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2.1 Intended Learning Outcomes

This module introduces a range of theories which implicitly or explicitly guide human resource practitioners, mentors, mentoring consultants and managers when we develop mentoring programmes. The aims of the module are to help practitioners:

- Understand that there are different approaches to mentoring which are shaped by different theories on why and how to mentor;
- Understand how different mentoring theories emphasise different roles for mentors and mentees;
- Understand how different mentoring theories lead to the development of different kinds of mentoring activities;
- Explain why a particular theory and approach may be appropriate or inappropriate in a particular situation; and
- Draw on mentoring theory to plan an appropriate mentoring programme or activity for a particular situation.

This short course can only *introduce* theories and give *limited* explanations of these theories. Learn more about mentoring theory through further reading. The two papers used to prepare this module (Dominguez, 2013 and Ehrich et al., 2001) and their references could be your starting points.

2.2 Tuning into Mentoring Theory

How we approach the design and practice of mentoring is informed by our theory of how mentoring works, and why. This influence of theory happens either explicitly and consciously or, more often, implicitly and tacitly, that is, without us really thinking about it.

The concept of mentoring has changed over time. In Module 1 we referred to a classic model of a mentor as a kind of 'father figure' who guides and instructs a younger person. The original mentor was a guide and instructor to the son of his friend and master, Odysseus. This kind of relationship can be described as a hierarchical dyad.

From the 1970s onwards, mentoring has increasingly been institutionalised (see 1.2 in Module 1), that is, it became a formal activity in workplaces such as colleges and universities, businesses, government departments and non-governmental organisations. In the process, a variety of approaches to mentoring came to be documented, reflecting diverse views on the role of the mentor and mentee, the purpose of mentoring and how a mentoring process should unfold. As a result, we no longer think of mentoring only as a hierarchical dyad. Some mentoring processes are designed so that both mentor and

Mentoring Theory: A central idea or set of related ideas to explain the need for, and nature of, mentoring, and why one would approach mentoring in a particular way.

Mentoring Approach: This is reflected in the design of the mentoring plan and process.

mentee learn from them (they are not hierarchical), and there may be more than one mentor, or more than one mentee, in a mentoring relationship (i.e. mentoring does not only happen in a classic dyad).

Experts explain how different approaches to mentoring work, and why they work, by drawing on different theories or ideas about individual development, individual learning, and organisational or broader social development.

Activity 2.1 is your chance to consider some examples of mentoring and see if you can spot some of the differences in the ideas underpinning the approaches evident in these examples. Note: Some examples might demonstrate more than one approach to mentoring!

Activity 2.1

How do the following examples of mentoring differ from each other? What do you think were the assumptions about mentoring of the people who set them up?

Read through the case examples 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 below. Work with a partner and answer these questions:

1. What is the purpose of mentoring in each example?
2. What activities are used for mentoring in each example?
3. Who are the mentors? What are the roles of each of the listed mentors? Use different terms to distinguish these roles from each other, for example, 'instructor' vs 'supporter'.
4. What is the nature of the relationship between mentors and mentees?

Case Example 2.1: *Pat, Prem and a Conference Presentation*

PAT: "Hello Prem! I must say I feel flattered that you've asked me to be your mentor, but I'm also a bit unsure how to proceed. Tell me, what do you want to achieve from the process?"

PREM: "Hey Pat, thanks for agreeing to this. Man, you know, I've always admired your presentation style, the way you are so entertaining but also succinct. I find I'm a bit long-winded and that I tend to lose the audience. This is one of the things I'd like you to help me with. What do you think?"

PAT: "Thanks for the compliment! I'm happy to try. How should we go about it?"

PREM: "Well, I thought about it. I want to present a paper at the Fynbos Forum. Can I present to you what I've prepared and ask for your feedback?"

PAT: "Sure. I have a time slot open tomorrow."

PREM: "Great. And then after your feedback, I'll work more on my presentation, and then maybe we have another go? And since you are also attending the Forum, you could perhaps also give me feedback on the actual presentation when we are there?"

PAT: "Sounds like a plan. Let's go for it! It will also help me reflect more consciously on what makes a good presentation. I'm sure I can learn a lot in the process."

Case Example 2.2: *The Marion Island Field Trip*

AKONA: "Has anyone seen my blue backpack? Eish, I'm sitting on it! Guys, I'm so amped! I never thought I'd actually get to go on this field trip."

ASHWIN: "Marion Island, yoo-hoo! We're joining the elite squad, gents. Sorry – and ladies!"

ADRIE: "You betcha! This has never been a boys club only, we girls are in too!"

ASHWIN: "Remember when we were first years? We couldn't believe the stories the post-grads told when they came back from the famous field trip."

AKONA: "Yoh! Infamous! Like the stuff they say Prof Prince got up to at the base camp! I couldn't believe students actually became friendly with him, he is lank intimidating in class!"

ADRIE: "I'm glad he's going. His theory is soooo radical, do you realise no-one else in the world combines Botany and Anthropology the way he does? I'm gonna trail him like a puppy and pick his brains. If I can get myself to actually talk to him ..."

AKONA: "Yoh girl, two months on a remote island! You can't NOT talk to the man!"

ADRIE: "I know, but Prince has such a reputation ... I want to get into his Unit when I graduate. This is my chance to make him notice me! What about you guys, where are you going next?"

AKONA: "What choice do we have? It's so hard to get a job, just take what you can get!"

ADRIE: "Maybe ... But I read in this brochure that you must be pro-active and plot your ideal career path, so you can also create some opportunities for yourself ..."

Case Example 2.3: *Nandi, Nathi and a Poster Presentation*

NANDI: "Kunjani? Please sit down. Welcome to our Unit. You started last month, right?"

NATHI: "That's right mam, good morning mam, I'm fine thank you, and you?"

NANDI: "Good, good. Your manager tells me you need to present a research poster at the Fynbos Forum as part of your bursary requirement?"

NATHI: "Yes mam."

NANDI: "Good. I have a template for preparing posters which I always use for my junior scientists. Here it is. Fill it in by Friday, just roughly. Then next week Monday, the 7th, you can join my group in the seminar room. In this session I take the group through some generic pointers and then you guys critique each other's draft posters. After that you'll have another week to get it into shape. I can see you on Monday the 14th to give you some specific feedback on what should be a near final poster. Are you taking notes of all this, my friend!?"

NATHI: "Yes mam, sorry mam!"

2.3 Making Sense of a Wide Range of Theories

There are different ways in which to classify mentoring theories. No classification seems perfect and there are overlaps and blurred lines between different theories and groups of theories. Here we use the system deployed by Dominguez (2013), who provides a useful overview and synthesis of the theoretical underpinnings of mentoring. Dominguez and colleagues analysed peer-reviewed journals and books on mentoring from 1978 to 2012. Although they focussed on the university context, their examples also apply to other contexts.

