



Draft NFCC Considerations for a Coaching and Mentoring Scheme

Introduction

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) have provided this guide to help you develop a formal coaching and / or mentoring scheme. It includes:

- Considerations for setting up a Coaching and/or Mentoring Scheme
- Useful definitions
- Further support

Note that any formal schemes will run alongside, and can complement, the regular coaching conversations that already happen between line manager and individual.

This guide should be used in conjunction with the other supporting documents, which are listed at the end of this document.

The NFCC Coaching and Mentoring Guide is a good place to start, and details the differences between coaching and mentoring, along with the benefits of each and when they could be used.

Considerations for setting up a Coaching and/or Mentoring Scheme

Each Fire and Rescue Service will have their preferences on how they may want to implement this. Listed below are some key considerations.

Organisational considerations	How will a Coaching culture be embedded across the whole FRS? <i>Think about:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Inclusion in the People Strategy / Workforce Plan / People Plan</i>• <i>Creation of a Coaching Strategy / Plan and alignment to the FRS Business Strategy</i>• <i>Obtaining senior leader support and buy-in</i>• <i>Providing key influencers, the opportunity to experience the power of coaching</i>• <i>Integrating coaching as a core element of your talent and leadership development strategy</i>• <i>Equipping key leaders and colleagues across the FRS, including HR professionals, with coaching skills</i>
	Who will lead and monitor the Coaching and Mentoring Schemes?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically, HR and L&D teams have a central role to play in designing and managing coaching and mentoring within an organisation. • You may want to appoint a Coaching Co-ordinator who could support with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collating information ○ Assigning Coaches / mentors ○ Maintaining records ○ Monitoring progress ○ Managing feedback ○ Reporting and evaluation
	<p>Do you want to include Reverse Mentoring? Refer to 'Coaching and Mentoring' document for more information</p>
	<p>How will you evaluate the effectiveness of the schemes? Think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining success criteria and metrics ahead of launching your scheme – what are the important things to measure within your Service? Could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Impact of coaching / mentoring on individual's performance and behaviour ○ Impact of coaching / mentoring on team / organisational goals ○ Link to financial metrics / return on investment, if possible and applicable • Who needs to be included in the evaluation? Suggest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coach / Coachee ○ Mentor / Mentee ○ Line Manager ○ Supervisor • Feedback and evaluation methods. Could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduction of a post-coaching / mentoring questionnaire ○ Adapting the traditional approach to training evaluation used in your Service ○ 360 feedback ○ Interviews
<p>Coaches and Mentors</p>	<p>How will you identify Coaches and Mentors? Think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a minimum grade / level / rank for someone to take on this responsibility? • Whether potential Coaches / Mentors 'apply' or are selected • The most important skills and attributes required. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A passion for helping others ○ Commitment to personal development for self and others ○ Non-judgemental ○ Maintains confidentiality ○ Listening and questioning

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Honesty and integrity</i> ○ <i>Ability to positively challenge</i>
	<p>What would be their time commitment? <i>Think about:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Time commitment required for initial training</i> ● <i>Setting a maximum number of coaching / mentoring relationships per person</i> ● <i>Allowing time for scheduled CPD and supervision sessions</i>
	<p>Do you want to offer external Coaches / Mentors? <i>Think about:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>What additional value would it bring to your FRS?</i> ● <i>Potential budget constraints</i> ● <i>Reciprocal arrangements with other organisations / FRSs</i>
	<p>What training and development will you provide to the Coaches and Mentors? Do you want this supported by a formal qualification? <i>Think about:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Providing different levels of coaching and mentoring training. e.g.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Foundation – introduction. Potentially online or in-house development</i> ○ <i>Practitioner – supported by a level 3 qualification or accredited programme</i> ○ <i>Senior Practitioner – supported by a level 5 qualification. Consider use of Apprenticeship to maximise the levy pot</i>
	<p>What ongoing development and CPD will be required? <i>Think about:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>How regular supervision arrangements could provide a duty of care to your Coaches and Mentors. This could include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Group supervision where Coaches and Mentors have the opportunity to discuss best practices and issues</i> ○ <i>Individual observations and feedback</i> ○ <i>Point of contact and referral for any issues, challenges, and escalations</i> ● <i>How you will provide supervision.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Internally through HR resource</i> ○ <i>Through another Service or partner</i> ○ <i>Through an external Coach</i>
<p>Coachees and Mentees</p>	<p>Who will be offered the opportunity of coaching / mentoring? <i>Think about:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Where it will add the most value</i> ● <i>Capacity of Coaches / Mentors, and how they access supervision</i> ● <i>Budget constraints</i> ● <i>Commitments made in People / Coaching Strategy</i> <p>How do people request support? How will this need be captured?</p>

