians, who act as facilitators, guides, sounding boards and role models, and work closely with participants throughout the Institute. Mentors share their professional and personal experiences, participating on a voluntary basis which is an expression of their own professional commitment.” This mentor relationship lasts only as long as the course itself, but the peer links are maintained throughout careers, along with networking amongst Aurorans and some further contact such as the Aurora Recall Meetings and an Aurora listserv.

Other examples include peer-mentoring within LIANZA regions as outlined in the peer-mentoring section above, and the MLIS Alumni Mentoring programme, also discussed above. Some mentoring within a profession is for targeted purposes, such as the forthcoming mentor system for the LIANZA Registration process.

**Mentoring in specific subject areas**

Mentoring within a specific area usually focuses on the chosen subject and finding ways to achieve success within it. Areas of speciality within librarianship, such as special librarians dealing with corporate information in a particular sector or industry may benefit from mentoring within that sector or industry, such as law, energy or healthcare. Mentoring can be from those involved in the parent profession of the business or company to the librarian working within that setting, giving advantages of subject and business acumen in that wider field; or may provide generic skills of use to the library profession as well as to the wider range of professions, such as business or leadership mentoring.

Examples of this include business mentoring such as that provided by Business Mentors New Zealand who pair professional people together so that generic business skills can be given by the mentor to the mentee in a related or unrelated field, and BIZ Business Information Zone Mentoring who provides much the same kind of service. Mentoring in Leadership is another subject area of great importance to the library profession. Programmes such as The Aurora Institute and the Leading from Any Position Workshops combined with ongoing mentoring provide leadership training of relevance to the profession.
**Commercial Mentoring**
This method makes use of external providers or mentoring services available on a commercial basis. Some individual providers have a connection with the library sector, such as Sally Angus, who spent 25 years in the library profession and now provides life coaching and business coaching to individuals and teams within the library and other communities. Other commercial businesses focus on more generic mentoring or coaching across a range of professions for mentoring which can be arranged through libraries or their parent organisations and institutions, or individually and privately. Providers of commercially available mentoring within New Zealand include The New Zealand Mentoring Centre, Business Mentors New Zealand, The New Zealand Institute of Management and the New Zealand Association for Training and Development.

**Which kind of mentoring is the right one for you or your organisation?**
Working out which mentoring system is going to be best for you or for your organisation is not always an easy process. The system can be complex, as mentors may need some training and guidance in the mentoring process and relationship as well as mentees. Expertise in a specific subject area does not in itself qualify mentors for their role, but other factors such as interpersonal skills, a passion for their work and profession, as well as a passion for life are all good things to have.

In selecting which mentoring system is right for you or for your organisation, practical considerations come to the fore. Choices are going to be dependent on what is available within your organisation, your profession, and your region. Some opportunities will present themselves and these can often be used to good effect. For others, you may need to seek out opportunities, and for still others, you may to create them.

Where you have a choice of systems, it is best to consider what results you want to obtain from the mentoring relationship, either for yourself or for your organisation, and also to consider what resources you are prepared to spend, whether it be in terms of time, money or effort.