In fact, it seems that different theories of mentoring, to some extent, originate in different institutional contexts. This is the angle of Ehrich and her colleagues in our other key reference (Ehrich et al., 2001). In some contexts, the emphasis is on what mentoring means for the individual, and how best to address the individual's needs. In these contexts, theories of individual learning and professional development tend to dominate. These theories often have roots in educational psychology. In other contexts, the emphasis is more on what mentoring can achieve for an organisation. Here the individual's role in a group or institutional setting – for example, their career trajectory in relation to an organisational plan – is often foregrounded. While learning and professional development theories still apply, organisational development, management and business studies might also influence the approach to mentoring. In a third context, on a national or sectoral scale, the emphasis is on mentoring serving a purpose in an entire industry, sector or economy, for example, the role of mentoring in human capital development for biodiversity conservation in South Africa. Here planners often draw on economic or social theories of development.

These contexts are interlinked, of course (see Diagram 2.1), and in one single situation all three contexts mentioned here might apply. In such a case, a variety of mentoring theories might be needed, and one will need to ensure that they don't clash or contradict each other.



Diagram 2.1: *Different Origins of Mentoring Theory in Different Contexts of Mentoring*

Another way to make sense of the theories we discuss here, is to consider that they are more or less conservative in nature. That is, some theories are focussed on preserving and strengthening the status quo, and we would use them when we are happy with the way things are; that is, mentoring keeps things as they are – for example, to uphold company standards or to strengthen commitment to the existing organisational culture. In other contexts, theories developed are more progressive and even radical in nature. These are the theories that promote mentoring as a transformational activity that contributes to changing the status quo, so that things can be done differently in future.

In the next section, we will be exploring a variety of mentoring theories divided as follows:

- Developmental theories
- Learning theories
- Social and economic theories.

We will introduce a variety of theories within each category, summarised in table form, and expand on these in a narrative explanation. You may find that there are more similarities than differences between the theories in a category, and there is even some overlap between theories in different categories. The aim of these theories is to help you differentiate more accurately between different ideas about and approaches to mentoring, and to give you some guidance for exploring mentoring approaches further.

When it comes to the way in which these theories influence mentoring relationships and activities, the differences are not always very pronounced. However, sometimes even subtle differences can be very influential. Consider planning a field trip or other mentoring activity to induct newcomers into an organisation, first from the point of view of a conservative manager who wants to keep things as they are and get newcomers to fit in with the status quo, and then from the point of view of a manager with a brief to transform the organisation using the input of newcomers with very different approaches. How we plan and provide for mentoring, and evaluate its success, would be influenced by where we see its greatest value, and this is in turn affected by the theory we use to explain mentoring.

2.4. Theories Underpinning Mentoring

2.4.1 Developmental Theories

This group of mentoring theories draws on psychology, including educational and social psychology. These theories focus on the developmental stage of the individuals involved in mentoring. They describe human development in distinct stages or phases, and they define a role for mentoring in relation to these stages or phases of development. In one of the most common approaches to mentoring, we look at a mentor as someone who helps another to transition into or navigate through a particular phase of their life or development.

There are a number of developmental theories on mentoring, with the differences between them sometimes slight, sometimes significant. Table 2.1 summarises key features associated with three of these developmental theories. The table is followed by some examples to make the theory come to life. You may want to add some of your own examples as well.

Table 2.1: *Three Developmental Theories for Mentoring (Dominguez, 2013)*

DEVELOPMENTAL THEORIES	COMPONENTS	CONTRIBUTIONS TO MENTORING	IMPLICATIONS FOR MENTORING PROGRAMME DESIGN
Levinson's (1978) Life Stage Theory	Succession of stable and transitional periods through structural stages.	Mentor role: Model, guide, teacher, sponsor Mentee: Receptive Outcomes: Career development, identification with mentor, sense of belonging.	Programme designed around modelling functions and the achievement of the "dream"; Directed learning plan; Opportunities for the development of a professional identity.
Kram's (1983) Mentoring Phases	Phases of the mentoring relationship: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Initiation, ■ Cultivation, ■ Separation. 	Mentor role: Varies depending on career and developmental stages Mentee: Receptive Outcomes: Career development through sponsorship, protection, coaching and challenge; psychosocial support through modelling, acceptance and confirmation, counselling, and friendship.	Programme designed around career development stages; Directed career development plan; Opportunities for growth within organisational boundaries.
Kegan's (1982) Developmental Stages	Progression through life stages from dependence to independence to interdependence; Confirmation, contradiction, and continuity are all essential for learning.	Mentor role: Different types of guidance; Mentee: Variable depending on developmental stages; Outcomes: Career development through multiple mentoring functions.	Programme designed around mentors' and mentees' developmental stages; Directed/co-directed/self-directed learning plan; Pairing and socialisation for organisational outcomes.

a) Levinson's Life Stage Theory

Levinson's life stage theory argues that every human being has structural development stages that we move through in succession: there will be a transitional phase, followed by a stable phase, and then another transitional phase. For example, the teenager transitions from a stable childhood phase through adolescence into young adulthood; young adults transition into maturity; mature members of the workforce transition into a retirement phase.

Associated with these stages are opportunities and challenges of professional and career development related to our working lives: the teenager may need study and career guidance; the young adult, career guidance and induction into the workplace; the professor about to retire may need guidance on how best to use remaining time at or away from work. See also Section 1.4.2 in Module 1.

The mentor provides this guidance, and plays quite a structured role, with the mentee being receptive, i.e. not playing a strong role in shaping the interactions.

An example could be an internship programme run by an NGO. The NGO's mentoring programme helps the interns choose a future career (whether in or outside of the organisation) through a career guidance programme. In addition to directed career guidance opportunities, there might be one-on-one sessions to help mentees formulate a career vision: What is it that they would like to do? What are the options? What is feasible? What do they need to do to make that dream come true? The mentor helps individuals or groups think through these questions. In an actual example from WWF-SA, the mentors of the interns also arranged opportunities for exposure (such as visits to another NGO, WESSA) and opportunities for personal growth (team building, working on practical recycling projects to build relational skills, amongst others).

These mentors can also act as sponsors, i.e. once a mentee has decided they want to follow a particular career the mentor may help them look out for opportunities, may pass on job advertisements, or may introduce the mentee to potential employers. Note that this approach also puts emphasis on the development of a professional identity; for example, efforts might be made to help the mentees feel enthusiastic about working in a particular sector. An example of this intent may be T-shirts or caps that carry an organisation's logo.

b) Kram's Mentoring Stages

Kram's mentoring stages form part of one of the longest standing and most frequently quoted theories on mentoring. Kram describes the mentoring relationship itself as unfolding in three phases. He reasoned that mentoring will take different forms during different developmental stages. Professionals in the workplace may draw on a mentor to help them develop new skills, apply for a promotion, move from one department to another, take on a new management role, start their own businesses or go into semi-retirement. In the process the mentor may need to play a variety of roles.

