How can leaders and managers in the Police support the learning of others and at the same time, support their own?

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to discuss and attempt to demonstrate that formal mentoring is a helpful tool to develop current and future managers within the changing context of the Police, and to highlight how managers can have both a helpful and hindering influence on mentoring programmes and the learning within them.

A longitudinal qualitative case study approach was chosen and semi-structured interviews were conducted alongside focus groups. The findings showed that both mentees and mentors perceived they were learning within the mentoring relationship. Also, despite some common themes in relation to the key moderating factors, managers were seen as both facilitating and hindering these relationships.

It was recognised that although interesting to compare and contrast the findings between the two different case study organisations, the findings drawn from this study may not be directly applicable to other mentoring programmes beyond these UK Police Forces. More could have been explored in the focus groups and information could have been collected from those that did not attend the interviews or the focus groups.

This research adds value as there is little written about the mentoring and managers, within the interesting changing context of the UK Police force. The insights from this mentoring research suggest that there is much learning to be gained by both parties through mentoring and that line managers need to be encouraged away from the day to day reactive approach towards being more proactive with supporting the personal development of their team members (and themselves) into the future. If they are more involved and supportive of L&D interventions, then they and their team members will gain more from the experience and this will ultimately help them to make a more positive difference within their role.

Introduction

According to Owen (2011) the value of mentoring is determined by how it contributes to the success of an organisation. This article will attempt to provide insights into whether formal mentoring is a helpful tool to develop current and future managers in the Police, and to highlight the influence that managers may or may not have on mentoring programmes and the learning within them.
This article also hopes to add value to the Police leadership and management literature because how public sector organisations are managed and led during these complex and changing times has been a huge area of interest (Young and Daniel, 2003; Pate et al., 2007; Snell, 2009; Meaklim and Sims, 2011) which has influenced the investment in managers and leaders learning and development. This in turn may have influenced the rise of mentoring within them. Also, only a few articles have been written about mentoring in the UK Police (Carson, 2009; Flynn, 2010; Hamlin and Sage, 2011; Jones, 2017). Therefore, it was felt due to the shifting nature of public sector organisations and the emphasis that is being placed on mentoring to support the changing leadership needs, particularly within the Police, that a review of mentoring within two Police forces would be interesting and topical.

In short, this research provides an opportunity to address the limited research in relation to the importance and influence of formal mentoring relationships generally, and more specifically in relation to managers and potential leaders within the UK Police.

Literature Review

The changing nature of work

The labour market and the labour process is affected by the political, economic, legal and social context (Lipsey and Chrystal, 2015) and specifically the changes in the composition and demographics of economically active population, the changing rate of employment, the changing pattern of work and changing requirements towards adopting new skills and new technologies. As a result, the growth of flexible employment patterns in the new networked information society (Legge, 2005) have in part driven an increase in ‘knowledge workers’ and knowledge-based jobs whereby workers are not just receivers and users of knowledge but they generate knowledge.

The suggestion is that these knowledge workers are more functionally and cognitively fluid; they can be more self-directing and exercise more discretion, autonomy and movement within their job roles, which in turn is transforming the pattern and nature of work itself (Williams, 2014). There have been significant shifts in the definition and nature of skills in the workplace with the rise of so called softer skills; communication, cooperation and adaptability and the development of emotional labour (Bolton, 2008; Thompson and Smith, 2009). The new knowledge economy requires workers to have both well developed cognitive and social skills, as well as a focus on collaborating and collective activity. This in turn has changed the nature of the psychological contract; previously this was about job security and steady advancement, now this is about competency development, continuous learning and work/life balance.

The move towards less secure/more flexible work arrangements and a more individualised model has been criticised by labour process theorists for exaggerating the degree of strategic intent and for not recognising the strengths it gives to increasing management’s
power and perogative, weakening the unions and creating a more intensified workplace (Williams 2014). Through delayering, downscaling and restructuring, Managers have also seen an intensification of their workplace, an increase in job insecurity and a reduction of promotional opportunities (McCann et al., 2009; Luhman and Cuncliffe, 2012). ‘The restructuring has taken place because of the new organizational ideology, brought into being by the need to reduce costs in the face of heightened international competition. Restructuring of the managerial hierarchy is a direct response to the perceived need for flexibility’ (McCann et al., 2004: 40-41). This quote confirms that in an attempt to keep up with these external pressures, organisations have had to take a different approach to how they manage and develop their workforce.

In short, due to the increasing speed, scope and depth of change in the workplace, leaders and managers today are being confronted with a multiplicity of new demands on their mental ability and judgement, psychological stability, emotional stability and general well-being (Cohen, 1999; Chun et al., 2012). Also, as senior jobs are involving increasing pressure and work-life balance is being threatened, leaders and managers are having to face up to their own needs for continuous improvement, developing new skills and personal career planning, in a more flexible and yet promotionally restricted workplace.

Also, due to globalisation and the notion of human capital becoming more internationalised, new problems of advanced modern capitalism are emerging (Boud and Garrick, 1999; Hassard et al., 2007) whereby the flexibility of labour and capital are intertwined but are not evenly spread. This in turn, has created an economic driven, market-orientated approach to learning. The ability to continuously learn is now considered to be a key determinant of competitive success (Sarri, 2011). As such, the workplace has become a basis for learning on two levels; the first is to develop the organisation through contributing to increased productivity, effectiveness and innovation (Rylatt, 2001; Bratton et al., 2008). The second is through employees sharing their knowledge, skills and competencies to further their own learning both as employees but also beyond the workplace as citizens in the wider community (Boud and Garrick, 1999). This suggests a correlation between the investment in training and positive outcomes (del Valle and Castillo, 2009; Khan, 2014). However, Tzafrir (2005) suggests that training can also be a huge cost and risk to the business if trained employees subsequently do not demonstrate the expected commitment, or they leave the organisation. The quality of the workforce has a strong and stable relationship with economic growth (Phillips and Phillips, 2015). Therefore, it is imperative for organisations to invest in the learning and development interventions that are right for the business and the individual and that ultimately yield the largest returns on investment, for both parties.

