

7.0 PROPOSED OPTIONS: DELLS-LED MENTORING PROGRAMME

Following the previous stages of the project a number of options for a DELLS-led mentoring programme for businesses in Wales have been developed taking into consideration DELLS (formerly ELWa's) typology of businesses outlined below. Figure 6 indicates which typologies are suitable for each of the options developed.

Typology 1: Micro to small business (1–9 employees) - doing the minimum amount of training to get by

Typology 2: Micro to small business (1-9 employees) - committed to the idea of training, but unsystematic approach

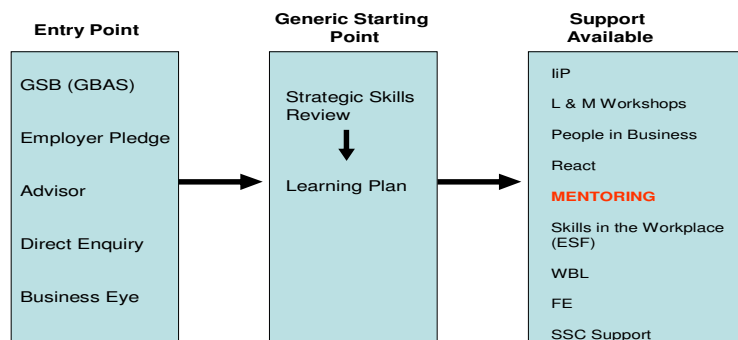
Typology 3: Small business (5 – 9 employees) - flexible approach to training

Typology 4: Medium to large business (10+ employees) – structured approach to training: key to maintaining service delivery

Typology 5: Medium to large business (10+ employees) - structured approach to training: an integral element of business growth

Figure 6 below indicates where the recommended options would sit within the existing business support structure in Wales.

Figure 6: Mentoring and the Workforce Development Framework



A number of different approaches have been developed, including co-ordinating of 'free-market' provision, voluntary mentoring schemes and options for a publicly funded programme. These options can be combined or developed in isolation. Our recommended approach is indicated in chapter 8 of the report.

The options were discussed in detail with key WMC and ELWA staff in March 2006. They were also presented to a number of managers/owners of established SMEs for comment.

A summary of the proposals, benefits and flow diagrams detailing the processes of each individual proposal together with estimated costs are given in Figures 7 and 8. If the proposals are implemented we would recommend that a detailed analysis of costs is undertaken which would depend on the DELLS' desired levels of quality and scalability.

Figure 7: Table of Mentoring Proposals

	Proposal 1	Proposal 2	Proposal 3	Proposal 4	Proposal 5	Proposal 6
Business Typology	4 and 5	3, 4 and 5	1, 2 and 3	All	All	1, 2 and 3
Programme Name	Business Bridge Mentoring	SME Mentoring Programme	Group Mentoring	Approved Providers of Mentoring	Central Database	Awareness Raising
Recruitment of Mentees	DELLS, DEIN, existing networks, local media	DELLS, DEIN, existing networks, local media	DELLS, DEIN, existing networks, local media	Business Eye, Local Media	Business Eye, Local Media	Business Eye, Local Media
Cost to Mentee	Free of charge	Free of charge	Free of charge	Market Rates/ Subsidised by grants	Market Rates	Free of charge
Qualifying Levels	2 years trading, 10 staff	6 months trading 4 staff	6 months trading 2 staff	Any Business – must be trading to get grants	Any business	Any Business
Number of Mentees per year	200	300	300	500	-	1000 SMEs assisted
Number of active mentors	100	300	10	100	Free market	-
Geographical Scope	Wales	Wales	Wales	Wales	Wales	Wales
Pairing Process	Programme Manager	Electronic database providing 3 possible mentees	Programme Manager	Programme Manager	Free market	n/a
Programme Length	Variable from 1-2 meeting to long lasting relationship	9 - 12 months	9 - 12 months	9-12 months	Free market	n/a
Hours Allocated	Variable	2-3 hours per month	2-3 hours per month	2 – 3 hours per month	Free market	n/a
Frequency of visits	Variable	4 – 6 weeks	6 – 8 weeks	4-6 weekly	Free market	n/a
Qualification of Mentor	Sector/Department Experience	SME ownership and/or management	Professional Mentor	Professional Qualification (to be agreed)	Free Market	n/a
Mentor Training	Interactive Workshops	Interactive Workshops	Interactive Workshops	Subsidized training programme 20% funding	Free market	n/a
Supervision	3 – 6 monthly supervision sessions	3-6 monthly supervision sessions	3-6 monthly supervision sessions	3-6 monthly supervision sessions	Free market	n/a
Mentee Training	Interactive Workshops	Interactive Workshops	Interactive Workshops	Interactive Workshops	Free market	n/a
Project Measures	Economic & softer Measures	Economic & softer Measures	Economic & softer Measures	Economic & softer Measures	Free market	Number of attendees
Estimated Delivery Costs	£335k -£395k			£87.5k	£65k	£40k-£80k