Think of a scientist who has been asked to take on a senior management role in an organisation, but for some reason lacks confidence. She may be the first person of colour in this position, or the first woman, or she might be an older scientist with much experience in laboratory work, who had never thought of herself as a people manager. A professional coach or a colleague in the organisation might be asked to mentor the scientist to: talk through the situation; be a sympathetic friend to consult; give honest and positive feedback; set appropriate challenges (e.g. prepare an elevator speech in which you describe your strengths as a manager); and even coach in a particular task (e.g. to prepare for a promotional interview). Notice how the mentor's role might vary. The one constant factor here is that the development stage of the mentee is the focus for what is planned and provided by the mentor.

c) Kegan's Developmental Theory

Kegan's developmental theory of mentoring makes the important point that the mentor is also in a particular developmental stage of his or her life and career, and this needs to be taken into account when setting up mentoring relationships. Let's say the mentor in the above example is actually interested in promotion himself. It may be difficult for him to set aside his own focus and help someone else to apply for a promotion. On the other hand, if the mentor is in a stable period where he wants to share his experience, or if he is transitioning into a period where he wants to 'give back' to the sector or organisation, then he may be very well placed to mentor.

Kegan's theory describes a shift over time in our professional development, from being *dependent* on others, to becoming *independent*, and even later we come to value *interdependence*. This can be applied to the example of an engineer in his late fifties, who was initially employed by a government department, where he was dependent on his managers to define his work and his income. Then he resigned and worked for 15 years to establish his own consultancy and became 'his own boss'. Lately, however, he has seen that the most meaningful work that really benefits his field can only be undertaken in multi-party social innovations, and in partnership with other agencies, including government departments, with whom he therefore needs strong and ongoing relationships. He would therefore like his business to operate in a more interdependent way. Mentoring government officials while working with them on joint projects has emerged as one way in which to do this. (See also the Cost-Benefit approach to mentoring in Table 2.3 and Section 2.4.3 (c), which is a Social Theory of Mentoring.)

Mentoring may have other outcomes besides moving on from one phase to another. The next set of theories focus on learning theories and learning outcomes of various kinds.

2.4.2 Learning Theories

Learning theories are associated with the field of education and have often developed in association with educational psychology, and more recently also social theories. There are significant differences between some learning theories, while others are quite similar. Learning theories of mentoring are used in the context of educational institutions, but also in many business contexts.

Table 2.2: *Learning Theories for Mentoring (Dominguez, 2013)*

LEARNING THEORIES	COMPONENTS	CONTRIBUTIONS TO MENTORING	IMPLICATIONS FOR MENTORING PROGRAMME DESIGN
Adult Learning (Andragogy)	Self-directed learning; Purposive learning; Internal motivation.	Mentor role: Facilitator; Mentee: Active, in control of own learning; Outcomes: Autonomy, self-confidence.	Programme designed around mentee's needs and goals; Negotiated learning plan.
Behaviourism	Environment shapes behaviour through positive and negative reinforcement.	Mentor role: Coach, sponsor; Mentee: Reactive, responds to environment; Outcomes: Adaptation, acculturation, retention, effectiveness, skills development, and productivity.	Programme designed around organisational needs and goals; Directed learning plan; Reward system.
Cognitivism	Individual types of learning/cognition; Metacognition (thinking about thinking); Brain and memory functions.	Mentor role: Teacher, tutor; Mentee: Active thinking process; Outcomes: Knowledge transfer.	Programme designed around stages of cognitive development; Flexible semi-individualised learning plan, built on prior knowledge; Environment provides input for internal information processing.
Constructivism	Learning takes place over time through frame of mind; Learning is a continual and gradual process; Ideas are formed through experience.	Mentor role: Guide, facilitator. Mentee: Active, reflective; Outcomes: Self-awareness, critical reflection, creativity, talent development.	Programme designed around individual interpretation of environment; Free, individualised learning plan; Environment provides opportunities for experience and continuous exploration.
Action Learning	Experience; Learning by doing.	Mentor role: Coach, facilitator; Mentee: Active, action taking; Outcomes: Self-awareness, learning from success and failure.	Programmes designed around tasks and activities; Directed learning plan; Environment provides opportunities for problem-solving and experimentation.

Social Learning	Observing; Role model; Modelling / imitation.	Mentor role: Role model, guide; Mentee: Apprentice; Outcomes: Self-efficacy, acculturation, acceptance and confirmation, skills development, tacit and implicit knowledge transfer.	Programmes designed around organisational culture; Co-directed learning plan; Environment provides op- portunities for imitation and social interaction.
Transformative Learning	Experience and reflection recon- structs ideas, expectations; Change through critical dilemmas or accumulation of experience.	Mentor role: Guide, facilitator; Mentee: Active critical thinking; Outcomes: Transfor- mation, change in frames of reference.	Programmes designed around change and innovation; Co-directed learning plan; Environment provides opportunities for transformation.

a) Adult Learning (Andragogy)

Andragogy refers to the theory of adult learning. (Pedagogy is the equivalent term for theories about how children learn.) Adult learning theory emphasises the motivation of the adult learner and its role in determining learning outcomes; learners are expected to play a significant role in their own learning. This is evident in adult learning theories about mentoring, which describe the mentee as playing a role in determining what they would like to get out of the mentoring process, and how the process should unfold.

Case Example 2.1 is an example of an adult learner (Prem) telling a potential mentor (Pat) what he would like from the mentoring process (to improve his conference presentations). Prem and Pat negotiate how they would go about the process. Adult learning theory would emphasise that Prem is highly motivated to learn, as he has identified his learning/mentoring need himself, and that autonomy (being able to function well on his own) and confidence (about his presentations) are some of the learning outcomes he seeks. According to their agreement, Pat facilitates Prem's learning by giving him feedback. Note that Pat has something tangible to share, because he is a capable and recognised presenter himself.

b) Behaviourism

The second example of mentoring shaped by learning theory is Behaviourism. This approach to learning has roots in the Russian behavioural scientist Pavlov's experiments with animals, where he was able to show that dogs will salivate when they hear a bell, if they have learnt to associate the bell with food. This theory of how we learn (stimulus → response) has value in certain situations, but it can seem to bypass the will and active

mental processes of learners, as it aims to shape behaviour through incentives and disincentives; positive behaviour is reinforced by rewards.

Examples might be awards for the 'Best Intern of the Year' or 'Best Presentation at the Fynbos Forum'. Another example is a university giving a financial award to the academic who publishes the most papers in a given time period, or the National Research Foundation giving public ratings to scientists, with being an A-rated scientist regarded as a sought-after achievement. The idea is to encourage behaviours regarded as appropriate, such as hard work, careful preparations, attention to detail, or focussing on publications above other activities. A mentor's role in these situations would be to coach the individual in how to achieve these awards.

In Case Example 2.3, a senior researcher (Nandi) undertakes to coach a junior researcher (Nathi) in how to prepare a conference poster, through a step-by-step, pre-determined process that will train the young person in standard organisational practices. The mentee is not proactive; he is reactive and follows the mentor's lead. The focus is on making the mentee effective and productive in the organisational context. Behaviourism can be useful when there are agreed-upon processes and procedures that are widely accepted as good and necessary, and to inform skills training towards uncontested, practical skills, such as driving, or using a chain saw.

