

03

SESSION 3. SAFETY AND ETHIC BEHAVIOUR DURING THE MENTORING PROCESS

OBJECTIVE

Ensure that participants understand and know how to address health and safety issues within the mentoring process.

ACTIVITIES

- **Practical exercise.** Practical dialogues to learn how to manage sensitive issues, concerns, and conflicts.
- **Action protocols.** Presentation of the action protocols developed by the partnership regarding confidentiality, delicate matters, and conflict resolution.
- **Conclusions and reflection.** The group reflects on the conclusions and questions that arose during the previous exercise.

For this exercise the participants should get into pairs. By taking turns in the role of the mentor and mentee, they should practice communication in cases of sensitive topics and conflicts. Here are some scripts proposed for them to build the conversation around, but they can also come up with their own script that should include discussion on sensitive topic, concerning topic or a conflict.

- **Sensitive topic:**

In the last meeting, you and the mentee touched upon the topic of romantic relationships. Due to his physical disability, the mentee struggles with needing assistance with the bathroom. He feels extremely self-conscious about that aspect of his life and is worried that it will prevent him from ever having a romantic relationship. As a mentor, address the mentee's concerns with sensitivity and provide support and encouragement.

- **Concerning topic:**

As a mentor, you noticed that the mentee has become increasingly introverted, quiet, and reserved over the past few weeks. The mentee, who was previously engaged and communicative, now seems withdrawn and uninterested in activities they used to enjoy. As a mentor, you are concerned about the mentee's mental health and want to address these changes in their behaviour with sensitivity and care.

- **Conflict:**

The mentee has repeatedly been late to scheduled meetings, often without offering any apology or explanation. Additionally, the mentee has been calling you at inappropriate times, such as late at night or during weekends, to cancel the meetings, disregarding the agreed boundaries. As a mentor, you need to address these issues in your mentoring relationship.

The mentoring process must **respect and protect the privacy** and trust of the mentee, creating a safe and supportive environment for their personal and professional development:

- Clearly define and communicate to both mentor and mentee what types of **information will be considered confidential** (e.g., any sensitive personal or professional information shared during sessions).
- Ensure **both parties understand** that all shared information in the mentoring context should be treated as confidential unless explicitly stated otherwise.

Make sure that the process of **breaking confidentiality** is handled with sensitivity, transparency, and a focus on the safety and health of the mentee and others:

- Clearly communicate to the mentee from the outset that there are specific **circumstances under which confidentiality may need to be broken** (e.g., threats of self-harm, harm to others, or instances of abuse)
- When it becomes necessary to break confidentiality, do so in a **transparent and supportive manner**. Explain the steps you will take, who will be informed, and the intended outcomes of the disclosure.
- Provide continuous support to the mentee throughout the process, ensuring they understand that the **primary goal is their safety** and well-being.

Remember to to handle **sensitive topics** with care, ensuring that the mentoring process is supportive, respectful, and conducive to the mentee's well-being and development.

- Establish and maintain a **safe and respectful environment** where sensitive topics can be discussed openly and without judgment.
- Encourage the mentee to **set boundaries** regarding what they feel comfortable discussing and respect those boundaries at all times.
- Offer appropriate **support and resources** when discussing sensitive topics to ensure the mentee feels supported and has access to additional help if needed.

SESSION 3. SAFETY AND ETHIC BEHAVIOUR DURING THE MENTORING PROCESS



Co-funded by the European Union

In case of a **conflict**, it is necessary to handle the situation constructively, fostering a positive and productive mentoring relationship.

- Address conflicts as soon as they arise to **prevent escalation** and to maintain a healthy mentoring relationship.
- Utilize **active listening and empathy** to understand the mentee's viewpoint and feelings regarding the conflict.
- Develop a **clear and actionable plan** to resolve the conflict and prevent future issues. Collaboratively identify potential solutions, ensuring both the mentor's and mentee's needs and concerns are addressed.
- Contact the **organization responsible** of the mentoring process to communicate any uncomfortable situation and find a solution.

The **end of the mentoring relationship** must be handled thoughtfully and respectfully, leaving both the mentor and mentee with a sense of closure and accomplishment.

- It is important to define clearly the **duration of the mentoring process**. At the beginning of the process, discuss the duration, number of sessions and frequency.
- Use the final stages of the mentoring relationship to **reflect on the progress** made and celebrate accomplishments.
- Facilitate a **positive transition** for the mentee, offering continued support and resources as needed.
- Express **willingness to stay in touch**, offering to be a continued resource or point of contact if appropriate, while clearly defining any new boundaries and expectations for post-mentoring interactions.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

- Organization: Fundación Isabel Gemio
- Name: Celia Sánchez
- Phone: +34 629 22 08 34
- Email: europacomunica@fundacionisabelgemio.com