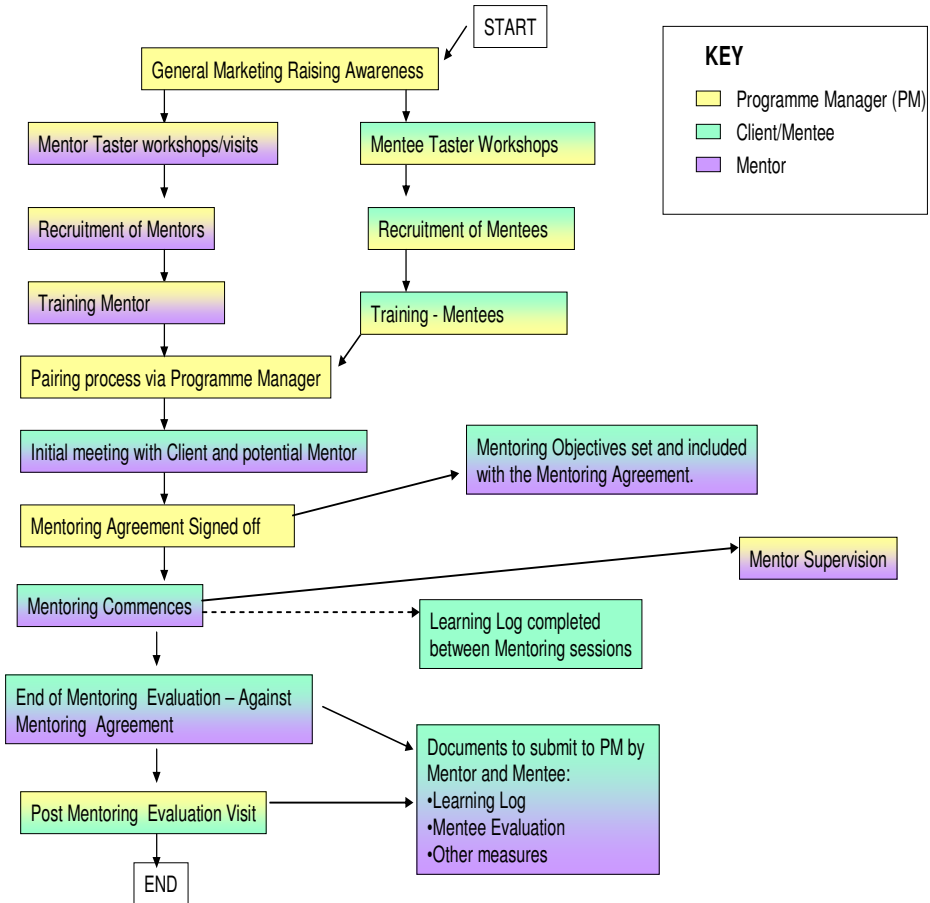
Figure 8: Overview, Benefits and Costs of Mentoring Programmes