Activity 2.2

Discuss:

What might be some of the drawbacks of this approach to mentoring?

Can you think of unintended consequences of the practice of shaping behaviour through incentives?

In what situations might behavioural theories of mentoring not be applicable?

c) Cognitivism

Cognitivism is a somewhat different learning theory that emphasises the cognitive process, i.e. how the brain works, and how that influences learning. In this body of theory, the mind is viewed as a processor, similar to a computer, and mentoring takes the form of inputs made on the basis of how the brain is thought to work at particular stages of cognitive development. Knowledge transfer is the intended outcome of the mentoring process, and the mentor takes the role of a teacher or tutor. This approach is often used when groups of students or adult learners are taught content-rich lessons in classes or groups, for example, learning the Linnaean classification system in Botany class. The mentor (teacher, lecturer or tutor) would think about how the learners would make sense of the information and how best he or she could therefore present the information (input) for optimal uptake by the learners. Too often, lecturers have only enough time to focus on the content of what they want to teach, and not enough time to think through a methodology that will be suitable for learning the particular kind of content on offer. Or the time in class may be too short for the sort of cognitive support that may be required to help young scientists build up their cognitive skills. Having recognised this, some universities employ tutors who spend time with undergraduate students, working through many practical examples where theory is applied, conducting practical experiments. Other mentors in the university context are academic support staff, with specialist knowledge of how people learn best, and they would use this knowledge to help them with challenges such as grasping statistical methods, reviewing the literature, or writing a scientific paper.

A busy field mentor might not have much time or experience in thinking through how his mentees would learn best. In his/her view, the best way to teach, for example, how to delineate a wetland, is to walk through the wetland with the students and let them use the auger themselves to extract soil at various points to determine where the wetland begins and ends. This will undoubtedly work for some students. Too often, a learning process is started with the mentor giving students a technical definition, which can be very unhelpful to learners who have no experiential sense of the phenomenon being defined. However, some students' cognitive processing may work best if they are first given an overview of the wetland, or an introduction to different soil types, before they start trudging through the mud. The point about cognitivism is that it gives considerable thought to *how* people learn.

d) Constructivism

Constructivism similarly gives attention to mental processes, but here the mind is seen less as a computer and more as active in building and changing its own constructs. In one branch of constructivism (social constructivism), the role of social and cultural contexts in shaping our individual constructs is also highlighted. This is a powerful and currently very popular set of educational ideas. It was referred to in the introduction of outcomes-based education to the South African education system, and it can also be found (more successfully) in some approaches to social learning (see below). Constructivism has roots in the discoveries of the educational psychologist, Piaget, and the socio-psychology research of Vygotsky. The learner is regarded as actively involved in their own learning, and

the mentor is more of a guide or facilitator than a teacher determining the exact nature of the learning. The mentor does more than simply provide knowledge input.

Constructivism is different from behaviourism and cognitivism in that the learners or mentees are encouraged to make up their own minds on the basis of their experience. This approach is popular for talent management, and the mentor provides or points out a variety of learning opportunities for the mentee to expand his/her understanding and perspective. The importance of recognising what one already knows, and building on that existing knowledge, is another key feature of the constructivist approach to learning. The common saying is: 'Start with what the learner already knows'. The mentor would encourage the mentee to reflect on his/her actions and experiences and to generate unique and creative solutions.

You may be able to see that some of the other learning theories, and indeed some of the social theories described below, incorporate elements of constructivism.

e) Action Learning

Action learning theories emphasise learning that starts not by listening, studying or thinking, but by doing. *Reflection* on our actions and the outcomes of our actions would then follow and contribute to the learning, in preparation for further action. Coaching is a form of mentoring that often draws on action learning. The coach would work with a mentee to reflect on the outcomes of his or her past actions: What worked for you? What does not work for you? Why not? Then plan for a particular action that needs to be taken, with further reflection on the outcomes of that action to follow. The organisational context will provide opportunities for action, problem-solving and experimentation. For example, the mentee may be preparing to take on a top leadership role in a company or organisation. She may ask a coach to help her with a particular challenge she has, for example to run board meetings effectively. She could stand in for the current CEO on occasion, trying out some new approaches she had formulated, based on some limitations she had observed in previous Board meetings. She would try this out, then report back to her coach/mentor, and together they would reflect on what worked and what did not work, and what she could do differently in future.

f) Social Learning

Social learning emphasises that we also learn by following the example of others. This often happens unconsciously, but it can become the basis for a conscious mentoring programme.

An example might be a young professional who was working in formal conservation but studied environmental law part-time, with a view to doing environmental advocacy work. He approached a seasoned campaigner, a renowned environmental activist whom he admired. The activist agreed to serve as a mentor to the younger professional, but said she had very limited time. Her approach was to invite the

Learning Theory: "Human beings tend to emulate the behaviour they see in others whom they respect and admire." (Ehrich et al., 2001)

younger person to accompany her as she visited mining companies and organised round table discussions between mining houses, government departments and environmental lobby groups. She thought that by following her around, seeing how she sets things up, handled situations and dealt with questions and issues, the mentee would learn a considerable amount. To optimise social learning, the younger professional could offer to volunteer some of his time as an apprentice to the environmental activist, in the process learning more practical skills such as taking minutes, setting meeting agendas, and preparing for court. (Note that there are also broader interpretations of social learning that are more transformative in nature, where all parties learn from their collective engagement in a situation.)

g) Transformative Learning

Here, the aim is not to transfer knowledge or orientate a mentee to an established practice, but to *change* an understanding, an approach and/or a situation. The assumption is that there is a particular problem that can only be addressed through deep or radical change, and that mentoring should be understood within this context of desired change. The exact nature of the change required might not be known, i.e. the process of transformation might be open-ended.

An example is Otto Scharmer's (2009) approach to leadership development. In a presentation to the World Bank, this leadership development specialist argued that leaders today have to deal with highly complex and challenging situations. Therefore, he argued, we cannot develop leadership competencies by simply transferring (passing on) knowledge or developing technical competencies. He proposed that leaders in complex organisational contexts also need transformational competencies, which include self-knowledge and identifying themselves as agents of change. Leaders further need relational competencies, that is, the ability to work with others who may have very different values and approaches. In the process, they may have to *un-learn* some of what they had already learnt over years of training and/or work.

So Scharmer's leadership development process involves a supported learning situation in which leaders from different contexts work together to tackle a difficult real life challenge and mentors help them with the associated learning challenges. Think, for example, of environmental NGOs, government, and mining companies working together to tackle acid mine drainage. In the process they would have to draw on their collective experiences (and other sources of knowledge and insight) and generate new understandings of and approaches to the problem; they would learn from their actions and from each other. This is a social learning process. It is difficult, and it can be supported in mentoring fashion by one or more resource persons (who could be members of the group) working with the environmental leaders, helping them to navigate the tricky situation and reflect on, and learn from, the experience (elements of adaptive management principles), thus gaining both deeply personal and collective insights.

