**Individual Development Plan**

**Vision Statement**

To assist fresh IT professionals, develop insight of what is entailed in the practice in order to improve their competence in provision of quality services to the society, identify their strengths and weaknesses, enhance their career growth and appreciate IT as a profession (How Can You Initiate Mentorship, 2013).

**Value Preposition**

The mentorship program aims at adding value to IT professionals and students through development of social and professional skills in IT for fresh IT students, graduates and young professionals with little experience in the field. I hope to instill leadership skills, inspire and cultivate professional qualities in fresh IT professional in the field; the reason behind this is because I want to nurture their career as early as possible through proper guidance (Wilkes, Joyce & Edmond, 2011).

**Advantages of the program**

Many students venture into professional careers that they have no passion for and those they do not understand (Chan, 2015). My mentorship program will help IT professionals understand what is entailed in the profession as well as inspiring them to pursue the profession as well as stipulating various ways in which it is used to help the society and solve technological problems (How Can You Initiate Mentorship, 2013). Moreover, the program will be used to help the mentees appreciate IT profession, determine their strengths and weaknesses, develop their programming and leadership skills in a bid to propel their career forward via constructive criticism (Chan, 2015).

**Mentee Group**

Apparently, the program targets young IT professionals cultivate and understand the profession, the challenges, advantages and the skills involved in the profession. In addition, the mentorship program creates a networking program with other experienced professionals to help fresh and continuing undergraduate students face and solve challenges in IT as well as helping them appreciate being IT experts (Wilkes, Joyce & Edmond, 2011).

**Needs Assessment**

As my mentee is a fresh IT graduate who is venturing into the IT profession, it would be wise to handle her carefully in a systematic mentorship program. One of the basic needs that she should understand is the objectives of the program. She should be able to understand what the mentorship program is all about and what she wants to achieve by the end of the session (Meyer & Fourie, 2004). Secondly, the program needs to ensure that she understands the important roles that IT as a profession has played to the society and the way the profession can help her develop financially as well. Apparently, to put a vivid picture of how successful people can get through IT as a profession, a dinner session with dignitaries and prominent IT experts will be held whereby she will attend just to rub shoulders with them as an inspiration (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2005).

Thirdly, without understanding what IT is all about, the program will not have a meaning. Apparently, she may have the theoretical knowledge of the profession, but she needs to be mentored on the practical and professional side of the IT practice (Meyer & Fourie, 2004). Moreover, the mentee needs to be guided on the sectors that she can specialize in IT as it is a broad profession. She will be guided on how to go about the most fitting specialization I reference to her acquired skills and her interests. Moreover, communication skills are a crucial area in the mentorship program. Besides, since she is now a young professional, she has to know how to handle clients in a professional and eloquent way with confidence (Lucas, 2003).

Furthermore, IT is a long term profession but the mentee has to set her short term goals that will be used as stepping stones to her strategic plans and success in the profession. Therefore, the program will assist her on how to prioritize and arrange her needs and goals towards a successful career (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2005). Moreover, another need that the program will address is that of interpersonal and collaborative skills. In order to deal with others, she has to know how to interact with them, how to ask for assistance and how to help others. Besides, this is where skills in consultations and feedback will be developed as well as guiding her on how to develop a cognitive work schedule for professional development (Meyer & Fourie, 2004).

The other needs that the program will address are the change of attitude for the mentee towards IT as a profession. She needs to ensure that she has interest and the inner motivation towards the profession. Moreover, the issue of setting strategic goals that are smart will be addressed as IT requires a lot of planning. Apparently, IT is not a one-man profession (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2005). As a result, there is need to cultivate networking skills in her so that she is able to expand her web of opportunities in the profession. Sometimes, she will encounter challenges in the profession and as a result, she will need to be mentored on how to cope up with such issues both physically and emotionally. On the other hand, the program will help her strengthen her programming skills by taking her through various programming sessions and the best way to handle programming problems (Lucas, 2003).

Finally, IT is mostly based on short term or strategic projects, therefore, there is need to mentor her on how to handle such projects and the things to consider in each type of a project. Moreover, to make the mentorship program interesting, there will be periodic rewards and incentives for the mentee so that she keeps her morale up and interest are created (Lucas, 2003). A mentorship program should be motivating and interesting rather than a continuous important but boring approach to issues. Therefore, the short term program will take a period of six months and the long term program will take about one to two years. As a result, she will emerge to be one best IT professions that there can be (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2005).