Proposal 1: Business Bridge Mentoring

Proposal 1 – Business Bridge Mentoring - Medium to Large SMEs
<p>Overview</p> <p>The Business Bridge programme is aimed at providing mentoring support to medium - large SMEs via a network of larger Multinational Companies. This particular proposal will provide selected SMEs with the opportunity to work with larger more experienced companies on a mentoring basis. The multinational will be encouraged to provide department managers or technical specialists to help SMEs overcome business issues, via the mentoring process. The mentoring programme could also include a sectoral approach.</p> <p>Mentor and mentee training will be provided to all participants</p>
<p>Benefits to the mentee</p> <p>SMEs are given the opportunity to learn from best practice and latest technological advances. The mentees (SMEs) will be encouraged to identify specific issues within their business that they feel local large organisations and/or multinationals could help them resolve. The issues could range from technical manufacturing issues to international sales and marketing strategies. Experienced and highly competent managers will be encouraged to pass on their valuable skills and experience via the mentoring process to assist these SMEs.</p> <p>The larger companies will provide support to the SMEs on a voluntary basis. The duration of individual relationships will ideally be between 9-12 months however this will vary from company to company.</p>
<p>Benefits to the mentor</p> <p>Individual mentors who volunteer to assist SMEs will be provided with structured mentor training. This will support their professional development including enhanced inter-personal skills and increase their business networks. The publicity generated from the various success stories will be circulated to relevant media sources to maximise the multinationals exposure.</p> <p>Facilitated action-learning sets⁴⁶ will be provided for mentors. This has the dual benefit of ensuring the consistent quality of mentors and providing a networking</p>

environment where mentors can share experiences.

Proposal 1: Business Bridge Mentoring Flowchart



Proposal 2: SME Mentoring Programme

Proposal 2 – SME Mentoring - Small to Medium Companies

Overview

This SME mentoring programme will provide structured mentoring to locally based small to medium companies. This service will be provided via a network of volunteer mentors who have extensive experience managing SMEs and/or are currently running their own SME. Potential mentors can only be considered if they can allocate a minimum of a half a day per month to the programme.

The pairing process will take place via an electronic database. The programme manager will undertake a simple review of the mentees needs and aspirations. These details will be entered into the database, which will then select 3-5 possible matches. These matches will be sent to the mentee who will decide who to meet with. If after the first few sessions, either party feels that the relationship is not working out, a no-fault separation takes place and the pairing process is repeated.

This programme is designed to run for 9-12 months with the mentors and mentees meeting every 4-6 weeks, or according to need.

Benefits to Mentee

This programme will allow mentees to accrue all the benefits of a quality mentoring relationship. This will include the development of productive relationships with experienced and credible SME business leaders who are currently in business and have no hidden agenda (i.e. not a paid consultant).