In summary, in response to increased competition and globalisation, the world of work has been constantly changing, becoming more complex, challenging, turbulent and unpredictable (Cohen, 1999; Hassard et al., 2007). Technology is rapidly improving and advancing and so managing in the new economy requires different ways of working and
doing business. Employees are expected to achieve more with fewer resources and managers are expected to manage within flatter organisational structures, across global and more diverse markets, with increased expectations of achieving more with less. This has increased demand on employees and managers to focus on their skills and self development, increase their flexibility and make changes. In response, mentoring (and coaching) are increasingly being proposed as a development tool and support mechanism, to help all employees at all levels to adjust more readily to these changing times (Cranwell-Ward et al., 2004; CIPD 2015).

It would not be possible to research the lived experience of managers nor the lived experience of mentoring (Cohen et al., 2011) without recognising the changing context of the workplace and the influence this has on the managers as mentors and mentees, together with the organisations that provide the mentoring programmes.

**Mentoring**

The importance of mentoring has been documented for centuries (Cohen, 1995; Garvey, 2010) but over time different definitions have been developed from different occupational perspectives (psychologists, educationalists), from evidence-based practice, testimonials and opinions of practitioners and consultants (Merriam, 1983; Clutterbuck, 2015) creating a ‘swampy lowlands’ (Garvey et al., 2014, p. 30). Attempts at a universal definition of mentoring have produced a quagmire (Clutterbuck, 2015). In the literature, definitions of mentoring vary with respect to dimensions such as purpose, hierarchy, intensity, duration and partnership (D’Abate et al., 2003; Gibson, 2004; Lancer et al., 2016) and according to national and cultural traditions (Liu et al., 2009) as well as differing disciplines and organisational contexts (Allen et al., 2008; Garvey et al., 2014) and perceived overlap (by some) with other workplace relationships, for instance coaching and mentoring (D’Abate et al., 2003; Tyler, 2004; Connor and Pokora, 2012).

Despite differences (and similarities) in the discussions, essentially it can be seen that mentoring is a unique interpersonal relationship between two people (Eby et al., 2010; Janasz et al., 2013). In short, the key purpose of mentoring relationships is to support and challenge both parties towards their learning and development (Garvey, 2014; Parsloe and Leedham, 2017). Mentoring sets itself apart from other more traditional workplace interventions as it is a two way process; both parties benefit. The focus is the mentee but the mentor gains often unexpected, insights into their own learning, in respect of new knowledge, skills and personal learning (Jones, 2017). Zachary (2012) refers to this as a ‘two way street’ suggesting that where reciprocity and mutuality exists, the more value-added the mentoring relationship becomes. With this in mind, the working definition for this article will be that (formal) mentoring is a learning relationship and its purpose is to help individuals (both mentees and mentors) realise and work towards their personal and professional goals (Connor and Pokora, 2012).
Mentoring activity has gained much momentum in private and public sector businesses, in small and large business enterprises, and within educational institutions and social contexts (Garvey, 2014). This high degree of interest is due to mentoring developing a reputation as a vehicle to develop human resources in an organisation, creating positive consequences for both the individuals involved and the organisation (Wang et al., 2014). In fact, mentoring in the workplace is becoming more popular than traditional training interventions as it is proving to be a cost-effective way of embedding long-term movement and change in an organisation’s culture and operations (CIPD Learning and Development surveys 2005 to 2015). There is also a trend to suggest that as the workplace and labour process expectations are changing, employees/adult learners are now requesting learning and development activities that are more individualised, more learner-centred, and more flexible (Knowles et al., 2015).

**Learning outcomes**

The four potential areas for learning outcomes within formal mentoring are: cognitive learning, skill-based learning, affective-related learning and social networks (Kraiger et al., 1993; Podolny and Baron, 1997; Wanberg et al., 2003). For clarity, cognitive learning is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge about the organisation, the politics and the culture of the workplace and skill-based learning is concerned with developing new skills, for instance interpersonal skills (working with others, managing relationships, communication skills). Affective-related learning is concerned with deeper more personal learning, often involving some mention of confidence or motivational change (for instance, following personal goals, taking the initiative, not being too hard on oneself) and social networks are concerned with expanding connections inside and outside the workplace.

Garvey (2014) discusses the key benefits of mentoring for all three parties: the mentee, the mentor and the organisation. For the mentee and mentor, they align with Kraiger et al.’s three learning outcomes in relation to learning new knowledge and skills, improving performance and productivity, improving career opportunity and advancement, and greater confidence and well-being. For the mentor he cites learning new knowledge and skills, improved performance, greater satisfaction, greater loyalty and self-awareness and leadership development. For the organisation: improved morale, motivation and relationships (with less conflict), improved staff retention and communication and overall improved learning. Hezlett and Gibson (2005) in earlier reflections suggested that the three organisational outcomes of mentoring are developing human resources, improving communication and managing organisational culture.