**Short-Term and Long-Term Goals**

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| **Short-Term Goal** | **Timeframe** | **Reward or Incentive** |
| Understand objectives of the Mentorship program | 1 Week  |  |
| Understand the advantages of IT to the mentee and the society as a profession | 1 Week | Dinner with iconic IT experts at the end of the session |
| Understand what IT entails | 1 Week |  |
| Determining the best area of Specialization in IT and exploration of the available options | 3 Weeks | A tour to visit different IT firms to see what they do |
| Improve communication skills | 3 Weeks (Coaching) | Attend a communication skills 2-day  |
| Set clear short term career goals | 1 Week | A journal as a gift |
| Develop a practical working schedule | 1 Month (coaching) | A watch-gift for inspiration and helping the mentee keep time |
| Promote interpersonal and collaboration skills | 1 Month | Attend a three-day teamwork and leadership program |
| Importance of Consultations and feedback in IT  | 1 Month |  |

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| **Long-Term Goal** | **Timeframe** | **Reward or Incentive** |
| Develop positive attitude towards IT | 3 Weeks | Inspirational video on successful IT profession stories |
| Set strategic career goals | 2 Weeks | A career guide book on strategic planning |
| Learn how to network with other IT professionals | 3 Months | Visit various IT firms and industries for 1 week |
| Learn how the best way to cope up with and deal with IT challenges | 6 months | 1 week to a sponsored vocational tour |
| Develop different programming skills | 6 Months (Coaching) | Attend programming classes with the best IT gurus for guidance |
| How to handle IT projects | 6 Months (coaching) | Financing a small IT project for the mentee to see if she can apply her acquired skills and succeed |

**Individual Development Plan Outline**

**Mentor Value Proposition**:

Molding of young IT experts into successful professionals

**Mentee's Vision:**

Improve IT skills and grow into an effective IT professional

Needs Assessment Results:

• Mentee realized the importance of the Mentorship program

• Developed an informed IT professional with cognitive skills

• Mentee improved his communication skills

• Mentee’s programming skills improved

**Short-Term Goals** (0-6 months):

• Understanding mentorship program objectives

• Advantages of IT

• Improve communication skills

• Setting clear SMART goals

• Practical working schedule

• Interpersonal and collaboration skills

• Improving consultations and feedback

**Long-Term Goals** (6 months-2 years):

• Positive IT attitude

• Setting of strategic career goals

• Networking with IT professionals

• Dealing with IT challenges

• Programming skills

• Handling IT Projects

**Activities to Meet Short-Term Goals**:

• Understanding mentorship programs: Holding regular meetings to discuss what the mentee wants to achieve by the end of the mentorship program.

• Advantages of IT: Taking the mentee to different IT firms for her to see the success that IT profession has impacted on people and the benefits that come with it.

• Understanding what IT entails: Holding numerous workshops and conferences for the mentee to participate in order for her to understand all about IT.

• Best Area of IT specialization: Taking a visit to different IT firms to go and see what they do so that the mentee can ascertain what she wants.

• Improving communication skills: Ensuring a communication practicing platform to ensure that IT jargons and professionalism is enhanced.

• Setting short term career goals: Ensuring that the mentee puts down what they want to achieve in a journal for easy follow up

• Interpersonal and collaborative skills: ensure that the mentee attends teamwork workshops and leadership programs at least once per week.

• Consultation and feedback in IT: Ensure that a face to face talk takes place to emphasize on the importance of prompt feedback and consultations before solving a problem

**Activities to Meet Long-Term Goals**:

• Positive attitude towards IT: Take the mentee for interaction with IT dignitaries and experts so that she can have a one to one talk on IT entailment.

• Strategic career goals: Guide the mentee on the best way to set career goals

• Networking with IT professionals: Visiting various firms and taking a one-day voluntary service in various departments so as to know various IT personnel.

• Developing programming skills: Taking programming sessions to strengthen the skills that the mentee has

• Handling IT project: Financing an IT project for the mentee to measure her skills as well as spark her IT career.