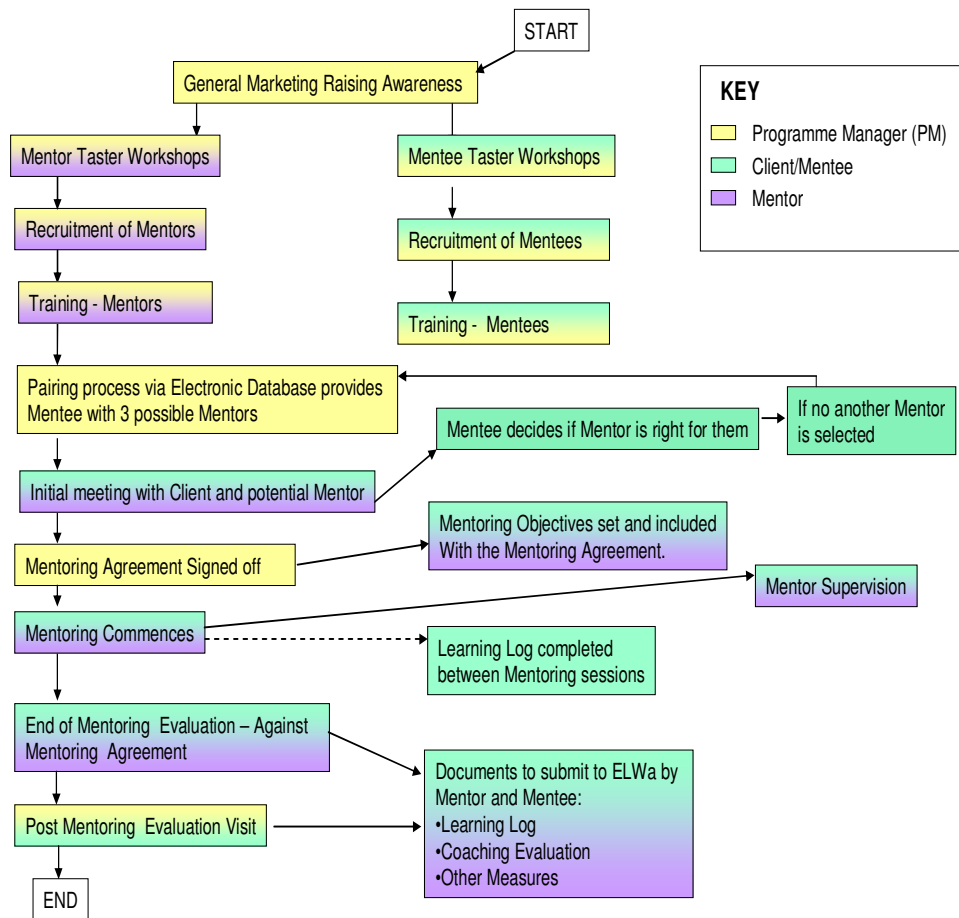
Training will be provided to all mentees.

Benefits to Mentor

Mentors will broaden their own learning and skills by taking part in the programme. They will be given training to ensure that they are competent in delivering the mentoring service. After successfully mentoring for 6-12 months, mentors could be introduced to higher level or accredited mentor training, allowing the mentors to gain a formal qualification. This would benefit the mentor, the mentee and members of staff within their organisations. This accredited training would be limited to the higher performing mentors.

Facilitated action-learning sets will be provided for mentors. This has the dual benefit of ensuring the consistent quality of mentors and providing a networking environment where mentors can share experiences.

Proposal 2: SME Mentoring Programme Flowchart



Proposal 3: Group Mentoring

Proposal 3 – Group Mentoring Micro – Small

Overview

The Group Mentoring Programme will provide structured mentoring to managers/owners of smaller SMEs such as micro and lifestyle companies. Groups of between 8-10 like minded mentees will work with a professional mentor in a group format every 4 – 6 weeks. Specialist group sessions for under represented groups, such as women or ethnic minorities could also be incorporated into this programme. The programme would provide support over a 9-12 month period at locations throughout Wales.