**Moderating factors for mentoring**
As already mentioned, formal mentoring is one type of intervention to facilitate workplace learning but it does not exist in isolation. The outcomes are influenced and can be influenced by other workplace learning activities (D’Abate et al., 2003) and by a variety of other factors, internal and external to the individuals involved and the organisation.

Moderating factors in respect of mentoring tend to focus on factors that help or hinder the mentoring relationship (Hegstad and Wentling 2005) in relation to both internal factors (within the relationship) and external factors (outside the relationship, from within the organisation.) Garvey (2010) suggests that mentoring can be ineffective because of practical and logistical issues, relationship issues, and scheme and organisational-related issues. Some scholars have discussed a number of moderating factors on learning generally (Lee et al., 2004; Eraut 2000, 2004, 2007; Eddy et al., 2005; Stok-Koch et al., 2007) and mentoring specifically (Hegstad and Wentling, 2005; Eby et al., 2006; Allen et al., 2006; Parise and Forret, 2008; Garvey, 2010; Thurston et al., 2012; Jones, 2017).

In short, there has been some research on how the organisational structure and context are significant factors which affect learning at work (Lee et al, 2004), with Eraut (2004) concluding that individuals’ learning in the workplace is greatly influenced by the interpersonal skills, personality and learning orientation of their manager. Hegstad and Wentling (2005) cited facilitating and hindering factors for mentoring specifically, which included relationship factors (including those with line and senior managers) and communication factors. The later studies of Eby et al. (2006) and Allen et al. (2006) showed that mentors who felt that managers who were supporting the mentoring programme were more likely to see the benefits and rewards of being involved. Parise and Forret’s study (2008) showed that perceived management support is a critical factor that will influence motivation and willingness to participate in mentoring programmes. In short, a common finding from moderating factors in mentoring research is the impact of managers choosing to actively support or block participation in mentoring programmes (Eraut, 2004; Hegstad and Wentling, 2005; Eby et al., 2006; Allen et al., 2006; Parise and Forret, 2008; Jones, 2014; 2017).

The Public Sector and the UK Police

The public sector is well known to have experienced huge economic, political and social pressures in relation to changes in political leadership, recessions and changes in public expectations which have led to the need for institutional change (Chynoweth, 2015) and mentoring has been increasingly used as a development tool by many public sector organisations in the UK (Snell, 2009; CIPD Factsheet, 2015). New policies and priorities have needed to be adopted within the public sector to cope with this change, which has resulted in the need for different management approaches and different organisational structures and new ways of leading and managing. For instance, the Police force in the UK was established by the State in 1829 to ensure social control and public order on the streets (Reiner, 2012). However in the last few decades, due to the changing political, social and criminal justice environment (Caless and Tong, 2015; Martin et al., 2017) and societal developments (Savage, 2007), the purpose of the Police role has developed beyond the
streets and into the private lives of citizens whereby the Police are dealing more with social, family/domestic issues. This has changed the priorities of policing towards a more socially responsible, community focused role but also at the same time, one that needs to be alert to the changing nature of crime; cybercrime and potential terrorist threats. This change in landscape has created a shift in the structure of the organisation in relation to the composition and level of the jobs available.

Currently, there are 43 police forces in England and Wales with approximately 207,000 police workers. This is made up of approximately 61% police officer roles, 31% police staff roles and 8% police community support officers/other designated officers/traffic wardens (National Statistics 2015).

Within the UK Police, there are a number of formal training programmes to support new Police Constable entrants, Direct Entry and Fast Track programmes together with some nationwide leadership programmes, for instance the High Potential Development Scheme. Despite the current push towards continuing professional development (CPD) by the College of Policing (2017), there is little formal learning and development offered beyond this, at the Force level. Whilst the College of Policing in the UK acknowledge that they have invested in developing leadership skills over the years, they also recognise in their Leadership Review (2015) that they now need to invest in management education and development, not just leadership development. They found that leadership and management training was inconsistent between Forces and that worryingly frontline managers were a ‘development free zone.’ Interestingly, the Police Federation (2015) response to this aspect of the College of Policing Leadership Review stated that ‘there was concern that some officers and some ranks in particular would simply feel they could not set time aside for personal training and development’ and they ‘expressed concern that an increased emphasis on CPD might direct officers away from what they should be doing’ (p.11.) This quote potentially demonstrates a lack of understanding of the long term benefits of investing in L&D interventions, for both managers and the wider workforce.

Despite the lack of national investment in management training, different Forces are running their own learning and development programmes to tackle their more local issues, although these tend to be small scale programmes, targeted at specific groups. Recognising this, a review of two mentoring programmes in two different Police forces, established for two different reasons, was carried out to see what these potential managers (as mentees) and current managers (as mentors) perceived they were learning and what was facilitating and what was hindering their learning. In short the research questions were;

- What can be learnt within formal mentoring programmes by aspiring managers (mentees) and current managers (mentors) within the Police?
- How do managers influence the formal mentoring programmes within the Police?

Design/methodology/approach
This research took an interpretivist theoretical perspective as the central purpose was to understand the subjective world of the human experience (Cohen et al., 2011) and interpretivism respects the differences between people (Bryman and Bell, 2015). It was felt that case studies were the most appropriate approach to address the research questions, as case study research allows the researcher to look at the phenomenon in context (Farquhar, 2012). The intention for this study was to locate the ‘story’ of mentoring and the factors influencing it (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989) over time, so that themes may be isolated and discussed. Lankau and Scandura (2007), Allen et al. (2008) stated that the majority of mentoring research could still be characterised as primarily quantitative, correlational and cross-sectional with information gathered from a single source (normally the mentee) using a single method of collection. Four years later, St-Jean (2012) suggested that further mentoring studies needed to use a longitudinal perspective and consider the mentor’s perspective too; confirmed by Jones (2012, 2013) and Garvey et al. (2014) expressing the need for more longitudinal studies. Therefore, following the conventions of Eisenhardt (1989) and Yin (2014), a longitudinal qualitative case study approach was chosen in order to gain insights beyond the normal snap-shot towards a longer term perspective of formal mentoring in the Police context.