The differences between mentoring, coaching, and other services are outlined in this chart below from the Coach mentoring Group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Coach</th>
<th>Mentor</th>
<th>Trainer</th>
<th>Consultant</th>
<th>Therapist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>Client</td>
<td>Mentor / Mentee</td>
<td>Trainer</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>Counselor and Therapist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses</td>
<td>Curiosity, Facilitation and Support, Coaching Models</td>
<td>Experience, Self-proven methods, Contacts</td>
<td>Models, Methods, Procedures</td>
<td>Expertise Experience</td>
<td>Healing Methods, Clinical Models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To partner with the client in clarifying, aligning, and achieving goals, while championing who the client is at their core</td>
<td>To teach the client the Mentor's methods and open doors that have led to success</td>
<td>To teach the client skills, procedures, methods, expertise, etc. To develop skill and proficiency in an area of an endeavor</td>
<td>To advise client and provide with success strategies</td>
<td>To assist the client in healing traumas from the past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client Objective</td>
<td>To connect with their deepest objectives and use the</td>
<td>To develop skill and proficiency in</td>
<td>To use the advise, expertise,</td>
<td></td>
<td>To release the past and/or have</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Differences between various styles of mentoring systems are outlined in the chart below, showing finer distinctions between the various purposes and potential results of a range of mentoring styles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Senior–junior within an organisation</th>
<th>Cross-team within an organisation</th>
<th>Peer-mentoring</th>
<th>Mentoring within the profession</th>
<th>Mentoring within subject areas</th>
<th>Commercial mentoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roles</strong></td>
<td>Teacher and Guide</td>
<td>Advisor and Guide</td>
<td>Two close matches or equals</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Authority</strong></td>
<td>Mentor/Mentee</td>
<td>Mentor/ Mentee</td>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formality</strong></td>
<td>Variable degree of formality</td>
<td>Formally paired, but a variable degree of formality in the relationship</td>
<td>Formally paired, but a variable degree of formality in the relationship</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uses</strong></td>
<td>Experience, knowledge of the workplace and profession, Self-proven methods</td>
<td>Experience, knowledge of the workplace and profession</td>
<td>Sharing of ideas, experiences and ambitions</td>
<td>Experience, knowledge and understanding of the wider profession, broad self-proven methods</td>
<td>Experience knowledge and understanding of the specialty within the wider library profession, and broad self-proven methods</td>
<td>Experience knowledge and understanding of business, leadership or other generic skills, and broad self-proven methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>To pass on the Mentor's methods and experience, and to open doors for the client and to grow professionals</td>
<td>To pass on experience and methods, and to grow professionals within an organisation</td>
<td>To give a breadth of knowledge and experiences, to set and pursue targets of achievement</td>
<td>To give a breadth of knowledge and experiences, understanding of the wider profession, and to open doors for the client and to grow professionals</td>
<td>To give a breadth of knowledge and experiences, understanding of business, and the wider library profession or commercial marketplace</td>
<td>To give a breadth of knowledge and experiences, understanding of business, and the wider commercial marketplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Client Objective</strong></td>
<td>To understand and use the Mentor's methods of success and contacts</td>
<td>To understand and use the Mentor's methods of success, and use their experience to grow professionally</td>
<td>To share methods of success, experiences, and to set and pursue self-identified targets</td>
<td>To understand and use the Mentor’s methods of success, and use their experience to grow professionally</td>
<td>To understand and use the Mentor’s generic experience and methods of success, applied in a new setting</td>
<td>To understand and use the Mentor's generic experience and methods of success, applied in a new setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desired Result</strong></td>
<td>Increased understanding of</td>
<td>Increased understanding</td>
<td>Increased understanding</td>
<td>Increased understanding</td>
<td>Increased understanding</td>
<td>Increased understanding</td>
</tr>
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These two charts provide clarification of the various elements involved in mentoring inputs and outcomes to help identify which is the best mentoring system for you. The optimum solution is to find the desired outcomes for your particular needs, and work backwards to identify what the mentoring system is that would best fulfill this. It is also acknowledged that in many cases, the ideal form of mentoring may not be an option for you or your organisation, for a number of factors, including such things as availability, cost, and perceived value. You may need to consider other options, or make the best use out of what is available to you. Investigate what is available, in-house, commercially, within your professional organisation, within your other networks. Some mentoring can be done by distance using phone, email and other technologies, so mentoring face-to-face, while being the traditional method, is not the only method available. If nothing you can identify targets your needs sufficiently, consider setting up a mentoring system; and if there are not sufficient numbers of willing mentors within your area, then consider establishing a peer-mentoring system based on the experience of others who have explored this option.

**Conclusion**

There are a range of mentoring methods and systems currently in place both within and external to the library and information management profession. These provide mentoring services targeted to outcomes. Where training in mentoring and mentoring methods is required, this can be gained from some courses such as the University of Auckland Graduate School of Enterprise’s short course on Coaching and Mentoring as well as from professional Coaching and Mentoring Services. The direct benefits of mentoring can be easily seen when the mentoring system and relationship works well, and there are usually indirect benefits to both parties as well. Mentoring is seen within the business community as a viable and successful way of passing on information, assisting with career and personal development, and creating more rounded professionals.

One last word on mentoring: like most relationships and plans for growth or development – what you put into mentoring is likely to determine what you get out of it, and this applies equally to both the mentees and the mentors.

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