Benefits to Mentee

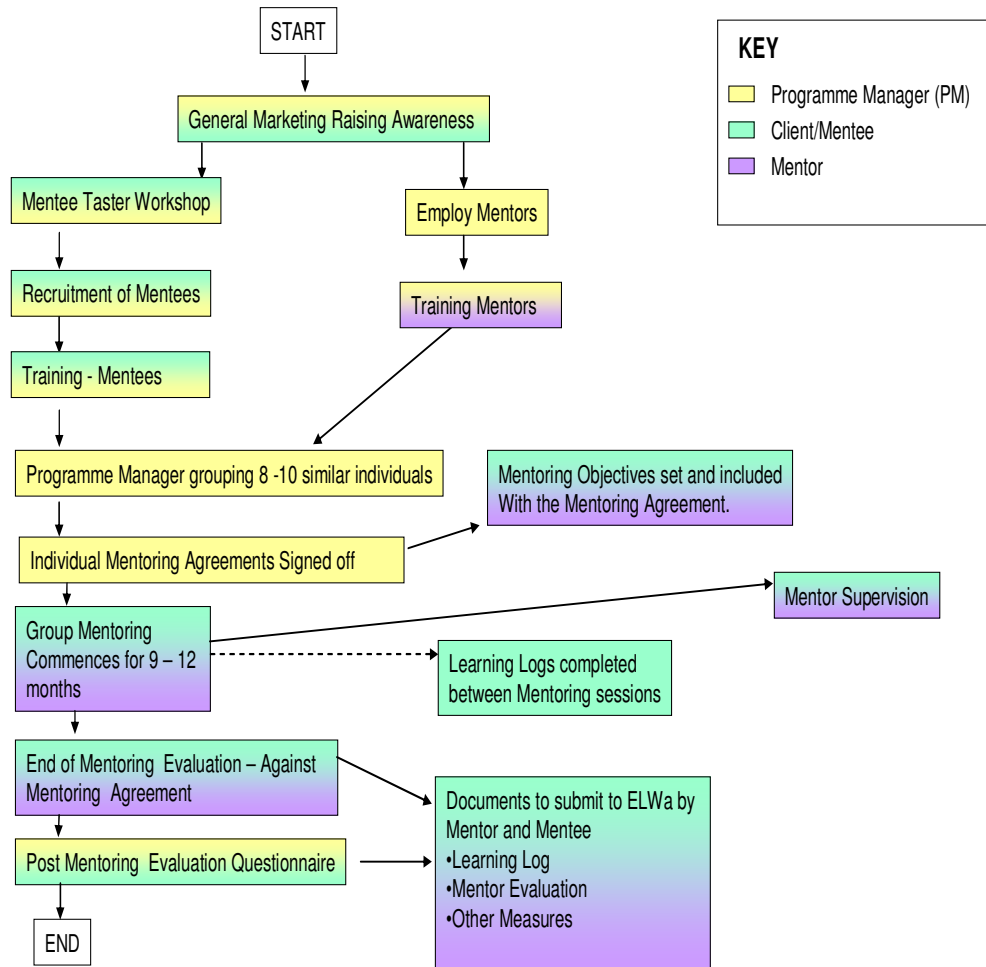
This programme will provide a high level of support to individuals who either may not normally be given support or may not be at ease receiving one-to-one support. Members of the mentoring group would benefit from developing their skills and knowledge and sharing experiences with their peers.

The programme could also act as a feeder into the proposals 1 and 2 mentioned above.

Benefits to Mentor

Group Mentors will be paid qualified professionals with experience in managing group sessions. This programme will help promote and raise awareness of the advantages of mentoring throughout Wales.

Proposal 3: Group Mentoring Flowchart



COSTINGS: PROPOSALS 1 TO 3	
Set-up/Design Costs	£30k
Annual Running Costs :	
Staff (1 programme manager, 3 project executives and 1 administrator)	£175k
Marketing of mentors and mentees (promotional material, direct mailing, radio/TV, workshops, one-to-one visits, presentations at events etc)	£50k
Admin (including travel & subsistence)	
Evaluation	£25k
Training/supervision for mentors and mentees including venue (based on 16 2-day workshop for mentors, 20 half day workshop for mentees, and 32 half day supervision workshops, and 30 group mentoring sessions)	£20k £80k - £140k
Facilitation of group mentoring	
Total Costs:	£335k -£395k
Outputs: 400 mentors trained 800 beneficiaries	Combined Unit Cost: £279 - £329 per person

Proposal 4: Approved Providers of Mentoring

Proposal 4 – Approved Providers of Mentors

Overview

The Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DELLS) would promote demand for mentors to develop their mentoring skills to a pre-determined level. This might include gaining a professional qualification relating to Mentoring and Coaching. Given the concern about the standard of existing mentors in the market-place this approach would endeavour to raise the quality of mentors in Wales. It should have the capacity in the longer-term to impact upon and raise demand through more positive experiences of mentoring.

It would involve providing subsidised accredited training for mentors (for example a mentor pays 80% of the training costs). For those who pass successfully they can become ELWA/DELLS approved supplier mentors. (This could work in a similar way to that of management and leadership development providers). These providers can then go out to the market-place and sell their services. Prospective mentees could then select from the approved mentors and receive a subsidy towards the cost of the mentoring (i.e. 50% of costs).