Case study 1 was within a Central England Police force (referred to from now on as the CEPF study). This police force covers one of the widest areas outside of the Metropolitan Police protecting over 2.5 million residents. This police force employs over 7,000 Police Officers and over 3,000 Police Staff. This Police force was in a middle of a significant change programme which involved a huge restructuring initiative from Operational Command Units to Local Policing Units. This coupled with ongoing government pressures towards budget cuts and a reduction in the number of police officers within police staff roles (putting them back onto the street) meant this was a turbulent time for the CEPF. In addition, the Home Office Assessment of Women in the Police Service Report (2010) showed a significant lack of women in senior positions and so there became a drive from within the CEPF L&D Department to find ways of developing a more inclusive workforce and to increase focus on developing and promoting women. Therefore, the L&D Department decided to launch a pilot formal mentoring programme for women only with the clear purpose of encouraging and supporting women’s career progression in these turbulent times. 45 mentees (aspiring managers) were matched with 23 trained mentors (current managers/leaders) who were at least two ranks higher than them. The expectation was that each mentor and mentee pair would meet up on a monthly basis for between 9-12 months to share workplace challenges and to discuss workplace opportunities. They were also expected to meet every 3 months for a mentor or mentee only focus group to share experiences and best practice. Over time, 68 semi-structured interviews were carried out by the researcher (36 mentors and 32 mentees), together with two mentor focus groups and two mentee focus groups (ranging from four to eight people per group). Each interview lasted between 45-60 minutes. The focus groups lasted up to two and a half hours.
Case study 2 was within a North England Police force (referred to from now on as the NEPF study). This police force covers one of the smaller counties in the UK protecting over one million residents. This police force employs over 3,500 people, of which over half of these are Police Officers (the rest are Police Staff.) This Police force was not in the middle of any large scale, significant change programme and although dealing with the ongoing inevitable government pressures towards budget cuts and reducing the number of police officers within police staff roles (putting them back onto the street) too, this police force was experiencing a more stable time than the CEPF. However, due to lack of national high potential development opportunities the L&D Department established a formal mentoring programme aimed at supporting their high potential employees. Contrary to the CEPF mentoring programme, the NEPF scheme was open to both men and women. In total 82 trained mentors (currently in management and leadership positions) were matched with 126 mentees (potential managers.)

Similarly to Case Study 1, the expectation was that each mentor and mentee pair would meet up on a monthly basis for between 9-12 months to share workplace challenges and to discuss workplace opportunities. They were also expected to meet every 3 months as a mentor or mentee only focus group to share experiences and best practice. Differently to the first case study, interviews were not held by the researcher, only focus groups with mentors and mentees separately. This was a decision made by the organisation, based on logistics and resource constraints. Also, this Police Force set up four different mentoring cohorts, one after the other, and three focus groups were held for both mentees and mentors in each of the cohorts, a total of 12 focus groups overall. Each focus group lasted up to one and a half hours each. In total 126 mentees (84% of all mentees) and 82 mentors (65% of all mentors) gave their views across all focus groups, some more often and more regularly than others. As with Case Study 1, attendance was mostly affected by problems with availability due to differing shift patterns, organisational changes and location.

In short, the case studies are similar in the fact that the focus was career development, the mentors were trained in the same way, they were matched together similarly and they were encouraged to meet monthly and as a group regularly to review progress. The key difference is that the methods of data collection were not the same. However, all interview and focus group discussions from both the CEPF and the NEPF were carried out by the same researcher, and although involved two different methods of data collection, the information was collected systematically; the same questions were asked of all mentees and mentors within all the interviews and within all the focus groups.

They key questions asked were;

- How would you describe your mentoring relationship so far?
- What do you think you are learning, from being involved in mentoring?
- What do you think your mentee/mentor is learning from being involved?
- How do you think you are learning this?
- What have been your most effective/least effective mentoring experiences?
Both the interviews and focus groups were recorded which ensured all details could be cross-checked and transcribed accurately. In short, the whole data collection process was managed robustly, professionally and ethically. Once all the information was gathered, it was uploaded, coded, categorised and sorted through NVIVO 9 and 10 to identify the type and number of responses made by each mentee and mentor that related specifically to the four theoretical learning domains proposed by Wanberg et al. (2003) and used by Hezlett (2005), namely cognitive, skill-based, affective-related and social networks.

Findings

• What can be learnt within formal mentoring programmes by aspiring managers (mentees) and current managers (mentors) within the Police?

A comparison of the extent of mentees (aspiring and potential managers) and mentors (currently managers/leaders) perceptions of their learning within their mentoring relationships is summarised into Table 1.1. This table shows the respective number of responses made within the two cases in relation to the four learning domains mentioned earlier. As well as showing the total number of mentee and mentor responses, the percentage of the overall total responses by learning domain have also been included.

This table demonstrates that all four domains were discussed in both cases but the volume of responses varies between mentee and mentor, and across the two cases. The areas with the two highest response rates were knowledge (cognitive) and affective-related for mentees, the same for NEPF mentors but slightly different for the CEPF mentors with affective-related and skilled-based learning as the most mentioned.