Transformative learning may open up uncharted territory. The mentors need to be willing to find, and let mentees find, completely new and unexpected directions. (The concept of emergence, from systems and complexity theory, applies.)

In the next set of theories, social learning will feature again; as much as it is a learning theory, it is also a social and organisational development theory that is prominent in the 'communities of practice' approach popularised by Wenger et al. (2011).

2.4.3. Social and Economic Theories

The theories in this cluster draw on the social sciences and economics. More than learning theories and developmental theories of mentoring, they conceive of mentoring as playing a role in an organisational, sectoral or national context. There is recognition of the developmental and learning needs of the mentee, and therefore mentoring might take various forms, but these are seen first and foremost in terms of the bigger context.

Table 2.3: *Social and Economic Theories for Mentoring (Dominguez, 2013)*

SOCIAL & ECONOMIC THEORIES	COMPONENTS	CONTRIBUTIONS TO MENTORING	IMPLICATIONS FOR MENTORING PROGRAMME DESIGN
Socialisation	Observation and interaction with role models; Sense of belonging, connectedness; Transmission of implicit cultural values.	Mentor role: Role model; Mentee: Apprentice; Outcomes: Transmission of information, career development, satisfaction, retention, performance.	Programme designed around role modelling for acculturation purposes; Directed / co-directed / self-directed learning plan; Environment facilitates pairing and socialisation for organisational outcomes.
Human / Social Capital	Learning for the generation of human / social capital for the country / sector.	Mentor role: Multiple mentoring functions; Mentee: Active / receptive; Outcomes: Human / social capital.	Programme designed for mutual organisational / individual benefits; Directed, co- or self-directed learning plan; Environment facilitates opportunities for multiple mentoring interactions.
Social Exchange / Leader-Member Exchange	Cost-benefit analysis determines relationships; Goal oriented relationships.	Mentor role: Multiple mentoring functions; Mentee: Active / receptive; Outcomes: Motivation, personal and organisational goals for both mentors and mentees.	Programme designed for mutual organisational / individual benefits; Directed, co- or self-directed learning plans; Environment rewards mutuality.

Social Network	Developmental networks.	<p>Mentor role: Multiple mentoring functions, relationships.</p> <p>Mentee: Active / receptive;</p> <p>Outcomes: Network strength through interactions across multiple social systems, connectedness, and commitment of members.</p>	<p>Programme designed for multiple, diversified mentoring relationships;</p> <p>Directed, co- or self-directed learning plans through multiple mentoring moments / relationships;</p> <p>Environment extends across personal, organisational, professional and community networks.</p>
Communities of Practice	<p>Legitimate peripheral participation of newcomers;</p> <p>Developmental networks within the community and across borders.</p>	<p>Mentor role: Multiple mentoring functions, relationships;</p> <p>Mentee: Active / receptive;</p> <p>Outcomes: Community development, creative expansion through the sharing of information across networks.</p>	<p>Programmes designed for multiple, diversified mentoring relationships within and across networks;</p> <p>Directed, co- or self-directed plans through multiple networks;</p> <p>Environment provides movement from the periphery to central roles for the community.</p>

a) Socialisation

Socialisation is an approach to mentoring which focusses on helping a mentee ‘fit in’ in a new context such as a workplace. It draws on some of the learning theories described above. Mentoring activities are opportunities for mentees to get to know and identify with a particular place of study or work. Role models are a key feature. The ‘programme’ may be quite informal and not even consciously structured, or simply part of the traditions in a particular institutional context.

Case Example 2.2 refers to an annual field trip that has been traditionally used to give postgraduate students an opportunity to socialise with the existing professionals in a particular field of work (at the same time applying and extending their theoretical learning practically in the field). On such trips, mentees may meet future mentors, future employers, and future co-workers; they get to know the sector and its practices in ways which they could not do in the classroom. Outside the classroom, individuals have opportunities to get to know each other more informally, and find out who they would be able to work with; hence ‘pairing’ can take place. Field trip experiences (going to places very few get to see, doing exciting research, facing hardships and having fun) can be the basis on which bonds are formed that last throughout the participants’ careers. Years

later they may still draw on, publish with, appoint or be appointed by, colleagues they got to know on such trips.

The outcomes of such socialisation experiences can be very good for the sector; like-minded people become socialised to continue in a particular field, and grow it, and the next generation of professionals are available to take over from those who went before, upholding valuable traditions. The down-side is that the socialisation approach may also prevent transformation (should this be required) as it does not encourage new ways of thinking and doing. Also those who are not like-minded, or can for cultural or other reasons not readily 'fit in' without a special effort being made, may have difficulty in finding an entry point into such networks, both during the experience or after.

Activity 2.3

Besides the field trip, can you think of other common activities that serve the purpose of socialisation in our sector?

Who are the mentors and what roles do they play?

In your experience, do they have particular advantages and drawbacks?

b) Human/Social Capital Development

Building human or social capital is about strengthening the human resource base of a country (in particular, its economy) or a sector, by improving the skills levels of individuals who work in it. It takes individual needs into account, but mostly at a general level (e.g. qualifications). Its focus is predominantly on national or sector-wide needs. For example, it may focus on the use of mentoring to address a national or sector need for particular scarce skills (such as environmental managers or engineers). Planners in the

Strategic Integrated Programmes (SIPs) promoted by government to create wealth and employment, have identified that South Africa has a scarcity of environmental managers. A programme could therefore be put into place to train and mentor environmental managers to take up positions in the SIPs.

In relation to mentoring, human capital development is a very broad theory, thus mentors will play a variety of roles and the mentoring programmes may take a variety of forms, depending on the specific needs of the situation. It would therefore be important to identify *why* there is a scarcity in a particular occupational skill. For example, are there too few graduates who choose a particular postgraduate specialism? Informed and inspiring mentors would then be required at university to encourage this study choice. Alternatively, graduates may be qualifying in this field but choosing not to work in it, or not for long, due to organisational conditions. Informed and inspiring mentors would then be needed in the workplace.

c) Social Exchange/Leader-Member Exchange

Social Exchange or Leader-Member Exchange theory acknowledges that people, and in particular the leadership in organisations or companies, may weigh up the cost versus the benefits before they invest in mentoring. To a business, mentoring means money, for while staff are busy mentoring they are not generating wealth or running income-generating projects. On the other hand, mentoring is an investment in the development of skills of new staff who are learning to function well in the company, and/or learning new skills; this is possibly more cost-effective than if they had been sent away on training. So the company weighs up the cost of mentoring versus the benefits.

In the environmental sector, where human and other resources are scarce, organisations lament the fact that they 'put a lot into' an intern or young professional through mentoring, only to lose that person within a short interval, when they change jobs. The cost to the organisation may therefore seem to outweigh the benefit. However, from a human/social capital point of view, provided the person continues working in an environment related job, the mentoring input has not been lost, as it has still been to the benefit of the sector. For this reason, programmes like GreenMatter and Groen Sebenza build and encourage mentoring skills to be shared across organisations.