Benefits to Mentee

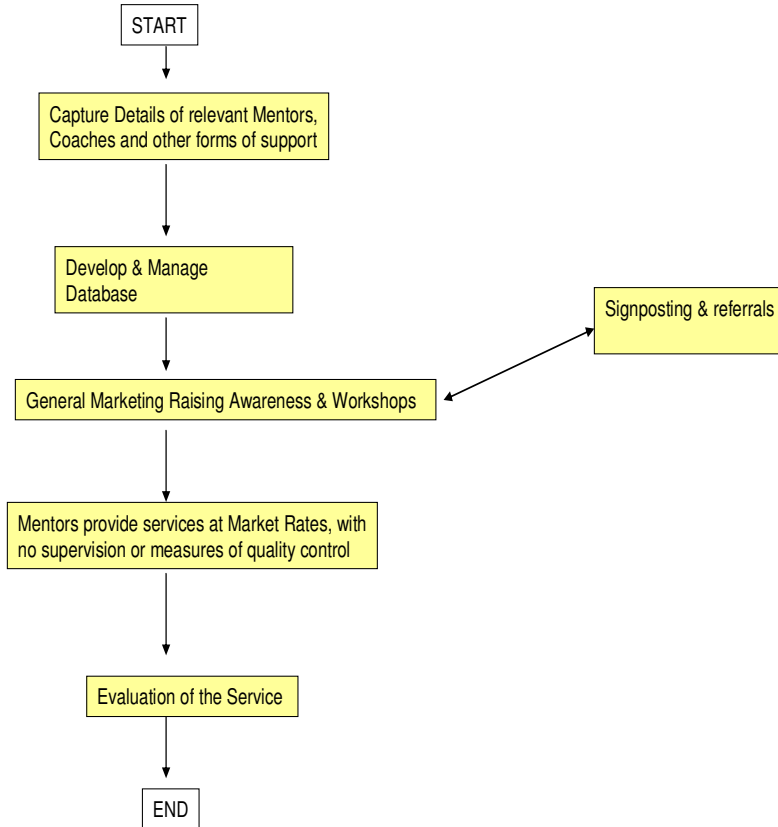
In addition to the aforementioned benefits of mentoring, mentees have access to an approved list of suppliers and can be assured of a quality service.

Benefits to Mentor

Mentors would be able to gain recognised accredited training and a route to market.

Structured supervision will be provided for mentors which will provide networking opportunities and support.

Proposal 4: Approved Providers of Mentoring Flowchart



COSTINGS: PROPOSAL 4	
Set-up/Design Costs	£10k
Annual Running Costs :	
Staff (1 programme manager)	£36k
Marketing	£20
Admin (including travel & subsistence)	£7.5k
Evaluation	£10k
Accredited Training of mentors (20% of costs mentor to pay 80%)	£4k
Supervision	£10k
Total Costs:	£87.5k
Outputs: 100 mentors trained 500 beneficiaries	Combined Unit Cost: £145 per person

Proposal 5: Central Database

Proposal 5 – Free Market Supplier Database

Overview

This option is designed to co-ordinate existing mentoring provision in Wales, encouraging the free-market to operate, and help stimulate demand. It would provide a central contact point for mentoring provision available in Wales (public, private and voluntary sectors).

This would be achieved through the development of a searchable database portal of providers of mentoring services, allowing anybody interested in mentoring to identify suitable mentors and obtain details about the credentials of prospective mentors. The database would also act as an information source on mentoring and could feature case studies, FAQ's and video clips. This would be both educational and act as stimulus for raising demand for mentoring.