Table 1.1 Comparison of the extent of mentee and mentor learning in each learning domain across the two cases – to be inserted here

Mentors and mentees in both cases were asked what and how they perceived they were learning, through their mentoring relationships. Here is a selection of mentor and mentee quotes to demonstrate the learning discussed in each of the 4 domains within both the case studies;

“Main issues we have discussed are around how I can get more development within my current role ... A big benefit is learning from my mentors experience and how she has progressed in her own career. Through her experience, she has had some interesting ideas which I had not thought of myself” (Mentee/CEPF - cognitive).
“You feel quite isolated I think, sometimes we can feel very alone in such a big organisation and mentoring helps you discover that you’re not” (Mentee/CEPF - cognitive).

“It was good to see other perspectives and look at the effort people are willing to put in...gave me the insight to go back and look at my own career; which has helped to reinvigorate me back into Local Policing. Their enthusiasm and love of their job was inspiring” (Mentor/NEPF - cognitive).

“She did pick up on the fact that I’m quite an honest and open person and sometimes when I’m talking to senior officers and my colleagues, I perhaps shouldn’t be so honest...no one has ever said that to me before. So in that respect I was able to self-reflect... whether it’s ranked officers or my peers, in relation to thinking about what I’m going to say first, instead of just being so blunt sometimes” (Mentee/CEPF – skill-based)

“Had some interviews with other departments; learnt about management skills (motivation, dealing with underperformance etc.) and has given me role models to aspire to” (Mentee/CEPF – skill-based).

“Helping to refine own skills in a safe relationship, which will make self-better in own role and to give better contribution to the organisation” (Mentor/NEPF – skill-based).

“It’s made me think more about the fact that, you know, a lot of people are wrestling with the same issues as each other and if we only supported each other a little bit more and thought about how each other were feeling, then the workplace would be so much better” (Mentor/CEPF – affective-related).

“Self confidence – I got myself out there and I’ve changed as I had this opportunity. I feel a different person. I’ve done quite a lot of the development myself and can acknowledge my skills better now i.e. self-awareness. I can look at the problems within me better” (Mentee/NEPF – affective-related).

“Being mentored has forced me to confront certain things about my work personality – still have a laugh but feel happier and more professional now” (Mentee/NEPF – affective-related).

“I’ve learnt how many people I know for network purposes” (Mentor/CEPF – social networks)

“(My mentor is) opening doors for me into areas that I may not have wanted to try before” (Mentee/NEPF – social networks).
These mentee and mentor quotes give a flavour of what both parties, from both case studies, are learning within all 4 domains; cognitive, skill-based, affective-related and through social networks. As demonstrated by the quotes, the cognitive comments related to learning from different perspectives and each-others experience. The skill-based comments related to reflecting on their own approaches and the impact of these but also learning and developing their management skills. The affective related comments focussed on developing better coping skills, increased self-awareness and a more positive attitude. Learning through social networks related to reaffirming the networks and finding out about new opportunities. Interestingly, both parties within both cases made comments about feeling less isolated and part of a larger team, through mentoring.

For provide some further detail, the next table (Table 1.2) demonstrates the key themes discussed by mentees and mentors in relation to the learning outcomes, within the four learning domains. Areas of similarity have been highlighted in the same colours.

This table shows that for mentees and mentors separately and together, there were similar patterns in relation to some of the key learning, in each learning domain, for instance; learning about the wider organisation (cognitive), developing listening/communication skills (skill-based), confidence/self-awareness (affective-related) and making new contacts in other departments (social networks). Confidence was a common theme within the affective-related domain for both cases and both mentors and mentees, as demonstrated by the quotes previously too, with self-awareness being mentioned across the two cases too (but not for CEPF mentees).

Table 1.2 Comparison of mentee and mentor learning outcomes in each learning domain across the two cases – to be inserted here

- **How do managers influence the formal mentoring programmes within the Police?**

Mentors and mentees in both cases were asked what they perceived helped and hindered, and also about factors that enabled or inhibited, their learning whilst mentoring; these have been referred to as moderating factors and a comparison of whether mentees and mentors perceived the 9 key moderating factors (Hegstad and Wentling, 2005) as facilitating or hindering their learning within their mentoring relationships is summarised into Table 1.3. This table shows whether the comments made were predominantly positive (facilitating factors) highlighted in green or predominantly negative (hindering factors) in red. N/A indicates that no responses were given by either mentees or mentors for this moderating factor. For the CEPF organisation in this table, the focus group results for managers have been added separately as there was a stark difference between what mentees and mentors said in the interviews and the focus groups.
Table 1.3 Comparison of the 9 key moderating factors in relation to whether mentees and mentors perceived they were facilitating or hindering factors, across the two cases – to be inserted here

This table demonstrates that in both cases mentees and mentors showed that time was a hindering factor together with HR challenges and personal factors. This table also shows that mentees perceived other relationships to be facilitating during their mentoring relationships, as well as similarity and difference. This too was replicated by mentor’s responses.

However most interestingly, the area of most confusion was within the area of the mentees and mentors managers. The CEPF mentee interview responses showed these were facilitating but the CEPF focus groups and NEPF focus groups responses showed that these were hindering factors. The CEPF mentor interviews showed that this was a facilitating factor but the CEPF focus groups suggested this was hindering, and the NEPF focus groups suggested they were equally facilitating and hindering.