At an individual level, when a person decides whether they take on a mentoring task or not, cost versus benefit may also be weighed up. In universities, for example, mentoring a colleague costs an academic time that they could rather spend on doing research and publishing – activities that have known rewards for the academic. Universities therefore need to create an environment that not only offers incentives for individual excellence, but also for *mutuality*, that is, a culture of providing mutual support to each other. The two approaches can be complementary. For example, through mentoring, academics may find new research partners and co-publishing opportunities. Or an organisation that provides mentoring to work-integrated learning students from a nearby university may find the relationship with the university brings with it other benefits, such as a joint project with an overseas funder set up through the university, or receiving 'free' research reports that inform management.

Also at an individual level, both the mentor and the mentee may look at the relationship as a reciprocal exchange: an older mentor might share the professional expertise he has built up over years with a younger staff member, who may in turn be prepared to assist the older mentor with coming to grips with unfamiliar social media or a new software programme. Many established researchers work with junior scientists or students in a reciprocal relationship where both parties write a paper on the junior researcher's study; the less experienced party shares their data in exchange for the more experienced party's know-how and networks, which are often essential in facilitating the writing and publishing process.

Activity 2.4

Discuss the costs and benefits of mentoring in your own context.

d) Social Network

Here the goal of mentoring is to help the mentees build networks; the theory is that expanding networks is developmental in nature, i.e. that social and professional connections will help mentees achieve developmental goals such as finding a university, bursary or supervisor for their intended studies; for finding employment or business opportunities; or finding organisational or funding partners for the work they would like to do.

In the GreenMatter programme, the fellows who receive bursaries or professional grants are encouraged to expand their networks amongst peers and established professionals. To this end, GreenMatter organises special networking training and events as part of the fellowship (Rosenberg and Manzini, 2014). Resources are used to bring fellows from around the country together, and to meet with established professionals in the field. A specialist provides training on how to network effectively, and fellows consider their existing network and how and why they would like to expand it. They also practise how they would introduce themselves and their work to a stranger in a succinct and inspiring

manner. Networking opportunities are created, where they put their learning into practice. In this way many useful additions are made to existing networks of both younger and older professionals.

Mentoring might take many forms with this approach. Sometimes, the mentor would be a sponsor who would introduce a mentee to potentially useful contacts, in such a way that the contact would know the strong points of the mentee, and why it would be worth making time to meet him/her. At other times, mentoring takes place through 'mentoring moments' (PureCoach, 2013), for example a short conversation where the mentor listens carefully to the mentee and shares contact details of professionals with whom to follow up to address a specific need that became apparent during the conversation. This approach is particularly useful for people who do not have extensive networks relevant to a particular context.

Activity 2.5

Can you think of examples of a need to extend personal, organisational, professional and community networks, in a context you have observed?

e) Communities of Practice

Communities of practice is the final social theory that we consider. Like the other social theories discussed here, it is as much an organisational or sector development theory as a theory for building individual capacity. It has been developed inter alia by the educational theorist Etienne Wenger, whose work with the anthropologist Jean Lave and others has seeded a growing body of research around the world that is increasingly popular in business contexts (Wenger et al., 2011).

Wenger studied how newcomers to a particular practice or field of work (such as tailors, accountants or school teachers) get to know how to do the job. A key concept is the idea of 'legitimate peripheral participation', meaning more or less that one is recognised as a

Community: In South Africa we often use the term 'community' to refer to people who (we assume) share a cultural, economic and/or geographic identity. In this theory, 'community' refers to people sharing a practice. It can be a work practice (e.g. research or teaching) or a hobby, cultural activity, etc. Professional communities of practice can be dispersed globally. They often come together at annual conferences, for example, and stay in touch via email or digital forums

newcomer or rookie and treated in particular ways (which differ from context to context). Eventually (if one is successfully inducted) one learns from other practitioners (not only masters), moves to the 'centre' of this community of practice and becomes one of the recognised core members, who in turn induct others into the community.

The practice of a particular community is explicit (for example, the written rules or standards that have to be followed in a particular job) but also implicit or tacit, that is, not spoken about or perhaps not even recognised by the participants themselves, for example, the extent to which the explicit rules or standards can be overlooked, or not, in a particular context, such as accounting or teaching.

The mentee can be active or receptive depending on the context, but often works as a kind of apprentice alongside the more experienced members of the community.

You may find that you are part of more than one community of practice. One of the most important ways of becoming more effective at environmental work is to cross borders between communities of practice, for cross-sector collaboration (e.g. integrated development planning). In integrated water resource management, for example, the different communities of practice who need to learn to work together may include commercial agriculture, emerging farmers, conservation stewards, local government (different branches), hydrologists, educators, freshwater ecologists, wetland specialists, Working for Water teams, academics, small and larger NGOs, and more!

A professional may want to make a career change, or to respond to calls and funding opportunities that emphasise the need to work across disciplinary boundaries. Moving from a single discipline or field (such as freshwater ecology) to another (such as biodiversity conservation) can be surprisingly hard to do, even if, from a distance, they are not that different. The professionals making this move would often look for mentors to help them find a foothold in the new community of practice. The established practitioners in the field may in turn be more or less motivated to help the newcomer find that foothold in this new 'community of practice'.

Activity 2.6

What are the communities of practice in your own context?

Are you a peripheral participant or at the centre of the community?

How did you get to be there?

2.5 The Use of Mentoring Theories

It should be clear that if one wanted to study mentoring, or perhaps evaluate the value and impact of mentoring, then it would be important to decide which theories of mentoring apply in the particular context or situation.

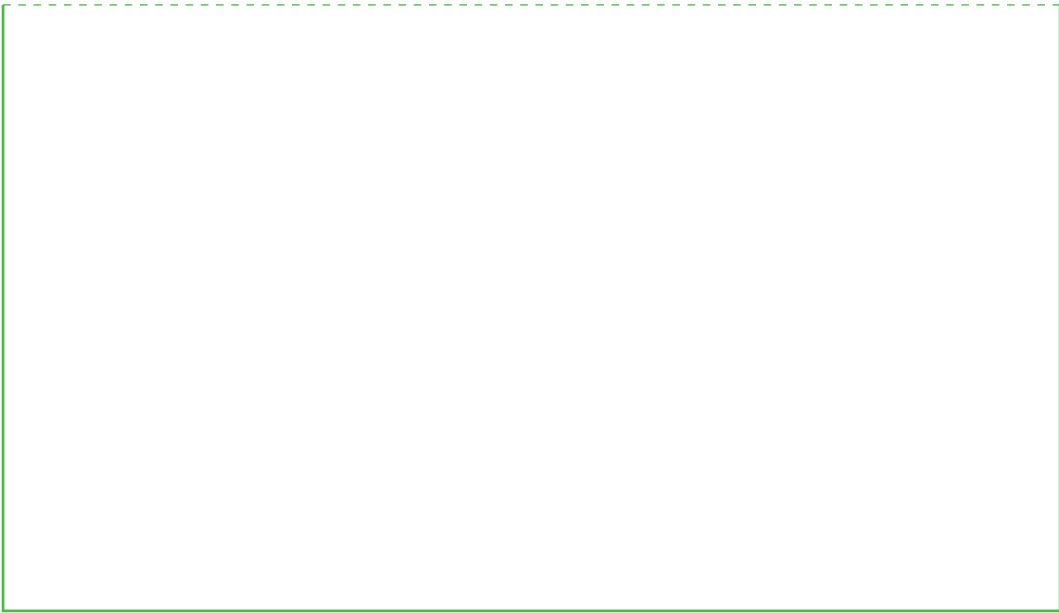
Activity 2.7

If we are not researchers or evaluators, and we are not studying mentoring as a formal subject, does the knowledge of theories of mentoring still benefit us in any way? Discuss this question in a small group or plenary, before reading further.