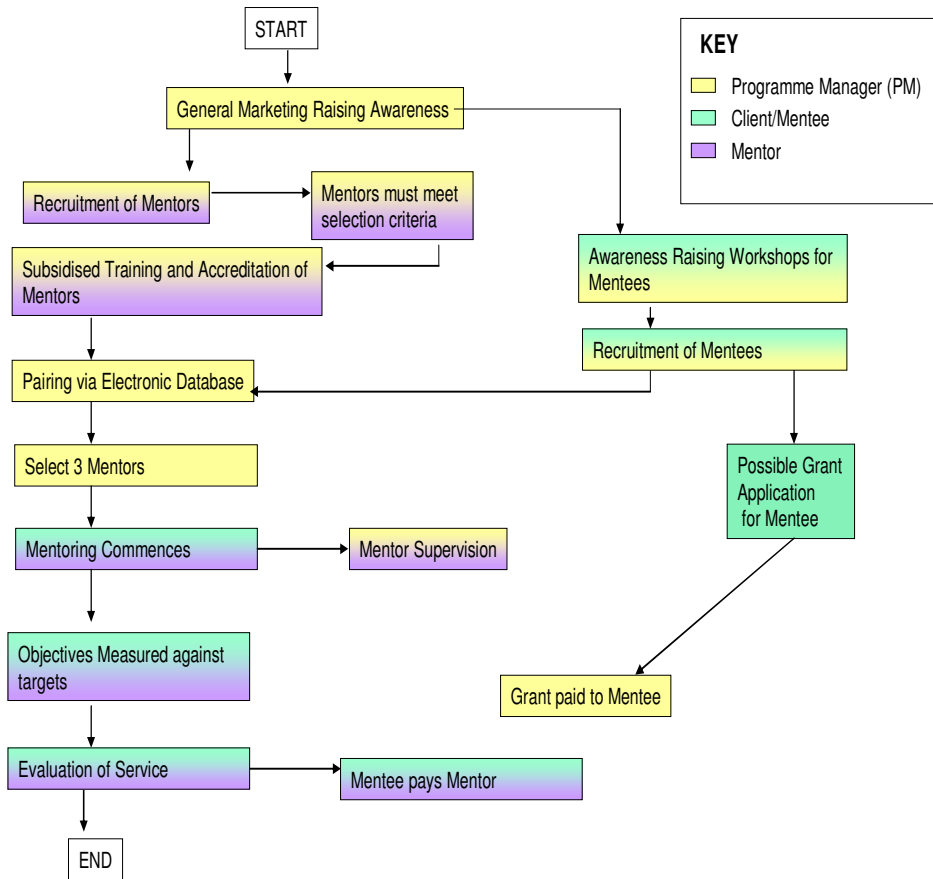
Benefits to Mentee

Easy access to suppliers within the marketplace and a central information point on mentoring.

Benefits to Mentor

An opportunity to promote their services and gain exposure via a central database.

Proposal 5: Central Database Flowchart



COSTINGS: PROPOSAL 5	
Database design	£50k
Running/Marketing costs	£15k
Total Costs:	£65k
Outputs: Unknown	

Proposal 6: Awareness Raising

Proposal 6 – Awareness Raising Workshops

Overview

This approach aims to raise awareness of mentoring and how it can benefit both the individual and the business. This would be conducted on a regional basis and would need to be marketed extensively. This approach should not be considered as a stand-alone option; rather it should be seen as integrating with the above options as part of the overall strategy for mentoring for businesses. It would be targeted at anybody who is potentially interested in mentoring.

In terms of the marketing we would see this being conducted through signposting from existing support agencies and initiatives and through HRD advisors, who have businesses who they think would benefit from mentoring. This would be combined with more traditional marketing methods i.e. direct-mailing, and would need to be tailored to the different typologies of businesses.

The business would have to see a benefit in attending and this benefit would need to be clearly communicated to them.

It is hoped that this approach will result in a number of the businesses feeding into the above options.

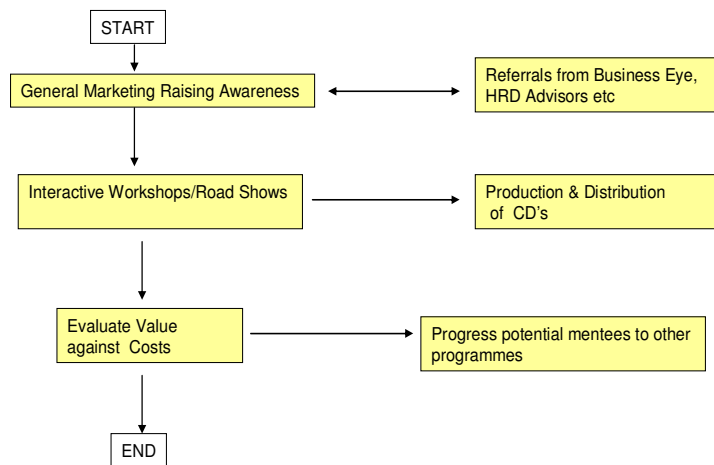
Benefits to Mentee

An opportunity to 'dip a toe in the water'

Benefits to Mentor

This programme would raise the awareness of the benefits of mentoring throughout Wales and therefore stimulate demand.

