



Mentoring Session Structure – CLEAR Model

The CLEAR model is a simple framework that can be used to structure individual mentoring sessions to ensure the conversations are productive and progressive.

The CLEAR model is designed to be conversational. A supportive dialogue is underpinned by a structure and direction with the overall aim of ensuring the mentee is in a better place after the session.

THE CLEAR MODEL		
Contract	<p>Firstly, agree on the topics for discussion in the session. This may involve a review of the previous session and what has happened since. Picking the right issues is really important. So take a bit of time to explore if there is a significant issue for the mentee, or an important issue that they are avoiding discussing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we want to talk about in this session? • What are the major issues confronting you right now? • Which issue, if resolved, would have the most impact on you? • What would you like to have achieved by the end of the session? • How would you like to feel by the end of this session?
Listen	<p>Give the mentee space to explain in their own words what the issue is, and how they feel about it. The mentor should reflect back on what they hear. Questions for this stage should focus on clarifying understanding, probe deeper for relevant information, and help the mentee to gain personal insight.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happened next? • Why do you think that happened? • How did you feel about this? • How did you/they react?
Explore	<p>The aim is to help the mentee to explore the issue in depth. The mentor may offer different perspectives, point out any patterns they notice, or gently challenge. For example, are there any parallels between a new issue and others previously discussed?</p> <p>In addition, it is important to explore possible future actions that might resolve the situation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you think that happened? • What prompted this? • How did X respond? • Are there other situations where you/they have responded in a similar way? • What did you learn from this?
Action	<p>This stage moves towards closing the session. It focuses on action that the mentee is going to take between now and the next session. This should be as specific as possible. The mentor can help to clarify or confirm actions. Sometimes it may be useful to “rehearse” the action in the coaching session.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When are you going to do it? • What will you do if ...? • What exactly are you going to say to X? • Is there someone you trust enough to give you feedback on this (e.g. someone else observing a new behaviour or approach)?
Review	<p>The final stage is a review of the session including ground covered and decisions made. Ideally the mentee summarises their insights, actions and self-reflections. A review of how the session went is also important and feedback is sought on what was helpful, what was difficult, and any suggestions for improved future sessions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did we achieve what we set out to do today? • How did you feel the session went? • Was it helpful when I ...? • What was the turning point for you?