**Mentoring Techniques**:

 When it comes to the mentoring techniques, there are various approaches that one can use to achieve career mentoring. In this case the following technique was used on my mentee to impact IT skills in her and mature her IT profession (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2005). First of all, the mentor has to have effective listening skills. Apparently, communication is enhanced through having the habit of listening to your mentee and the vice versa to create an environment that is ideal. Moreover, the protégé’s needs and interests are ascertained. Moreover, body language has to be used in order to determine what the mentee or the mentor wants or intended to communicate as it is also able to read their emotions (Straus & Sackett, 2014).

 Secondly, it was important to build trust between the mentor and the mentee. Every time we had a communication with the mentee, confidentiality of the conversations was of at most interest. In addition, anytime that there are meetings, the mentor has to ensure that he or she honors the scheduled meeting or even phone calls. Apparently, consistency ensures that the mentee feels the value of the program and the interest of assistance that the mentor is offering. Trust is the ultimate aspect that makes mentees open up to their mentor and as a result the program succeeds fully (Straus & Sackett, 2014).

Thirdly, determining and setting of goals by the mentee should be enhanced. Besides, the mentor must have his own well-stipulated goals and the potential to build and realize them. Moreover, the mentor should share his or her plans with the mentee so that he or she can understand how the goals were set and how they have been realized so far (Straus & Sackett, 2014). Besides, it is through finding such resources as books and web information that the mentee gets assistance on how to set her goals. It is here that the responsibilities and organizational perceptions of the mentee are outlined (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2005).

 The other step involves encouraging and ensuring that the mentees have the morale to undertake the mentorship program. A good example is when the mentee achieves some progress in the mentorship program, then the mentor should applaud them by commenting favorably on their accomplishments. The aspect of showing the mentees that you believe in them and that they can achieve whatever they want if they put some effort into it is crucial. Besides, the process should involve constant moral support for the mentee with assurance that the process will be effective and they have to persevere (Fee, 2011).

**Coaching Techniques**:

On the other hand, when it comes to the coaching techniques, six strategies have been used to achieve great results. The first technique in coaching is to have a game plan. Apparently, a clear vision of the mentorship program must be stipulated for the mentees to understand where they are going. Moreover, the set game plan has to rhyme and correspond to the mentee’s goals. Besides, this is where the mentor’s goals on the mentee are also stipulated to ensure that he achieves his plans on the mentee (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2005).

Thirdly, from time to time, it would be ideal for the mentor to do periodic drills on the mentees. The drills must be aimed at making the mentee exercise her learnt skills and determine if they are in the right track (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2005). Moreover, the drills help the mentors to determine if the strategies they are using in impacting change on the employees is happening. Moreover, the mentor must ensure that the mentee is in a role that corresponds to her aptitude. Besides, the mentor should not keep on suggesting what to do to the mentee but should ensure full participation and decision making by the mentee in accordance to the stipulated schedule (Straus & Sackett, 2014).

On the other hand, coaching must entail an appropriate communication mode that ensures that the content being conveyed to the mentee is effective and appropriate. Effective communication ensures that the mentee benefits and she has better rapport and long retention on the information she is given by the mentor. Finally, the act of celebration and appreciation of the mentees when they make any form of achievement is appropriate. Apparently, the appreciation and recognition gives morale to the mentee and creates purpose too. Furthermore, it is through motivation that the mentee is able to go through the next hurdle of mentorship (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2005).

**Obstacles or Concerns**:

The mentorship program was a success but it did not go without challenges and obstacles. The first one is based on time investment by the mentor. As the mentee goes through her program, the mentee cannot just neglect his schedules for the mentee. Sometimes the mentor had to reschedule an activity due to issues that came up or even some kind of emergencies (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2005). Moreover, the mentee also had various time challenges which were resolved as time went on.

Other times, the mentor grew impatient with the program as the mentee sometimes doesn’t get things right as they should. Sometimes it was hard for the mentee to realize the sacrifice that has been put in her mentorship program and she forgot to appreciate the effort sometimes. Some other times the program would go to standstill after the mentor band the mentee disagree on some issues (Straus & Sackett, 2014).

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