Here are some quotes to demonstrate the views on managers from both case studies;

“My manager I’ve had for three-and-a-half years, I read through everything with her before I got on to the scheme and she was very supportive, she was the one who said to definitely go for it” (Mentee/CEPF – supportive Manager).

“They’re quite supportive in terms of letting me go out, so that has been quite good for me. To be honest I don’t think it’s because they understand the value of mentoring, I think it’s because they’re fairly trusting of me and are not that bothered” (Mentee/CEPF – supportive Manager).

“Some managers are appearing to be supportive” (Mentor/NEPF/Focus Group – supportive Manager).

“So have I had support from my line manager? - No. But is that because my line manager just leaves me to get on and do what I need to do? – Yes. Does my line manager ask me about it? - No. Should they? - Yes. So I think there are discrepancies around a line manager - abilities, capabilities, knowledge, lots of different factors around line managers” (Mentor/CEPF – indifferent Manager).

“Some managers do not know about it but are not necessarily unhelpful” (Mentee/NEPF/Focus Group - indifferent Manager).

“My management have not embraced my abstractions positively... Lack of management support doesn’t worry me because there are ways around it. I just find it disappointing.... there’s a huge emphasis on performance now and, you know, being mindful of what you’re
“spending your time on... it’s very short-termism” (Mentee/CEPF – unsupportive Manager).

“I had some cross words with him (Manager) ... I don’t get on with him particularly. It’s one of the things he said, “Oh, I’ve let you do your mentoring” like he was doing me a favour. It’s the way he said it and I felt like saying, you know, that you should be letting me do it...So I didn’t appreciate that comment from him the other day” (Mentor/CEPF – unsupportive Manager).

“There is a difference in what they (managers) say and what they do. They may support the mentoring application but when it comes to releasing for interviews, may not always be flexible” (Mentee/NEPF/Focus Group – unsupportive Manager).

“Hindering factors are line managers, Unit politics...Had to deal with managing conflict with line managers...encouraged mentee to share progress with their line managers...so they started to realise the benefits” (Mentor/NEPF/Focus Group – unsupportive Manager).

“Some inconsistencies with line managers...some more supportive than others; some let mentees use work time to meet, some work time/some own time, others expected mentees to only use their own time” (Mentee/NEPF/Focus Group – mixture of Manager responses).

This selection of mentee and mentor quotes from both cases show that some Managers were being actively supportive, others were appearing to be supportive but then in practice were not so, others were indifferent and others were being unsupportive and obstructive. This shows an inconsistency with how managers supported these mentoring programmes and suggests that if you have a supportive manager, you are more likely to get access to mentoring.

In summary, these Tables (1.1 to 1.3) and quotes clearly show that both mentees and mentors perceived they were learning within the mentoring relationship, across all four learning domains, in both cases. This learning occurred despite some common themes in relation to the key hindering moderating factors, for example time and managers.

Discussion

These two studies give interesting and common insights into how both mentees and mentors perceived they were learning within the mentoring relationship, across all four learning domains. This seems to support the notion that mentoring supports learning and development to happen (Garvey, 2014; Parsloe and Leedham, 2017). This is an important insight, as it seems to reinforce mentoring as an important learning and development (L&D) intervention and helps to set mentoring apart from other L&D interventions which do not necessarily create a two-way process for learning. As the pattern and nature of workplace
requirements are changing (Williams, 2014) in respect of employees and managers needing to adopt new skills in communication, cooperation and adaptability, and the need to develop a more emotional labour force (Bolton, 2008; Thompson and Smith, 2009) which shares knowledge and works more collectively, mentoring seems to be a good example of where these skills can be encouraged or developed. If the workplace is moving towards a more self directed and individualised way of learning, then again one to one mentoring relationships are more likely to meet this expectation than larger group training scenarios.

This could also be important information for both HRD practitioners and managers as the clearer they can be about who and what can be gained from mentoring, the more they may be able to ensure it is the right learning and development tool to offer in the workplace and to ‘sell’ to senior management levels (Bosworth et al., 1993). As previously stated, investment in human capital is costly, therefore senior managers in the Police are keen to ensure their ever tightening budgets and time spent by employees not directly linked to their roles is spent wisely. Having some clues to how better to invest in the right learning and development interventions will then potentially bring more positive return in respect of increased individual and organisational productivity levels (Khan, 2014; Lipsey and Chrystal, 2015) and so help Managers to cope better or differently with their ever intensifying workload.

Generally for both parties, the largest number of responses were in relation to the affective-related learning domain, in the area of self-confidence. This finding highlights again the distinction between mentoring and other formal L&D interventions offered. Traditionally on-the-job coaching and training are generally directed at increasing knowledge and skill levels in the workplace of those on the receiving end of the intervention. Whereas this research suggests that mentoring goes beyond these learning domains and into the more personal affective-related domain, and both parties benefit; so two for the price of one! This finding is an important reminder to senior managers and leaders, suggesting that if they wish to develop their human capital and the emotional labour at all levels within their teams (Bolton, 2008), then mentoring could be an appropriate tool to do this, especially as there seems to be a direct link between self-confidence and improved ability/skill and motivation to do the job well.

For the moderating factors, there were common facilitating and hindering factors identified for both parties based on Hegstad and Wentlings’s (2005) moderating factors, but the most interesting but mixed response was from both parties in relation to managers.