An initial observation, when reviewing the theories of mentoring, is that there is certainly more than one approach to mentoring. This challenges us to question: Do we have a default understanding of mentoring that we apply without much thinking to all situations? It may be the older person assisting the younger person with a developmental phase; or the trainer or lecturer sharing their expert knowledge with trainees or graduates; or a long-established staff member engaging with a colleague new to the organisation. The theories and examples above show that there can be many different kinds of mentoring relationships and mentoring programmes, depending on one's understanding of what mentoring should achieve, and how. Different theories will advocate different kinds of mentoring activities to achieve the different intended outcomes.

Activity 2.8

Revisit Activity 2.1. With your expanded knowledge of different theories, re-do this activity. Which theory or theories would suit each of the situations described in the case examples?



“There is no formula to follow for mentoring.”

(Ehrich et al., 2001)

Mentors may be relieved to consider that there is more than one way to mentor and no single mentoring formula to follow. The summaries of mentoring theories in the tables show that mentors play a variety of roles; some are similar, and some quite different in approach.

Below is a list of mentor roles taken from the GreenMatter Fellowship *Learning Portfolio: Powerful Conversations – Strengthening Mentoring Capacity in the Biodiversity Sector* (PureCoach, 2013). These roles describe the varying aspects of the ‘job’ of a mentor.

Table 2.4: *The Roles Mentors Play (PureCoach, 2013)*

Ally	provides assistance and support; stands by mentee in critical situations
Catalyst	someone who speeds up a reaction, change or insight that would have occurred anyway, but at a much slower rate; offers challenging ideas; provides growth experiences
Networker	exchanges information that brings about working relationships; makes introductions
Advocate or Sponsor	someone who speaks, pleads, or argues in your favour
Advisor	a consultant or counsellor who has expertise or insight; gives recommendations and expert advice; offers wise counsel; assists with mentee's career
Listener	a trusted, non-judgemental audience and sounding board
Coach	a professional and personal developer that partners, instructs, trains; helps build self-confidence; triggers self-awareness

Role model	someone who is admired and worthy of imitation; someone whose behaviour and attitude is copied by others; teaches by example; inspires
Teacher	a wise guide; helps others acquire knowledge, information, or skills; shows others how to do things; participates in learning new things; encourages professional behaviour; offers quotable quotes
Companion	someone who enjoys spending time with mentee; talking and listening, sharing interests and experiences; offers friendship, listens to personal narrative
Supporter	someone who is loyal, boosts mentee's self-esteem; conveys warmth and caring about mentee; gives support to mentee's efforts; listens to mentee's ideas and concerns; expresses belief in mentee's abilities; offers encouragement
Resource	someone who is a source of information; provides opportunities to try new things; introduces mentee to new people, places, interests, or ideas; encourages mentee to approach other people as resources; suggests new sources of information; explains how the department / company / industry works; shares critical knowledge
Navigator	<p>Everyone will encounter unpleasant situations, setbacks or problems. Navigating means helping others through these situations, or building bridges for people to cross from where they are to where they want to be.</p> <p>A navigator defines the destination.</p> <p>Helps people recognise where they want to go. Helps them connect with what their passions and compassions are. What upsets them? What touches them? What gives them joy? What makes them enthusiastic? What are their visions and dreams?</p> <p>A navigator plots the course: Helps people turn their visions and dreams into reality by plotting a course and setting goals. Gives attention to these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Where they need to go; ■ What they need to know; and ■ How they need to grow. <p>A navigator thinks ahead: Prepares people for the things they are going to face. Recognises problems before they become emergencies. To help them prepare for potential difficulties, helps them understand that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Everybody faces problems; ■ Successful people face more problems than unsuccessful people; and ■ Problems provide opportunities for growth. <p>A navigator makes course corrections: Even the best-planned projects can go off course. You need to equip people with problem-solving skills so they can get back on course. It would help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Train them not to listen to doubting critics; ■ Coach them not to be overwhelmed by challenges; ■ Encourage them to seek simple solutions; and ■ Instil confidence in them. <p>A navigator stays with people: Take the trip together with the people you are guiding. Travel alongside as a friend.</p>

Activity 2.9

In plenary or small groups, find examples of where you or someone you know have acted in each of these mentoring roles. What made this role necessary or appropriate in the particular situation? Was it in some cases perhaps not appropriate?

Alternatively, think of situations related to your context in which each of these mentoring roles may be needed.

It can be liberating to know that you do not have to mentor in the same way as someone else does. But the diversity of approaches to mentoring can also be a bit daunting. How does one decide which theory and approach to use?

The choice of theory and approach will be influenced by one's context and the overall intentions of the sector and/or the organisation, depending on the level at which one is working. It will also depend on the needs of the mentees, of course! Greater or lesser emphasis will be given to the individual mentee and mentor, depending on the contextual aims.

Activity 2.10

Can you see that choosing the wrong approach for a particular context could lead to a mismatch not only of the mentor and mentee, but also of the mentoring approach to the mentee and/or the organisational needs?

While protecting individuals' and organisations' identities where necessary, share examples of where such a mismatch between needs and approach may have been the case.

With a basic knowledge of different approaches to and underlying theoretical assumptions about mentoring, employers or university managers are in a better position to make choices when they appoint mentoring providers, consultants, or their own staff to develop mentoring programmes for the organisation, or to act as mentors. Without this, managers run the risk of appointing a consultant or service provider who has a particular area of expertise, based on a particular approach to mentoring which may not be suitable for (all) the needs the managers are trying to address. Theoretical knowledge of mentoring will help the manager draw up a clearer terms of reference; this will make it clearer to the prospective mentor or mentoring provider whether they can take on the task, and if they do, where they should put their emphasis.

With a basic knowledge of mentoring theories, managers and mentor trainers are also in a good position to design plans to monitor and evaluate their mentoring programmes. This is because they are clear what mentoring is meant to achieve, what sorts of activities best suit this intention, what successful outcomes would look like and at what level to look for them (e.g. individual, organisational or sector).

