Mentoring; engaging with heart, mind and soul for the good of the profession

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Cautionary tales

We train teachers up just to break them down

AFTER: A recent round of school visits, on which I observed student teachers, I found myself taking stock. I have been training teachers for more than a decade. I have been training teachers for more than a decade. I have seen four standards rewritten, designed PGCEs split between professional and master’s level, accommodated the changes needed to welcome School Direct and worked with trainees doing masters courses. I have interviewed hundreds of prospective student teachers, watched thousands of lessons and developed working relationships with dozens of mentors.

The numbers creep up: questionnaires completed, qualifications awarded and jobs secured. Am I proud? Yes. But my overriding thought is how pleased I am that I don’t know the number of teaching posts abandoned by those bright newcomers who have so much to offer. When I go back into schools, people I had hoped would become mentors are often no longer even teaching.

And why is this? Well, we have subverted school visits to provide them with support, rather than support, rather than support, rather than support. Many of the chats with distressed mentors as they dash along corridors. Summaries of trainee teachers’ progress often extend only to “I hardly see them”, “They’re doing fine” or “We’re still working on the same two targets”. I observe lessons from behind a pile of “evidence files”, trying to make sense of the context and the practice I must assess teaching and learning in a snapshot.

And then there’s the lesson review: “Let’s talk about learning – your pupils and yours.” I try to resist the inevitable routine of ticking off targets – they are a poor substitute for professional repertoire. This system is a devo of profession and has been simplified beyond use. We need to work barrier at the entrance stage of the profession to ensure that these talented teachers stick around.

People I had hoped would become mentors are often no longer even teaching.

Judgement mentoring and other threats to realizing the potential of school-based mentoring in teacher education

Andrew J. Hobson
Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, UK, and
Angi Malderez
University of Leeds, Leeds, UK

It [is] difficult for teachers to engage in interaction [with each other] with sufficient frequency, specificity, and depth to generate new insights into teaching dilemmas or to foster instructional innovation.
The camera in the classroom: video-recording as a tool for professional development of student teachers

Authors: Rachel Lofthouse and Peter Birmingham

Professional Development in Education
Concerning collaboration: teachers’ perspectives on working in partnerships to develop teaching practices
Rachel Lofthouse & Ulrike Thomas
Education, Communication and Language Sciences, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU, UK
Published online: 28 Jul 2015.

Mentoring student teachers; a vulnerable workplace learning practice
Rachel Lofthouse and Ulrike Thomas
Research Centre for Learning and Teaching, School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences, Newcastle University, Newcastle, UK

International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education
Emerald Article: Teacher education lesson observation as boundary crossing
Rachel Lofthouse, David Wright
Imagine a chat on the lawn...

Why bother with mentoring in ITTE?
Workplace learning: What is the role of mentoring in initial teacher development?

3 goals of workplace learning

- Ensure teaching is desired goal
  Identify prospective specific career interests

- Gain occupational capacities – learn the skills needed to do the job at entry

- Develop occupational competencies for future professional learning – have the skills needed to keep developing

(after Stephen Billett)
Mentoring: can we go further?

Imagine a chat on the lawn...

Why bother with mentoring in ITTE?

What affects the outcomes?

Mentoring

- Ensure teaching is desired goal
- Identify prospective specific career interests
- Gain occupational capacities – learn the skills needed to do the job at entry
- Develop occupational competencies for future professional learning – have the skills needed to keep developing
Dimensions of learning in the workplace

**Practice pedagogies**
appropriate T&L techniques which support workplace learning

**Personal epistemologies**
beliefs and values that the participants bring to learning in the workplace and to their roles

**Practice curriculum**
what and how learning opportunities are offered in the workplace

(after Stephen Billett)
Mentoring as a tool

- Scaffold, frame & assess professional learning
- Promote dialogue & divergence
- Enable transformation through boundary crossing
Go back out for a chat ...

What emotions are experienced in mentoring?
This will hurt me more than you...

Safe spaces to learn to be the very best you can be

Solidarity with peers and with learners...

Permission for purposeful creativity

Imposter syndrome

Fear & anxiety

Tension
Mentoring: How do we plan for positive engagement?

What emotions are experienced in mentoring?

Go back out for a chat...

Safe spaces to learn to be the very best you can be

Solidarity with peers and with learners...

Permission for purposeful creativity
Are you part of a virtuous circle of mentoring?
Authenticity
Solidarity
Creativity
Please contact me if you have questions about this session, about the work of CollectivED, or would like to write for our Working Papers

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