As previously stated, many authors (Eddy et al., 2005; Hegstad and Wentling, 2005; Eby et al., 2006; Allen et al., 2006; Parise and Forret, 2008) discuss the important influence of managers within mentoring, with the suggestion being that those with less supportive managers may be less motivated or less willing to participate in mentoring (Parise and Forret, 2008). This study seems to show that managers were a significant both facilitating and hindering moderating factor for mentees and mentors in both organisations. It is interesting to see that the focus group comments tended to be less positive about
managers; could this be because mentees and mentors felt more able to share their displeasure when with other colleagues, or that once colleagues had initiated the conversations, they felt more able to open up about this and elaborate too? Or perhaps focus groups were seen as a more anonymous opportunity for all those involved to share concerns about their line managers without feeling that it was being directly documented and directly attributed to them only.

In summary, mentees and mentors across both organisations stated that managers were either supportive, disinterested/indifferent/unaware but not unsupportive, and/or disinterested/not supportive/blocking available mentoring time. The actions of unsupportive managers is at odds with the literature that suggests workplace learning involves sharing knowledge, skills and competencies for the greater good of the employees (Boud and Garrick, 1999) and the organisation (Rylatt, 2001; Bratton et al., 2008). Morris and Shinn’s (1999) police officer study cited the importance of line management support and fairness as key moderating factors, showing that line management inconsistency is not helpful. Jennings (2010) and Jones (2014) suggested that without management engagement, L&D efforts in the workplace would be less effective. Specifically with regard to mentoring, Alred and Garvey (2010) agreed that a condition that relates to a less successful programme is that it is not seen as legitimate work. If line managers hold this perception in an ever increasingly pressurised workplace, then this could cause issues with mentors and mentees being released from the workplace for mentoring (Police Federation, 2015) and this in turn will affect the effectiveness of the intervention. Some mentees reported that managers felt left out as they had not been briefed well enough about the programme (Cranwell-Ward et al., 2004) and perhaps this linked to their misunderstanding about the difference between their role as manager and the role of mentor and/or the legitimacy of mentoring. Some managers were also reported by their mentees as feeling guilty that they did not enquire enough or support them more.

However, it is important to note that there were also many facilitative comments made about managers, which would help to explain the success of many of the mentoring relationships too. Interestingly though, most of the mentoring relationships were successful despite or with their managers support or involvement, which is perhaps a testament to the enduring nature of mentoring. However, when reviewing the quotes from these mentees/mentors, the suggestion is that their relationships may not have been as effective as others who did receive management support.

This matrix (Fig 1.1) helps to simplify this finding further. This figure demonstrates this is potentially an important insight in relation to managers, as it shows that where manager support and mentor support is high, learning is likely to be maximised. However, where management support is low, but mentor support is still high, learning will occur but is not likely to be maximised. Obviously, where management support is low and mentoring engagement is low, outcomes will also be low.
This model helps to confirm what is already known about the influence that managers have on mentoring: that their influence can be both facilitative and hindering towards learning. In the public sector, where management and leadership styles are criticised and trust between management and workers is low (Pate et al., 2007), this is an important reminder of the influence that managers can have on learning; the suggestion being that managers cannot directly affect change towards the external business environment, but they can affect change within the businesses that they work within. If the public sector is truly attempting to effect change in leadership styles and the organisational culture within which they work (Meaklim and Sims, 2011), a starting point could be to ensure managers are much more engaging, much more open to offering developmental support to their employees and much more willing to act as enablers and not restrictors to such L&D opportunities. If L&D and promotional opportunities are becoming more scarce, then it is perhaps even more important to support mentoring initiatives, in the absence of any others.

**Fig 1.1 - Showing how line management support combines with mentor/mentee engagement to encourage learning — to be inserted here**

**Implications**

The first key insight from this research is to suggest that both parties learn within mentoring relationships. This implies that investment in mentoring can bring positive results for both parties, by helping to foster a more collaborative approach to learning and the workplace. This in turn may help to create a more inclusive, supportive workplace culture within the UK Police.

The second key insight suggests that line managers should be encouraged towards being more proactive when supporting the personal development of their team members into the future. If they are more involved in and more supportive of L&D interventions, then their team members could gain more from the experience. In turn, this may ultimately help them to make a more positive difference within their role. It is interesting to see that the College of Policing Leadership Review (2015) states that leading people involves communication, team working and maximising potential. All of these have been mentioned as learning outcomes by mentees and mentors in this research. However, due to the lack of management support highlighted, these insights suggest there is still more work to be done by managers towards supporting and maximising individual potential in their teams. This research also shows that those managers who actively involved themselves in being a mentee or mentor, also received huge learning benefits from being involved. This perhaps demonstrates the importance of managers role modelling mentoring. The suggestion being, that if they are or have been involved in mentoring before, they are more likely to have
better developed knowledge, skills and affective-related behaviours. Equipped with these, they are more likely to be supportive when others wish to get involved.

Research limitations

Several limitations to this study should be recognised. Much information has been gathered from 68 interviews and four focus groups (CEPF) and 12 focus groups (NEPF) with the same types of respondent over time. This gives confidence in the results that the information collected represents the perceptions of this particular mentoring population: mentees and mentors. It is hoped that these results will inform wider evidence-based practice but it is recognised that although interesting to compare and contrast the findings between the two different case study organisations, it would have been helpful to have had access to indepth interviews from within the second case study too, so the detail could have been compared further. As such, the findings drawn from this study may not be directly applicable to other mentoring programmes beyond these UK Police Forces.