You might also have concluded that, in fact, a variety of mentoring approaches could be appropriate in a particular context. Use the situational analysis work you have completed in Module 1 to help identify the contextual needs that should be addressed through mentoring, and then match them up to one or more theories outlined here. For practice, try Activity 2.11.

Activity 2.11

Work with partners to customise a mentoring plan for a particular context. Study the organisational scenarios below, in case examples 2.4 to 2.8. Then choose a suitable mentoring approach for each of them. Refer back to the tables in Section 2.4 for guidance. Describe your chosen approach by answering the questions below. In the report back, provide reasons for your answers.

- What should be the purpose or intended outcomes of mentoring in each of the scenarios in the case examples?
- Around what key aspect of the context would you design the mentoring programme?
- What would the role(s) of the mentor be?
- What would the role(s) of the mentee be?
- What activities and opportunities (for learning, development, networking, etc) would there be in your mentoring programme?
- Which theory or theories of mentoring best describe your chosen approach?

Case Example 2.4

Museums are finding it hard to hold on to talented taxonomists. This is despite the fact that people are graduating in Taxonomy. How can mentoring help the country and the environmental sector to fill more posts with contented taxonomists committed to a career in this field? Outline a mentoring plan for this situation by answering the questions in Activity 2.11.

Case Example 2.5

Three recent Botany graduates from Limpopo Province are offered internships with a bio-regional research and community development programme in the Northern Cape. They and their managers have a number of challenges, including a small staff base in the Northern Cape office and no contextual knowledge among the interns; on the positive side, the interns speak several of the local languages, and there are a number of semi-retired farmers in the area who have collaborated with the programme before. Outline a mentoring plan for this situation by answering the questions in Activity 2.11.

Case Example 2.6

An environmental NGO is struggling to find a suitable CEO who has a strong environmental background, organisational leadership and management skills, and the ability to develop new partnerships for the organisation. Talented young people join the organisation as junior staff, but there is a pattern of losing staff as they become more experienced. The existing senior staff lack one or more of the required skills sets. Outline a strategic, organisation-wide mentoring plan for this situation by answering the questions in Activity 2.11.

Case Example 2.7

A senior scientist has recently been appointed as head of a new research unit. She is very creative in her field and has published internationally acclaimed work. However, graduates have been scared to join her research programme and funders are complaining about her demanding and impatient way of work. Outline a mentoring plan to support the scientist in her new post, by answering the questions in Activity 2.11.

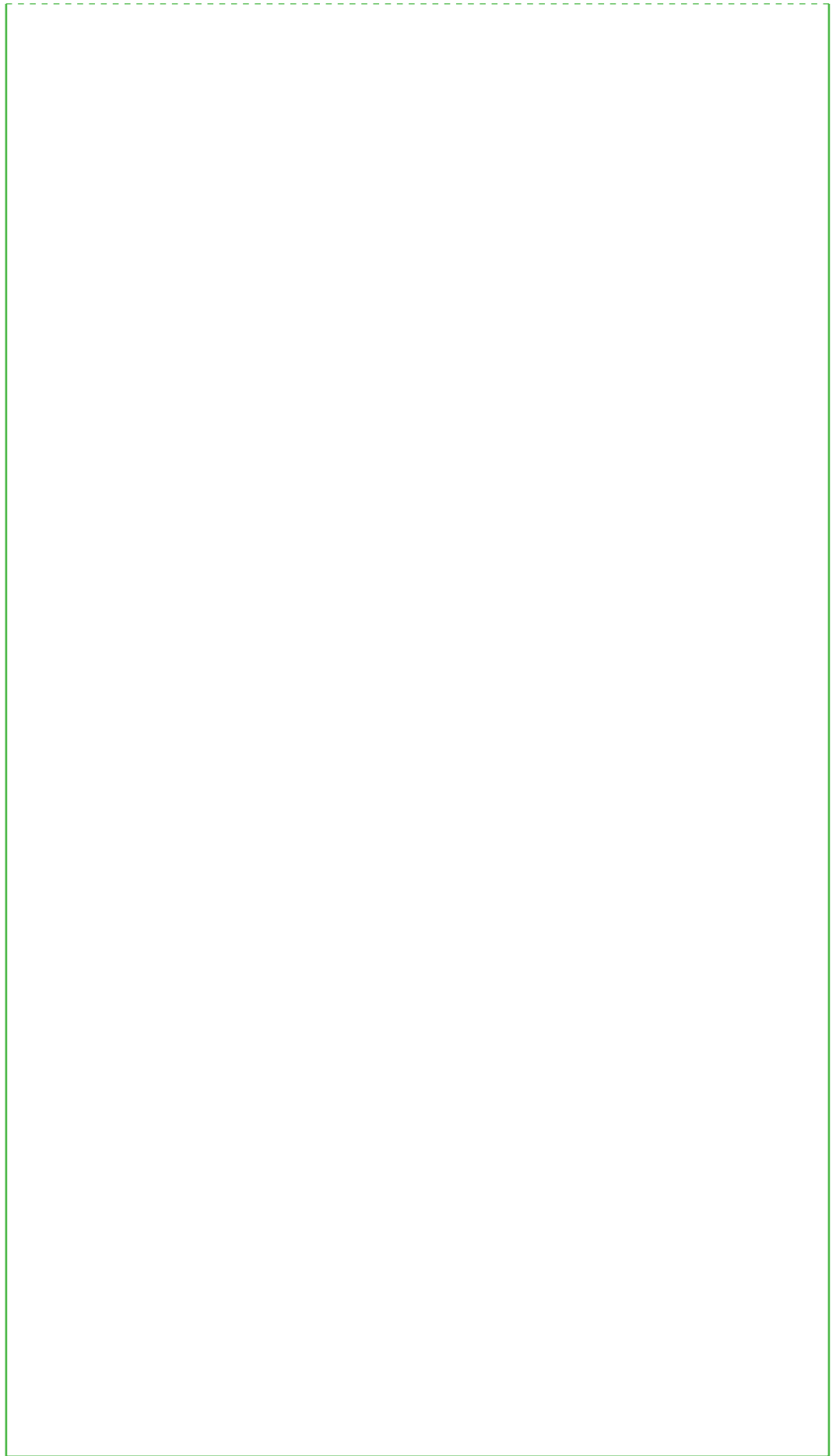
Case Example 2.8

A former company director turned environmental lobbyist is about to retire. He wants to 'give back' to the field by mentoring young professionals. However, he has been told that his approach to conservation is outdated and out of touch with the needs of young people, particularly black graduates. Outline *one or more* mentoring plans for this situation by answering the questions in Activity 2.11.

Activity 2.12

Write your own conclusion to the chapter and review your learning by answering these questions:

- How would you categorise different approaches to mentoring?
- What are the key features of development theories of mentoring?
- What are the key features of learning theories of mentoring?
- What are the key features of social theories of mentoring?
- Which is your favourite theory of mentoring, and why?
- How would you decide on the mentoring approach to use in a particular situation?
- What problems might arise in an organisation where no-one knows any mentoring theory? Who should know about mentoring theories?



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