Proposal 6: Awareness Raising Flowchart



COSTINGS: PROPOSAL 6	
Awareness raising (including CDs, direct mailing, presentations, workshops etc)	£40k - £80k
Outputs: 1000 SMEs assisted	

Feedback from the SME managers on the proposals was very positive. They all expressed an interest in becoming a mentor and would be prepared to give up their time for free. Generally, they liked the idea of 'giving something back.' Some expressed concern over who would be running/managing the programme/s due to previous negative perceptions of publicly-led initiatives. However, they were very enthusiastic about the mentors being current successful business leaders who they could directly relate to and learn from.

Measuring Outputs and Results

Mentoring focuses more on people-centred skills and personal development which may be more difficult to capture using traditional economic measures such as increases in turnover, jobs created and number of jobs safeguarded.

Furthermore, every business is different and each mentoring relationship will be unique. Therefore the criteria for measuring success will vary from business to business and should not be prescriptive.

For example the manager of Company A may have a problem retaining quality staff. The success criteria for this company would primarily be staff retention, saving money through recruitment and training. However, the manager of Company B may have difficulties delegating responsibility and therefore the success criteria for this company would be the manager's ability to delegate.

The LEED Unit has developed an evaluation tool for the Wales Management Council⁴⁷ that helps small businesses to measure whether improvements in management and leadership skills have impacted on their business performance. This tool can be adapted to evaluate the outcome of mentoring programmes, capturing the outcomes of people-centred skills and personal development as well as traditional economic indicators. The tool was designed to be generic, allowing individual businesses to tailor it to meet their own needs. This tool consists of a worksheet and some simple guidance notes. The worksheet is split into two areas. The first part of the worksheet links the business objectives to the management and leadership skills. The second part measures the impact of the skills acquired on both the individual and on the performance of the organisation. Examples of the performance indicators are shown in Figure 9 below. The evaluation tool and accompanying guidance notes can be found in Appendix 9.

Figure 9 Examples of Performance Indicators

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION	EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION
Customer satisfaction i.e. speed of response, advice, knowledge of g/s, satisfied overall	Length of service
Repeat business from customers	Staff turnover
Renewed business through referrals from customers	Staff sickness levels/ absenteeism
Improved responsiveness to customers	Improved morale of staff
Improved supplier/customer relations	Engagement in team work and process innovation
Improvements in quality leading to greater customer loyalty and/or new business	Personal achievements
Flexibility in responding to customer needs	Greater understanding of value of training and HRD development in general
	Punctuality of staff
PRODUCT/SERVICE PERFORMANCE	FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE
Improved quality	Product pipeline cost reductions
Number of late orders	Increase in profitability
New product(s)/service(s) developed/ introduced	Higher sales conversion rate
Improved Quality of service (end to end) i.e. lost/damaged/JIT	Secure finance
Improved business processes	Increase in turnover
Introduction of new systems	Increase in sales
Innovation related activities i.e. adopting new technology	Increase in employment
Improving existing products/services	Cost reductions
	Increased market share
OTHER BUSINESS TARGETS	
Influencing people	Time for planning
Business plan	New ways of working
Freeing up of time	Awareness of how you spend time
New business opportunities	Company vision defined/communicated
Delegation/ Control	Commitment from staff
Process management	Public recognition
Organisational effectiveness	Improved efficiency in working practices
Confidence in future	Better tracking of projects and evaluation of their worth to company
Competitiveness	More productive meetings
Access to new markets	