	<p><i>Think about:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Creating an electronic request process</i> • <i>Who will co-ordinate the process?</i> • <i>Capturing information, following governance guidelines</i> • <i>Reviewing how this is working on a regular basis</i>
<p>Coaching and Mentoring relationships</p>	<p>How will you ‘match’ participants?</p> <p><i>Think about:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Creating profiles for Coaches / Mentors</i> • <i>Setting up an initial introductory session to ensure that both parties are happy that the relationship could be productive and beneficial and that the right ‘chemistry’ is evident. This allows both parties to ensure the fit is right and, if not, then a different coach/mentor can be sought</i>
	<p>How long should the relationships last?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching – <i>there is no hard and fast rule. Many people retain a coach for a short time period (i.e., three to six sessions) to work on a specific, limited challenge, but some relationships last much longer</i> • Mentoring – <i>mentoring relationships tend to be longer term than coaching arrangements. A Mentor/ Mentee relationship will often be long-lasting and can span up to 12 months or even years</i>
	<p>How will you integrate the NFCC Coaching / Mentoring Agreement and NFCC Coaching and Mentoring Ethical Code, including confidentiality and safeguarding?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It’s recommended that the Coaching / Mentoring Agreements and the Ethical Code are treated as a priority and discussed at the outset of the coaching or mentoring relationship</i> • <i>Consider having these readily available as templates</i>
<p>Practical considerations</p>	<p>How frequently should these sessions take place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The frequency of coaching and mentoring sessions will be dependent on the needs of the Coachee / Mentee</i> • <i>A good rule of thumb is for discussions to take place every 4-6 weeks. This ensures regular contact and follow up, but also allows adequate time for the Coachee / Mentee to act upon any agreed actions</i>
	<p>Where / how do the sessions take place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This should be agreed by the participants and agreed prior to the coaching / mentoring session</i> • <i>Sessions do not need to be face to face and can work equally well over phone and video calls</i>
	<p>How long would each session last?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sessions usually last between 1-2 hours, this will depend on the participants and topics for discussion</i>
	<p>Who is responsible for setting up the sessions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Typically, the Coachee / Mentee takes the responsibility for arranging the sessions, although this can be agreed at the start of the relationship</i>
	<p>What records will be kept? How and where?</p>

	<p><i>Think about:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What records do you want to maintain?</i> • <i>Where and how these will be stored?</i> • <i>Governance requirements</i>
Escalation	<p>What happens if the relationship doesn't work out?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It is right to acknowledge that sometimes the coaching / mentoring relationship, for various reasons, won't work. This should be discussed in advance at the initial contracting meeting, so all parties are aware of the steps to follow if this is the case</i>
	<p>What policies support this process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It's a good idea to have a policy or guidance note in place to support your coaching or mentoring scheme</i>
	<p>Do you need a complaints process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The matter of how to handle a complaint should be discussed at the initial contracting meeting</i> • <i>If your Coach is a member of a professional body, there will be recourse to log a complaint if required via this body</i>
Role of the line manager	<p>What role will the line manager play?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It's recommended that the line manager supports the Coachee with actions arising from coaching sessions, if applicable</i> • <i>It's also useful to have the line manager attend part of the initial coaching contracting meeting to understand how they can support their member of staff</i>

Useful definitions

Listed below are some commonly used terms in relation to coaching and mentoring.

Coach	The individual who carries out the coaching, using a thought provoking and creative process that inspires people to maximise their personal and professional potential. An experienced Coach can use their skills without needing to understand the area in which the Coachee works. They do so by using their experience and knowledge to facilitate a coaching conversation to assist the Coachee to reach their own solutions and conclusions.
Mentor	The individual who carries out Mentoring. A Mentor tends to be a more experienced colleague who shares their greater knowledge to support the development of an inexperienced member of staff. It calls on the skills of questioning, listening, clarifying, and reframing that are also associated with coaching.
Coachee	Also known as the 'client'. This is the individual who receives coaching from a Coach.
Mentee	This is the individual who receives mentoring from a Mentor.

Coaching	A one-to-one developmental relationship with clearly focused aims designed to unlock an individual's potential to maximise their own performance through a facilitated, structured, confidential conversation.
Mentoring	Imparting knowledge, advice, and guidance from a place of experience to enable individuals (Mentees) to become competent in their roles. It involves Mentors giving advice and offering direction, and the relationship is usually based on someone more senior or with more experience offering this support as they are recognised as an expert in their field.
Reverse Mentoring	Teaming a newer or less experienced member of the team to support someone more senior and experienced within the workplace.
Professional Coaching Relationship	A professional coaching relationship exists once an agreement is in place to coach and receive coaching. It is best practice to establish a contract that defines the responsibilities of each party. (see Coaching Agreement)
Sponsor	The organisation or individual supporting and/or funding the coaching / mentoring.
Supervision or Supervisor	The relationship between a Coach and an appropriately trained and qualified person who is outside of the normal Coach/Coachee relationship. It is best practice for the person fulfilling this role to not be in a managerial relationship with the Coach. The role of supervisor is to support the Coach to maintain confidentiality, develop their practice, enhance the quality of the coaching work, and Coachee safety.

Further support

- Coaching and Mentoring
- Coaching and Mentoring Ethical Code
- Coaching Agreement
- Mentoring Agreement
- Leadership Framework
- Code of Ethics