Whilst the focus groups have allowed mentees and mentors to build on others ideas, and to develop shared knowledge, it was interesting to find that the focus groups tended to collect mostly negative comments about managers and the organisational context. It would have been helpful to acknowledge this information earlier, in order to share this back with the focus group attendees, in order to try to understand further why this was the case. Also, information was not collected from those that did not attend the interviews or the focus groups, although some phone-calls were made and emails were sent. Assumptions could be made that these mentees/mentors were having successful mentoring relationships and so did not see the value of attending and/or did not have the time available or that their mentor relationships were not as productive, so did not attend as they felt they had nothing to share or their mentoring had been disbanded. This information would have been helpful to pursue, to have a better understanding of those specific hindering factors which could lead to less effective or termination of relationships.

Also, it may have been difficult for both parties to distinguish between the learning and support from mentoring and other experiences within the workplace. The Police mentors and mentees would have been developing through on-going experiences within their job alongside their mentoring. It is very likely that some of the learning discussed and attributed to mentoring, had been developed outside of the mentoring relationship, but perhaps only realised as part of the mentoring discussions.

Conclusion

In short, this research provides some insights into how and what managers might learn through mentoring and the influence that managers might have. It has been suggested that in relation to the future direction of police leadership, that greater investment is made
towards frontline managers as ultimately they will be the leaders of the future (College of Policing Leadership Review, 2015). As a result of this research, the suggestion is that investment needs to be made earlier towards their personal development. This will help them to better recognise how they can support the personal development of others in their teams too. More attention needs to be paid at these levels. If not, the pipeline of talent moving up towards the higher levels of leadership in the next ten years and beyond, will not be representative of the real talent below. Nor will it be what is needed in these changing times.

From the researcher’s point of view, the workplace is increasingly becoming intensified, recognising the need to change and working towards being more diverse and representative of the community it serves. With this in mind, it does not make sense to keep with a system whereby if you have a good manager you are supported and progress. But if you don’t, you don’t.
References


Miller, W. (1999), Cops and Bobbies (2nd ed.), Columbus, OH, Ohio State University Press.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentees/ Mentors</th>
<th>Learning domains/cases</th>
<th>CEPF (interviews)</th>
<th>NEPF (focus groups)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentees</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of responses</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(33.46%)</td>
<td>(28.73%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skill-based</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(21.40%)</td>
<td>(20.21%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affective-related</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(36.97%)</td>
<td>(28.72%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social networks</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(8.17%)</td>
<td>(22.34%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total mentee responses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>257</strong></td>
<td><strong>188</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of responses</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(28.80%)</td>
<td>(41.03%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skill-based</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(30.37%)</td>
<td>(14.10%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affective-related</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(35.08%)</td>
<td>(28.21%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social networks</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5.75%)</td>
<td>(16.66%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total mentor responses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>191</strong></td>
<td><strong>78</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.2 Comparison of mentee and mentor learning outcomes in each learning domain across the two cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentees/ Mentors</th>
<th>Learning domains/cases</th>
<th>CEPF (interviews)</th>
<th>NEPF (focus groups)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentees key learning outcomes</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>• Promotional info</td>
<td>• L&amp;D opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Practical advice</td>
<td>• Wider org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Wider org</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skill-based</td>
<td>• Interview skills</td>
<td>• Goal setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Communication</td>
<td>• Problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Coping with stress</td>
<td>• Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Work-life balance</td>
<td>• Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflection</td>
<td>• Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affective-related</td>
<td>• Confidence</td>
<td>• Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Positivity</td>
<td>• Drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Motivation</td>
<td>• Self-awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social networks</td>
<td>• Signposting</td>
<td>• Contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Making connections</td>
<td>• Project opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Meetings in other depts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentors key learning outcomes</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>• Wider org</td>
<td>• About mentees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• About mentees</td>
<td>• About mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• About mentoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skill-based</td>
<td>• Questioning</td>
<td>• Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Listening</td>
<td>• Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Challenge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Empathy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affective-related</td>
<td>• Confidence about mentoring</td>
<td>• Confidence about mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-awareness</td>
<td>• Self-awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Positivity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social networks</td>
<td>• Raised awareness of own contacts</td>
<td>• New meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Created own new contacts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.3 Comparison of the 9 key moderating factors in relation to whether mentees and mentors perceived they were facilitating or hindering factors, across the two cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentees</th>
<th>Moderating factors</th>
<th>CEPF (interviews/focus groups)</th>
<th>NEPF (focus groups)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MENTEES</td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Low - Facilitating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matching Strategy</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HR challenges</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>Facilitating (interviews)</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hindering (focus groups)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organisational changes</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other relationships</td>
<td>Low - Facilitating</td>
<td>Low - Facilitating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal factors</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
<td>Facilitating/Hindering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Similarity</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Low - Facilitating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MENTORS</td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Low - Facilitating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matching Strategy</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HR challenges</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>Facilitating (interviews)</td>
<td>Low - Hindering/ Facilitating</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hindering (focus groups)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organisational changes</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other relationships</td>
<td>Low - Facilitating</td>
<td>Low - Facilitating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal factors</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Similarity</td>
<td>Facilitating</td>
<td>Low - Facilitating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
<td>Hindering</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Fig 1.1 - Showing how line management support combines with mentor/mentee engagement to encourage learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentee/mentor engagement</th>
<th>Line management support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>LOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **High** line management support and high mentee/mentor engagement:
  - Will learn new knowledge, skills, and develop networks (some affective related) but not likely to maximise learning
  - Likely to maximise learning

- **Low** line management support and high mentee/mentor engagement:
  - May learn new knowledge but mentoring unlikely to get really started or sustain itself

- **Low** line management support and low mentee/mentor engagement:
  - Unlikely to be open to learning anything new as being directed to by line manager

Source: Jones (2014) p. 5.