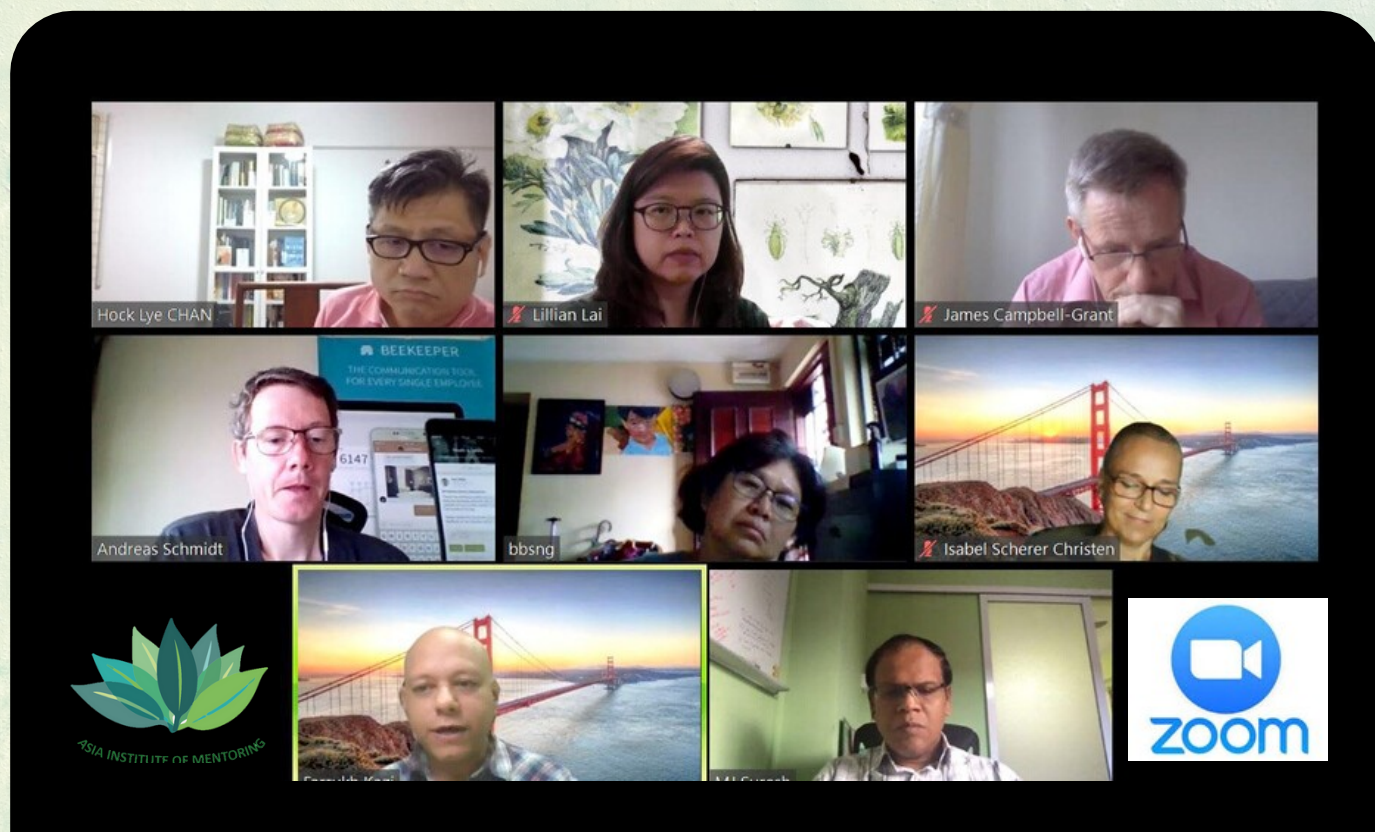




LEARNING CIRCLE INSIGHTS



Structured vs Unstructured Mentoring Meetings

Synopsis

James Campbell-Grant and Chan Hock Lye facilitated the first virtual AIM Learning Circle on structured versus unstructured mentoring.

The discussion was to understand what is considered a structured mentoring, share experiences on how a mentoring session is structured, how to ensure that there is still flexibility and flow of discussion from the mentee and what are the risk if the sessions where too structured or unstructured?

Key point & comments

While we apply proven structures, like the GROW model (which is also part of AIM Certified Professional Mentor program), keeping the free flow of ideas from the mentee is important too.

- Following the discussion of the last learning circle on setting boundaries, the first few sessions of mentoring relationship is likely to more structured to set the objectives and the boundaries, as trust, confidence, are built, it will allow for less structured sessions to explore.



Life happens, so we need to have flexibility to shift the objectives, to adapt to the circumstances. Again, this must be driven by the mentee to meet his/her needs.

How can we structure mentoring sessions?

Using a proven model, like GROW or SMART, helps in the initial stage to channel the discussion towards the desired outcome from the mentee.

- Mentor can help the mentee break down the goals to more granular levels, to achieve early wins and motivate actions towards final goals.
- Mentors and Mentee must take notes during the sessions, especially on the agreed follow-up action items.

Structured mentoring is especially applicable in the imparting of skills.



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Boundaries set at the beginning by establishing rules of engagement & aligning expectations, help build trust and confidentiality leading to a stronger mentor-mentee relationship.



How do we maintain flexibility?

Mentoring sessions should be more like a conversation than work. In the conversation, mentor needs to practise active listening to listen to the unspoken.

- Each session can start with asking what the mentee wants to discuss before going to follow-up items from last session.
- It should allow mentee to talk about their current problem, with the questioning from the mentor, come up with applicable solutions.
- Flexibility also includes challenging the mentee out of his comfort zone with 'fierce' conversation.

What are the risks?

- A model should not be applied rigidly, to the point that it's restrictive to meeting the needs of the mentee.

The structure should not become the

- goal of the mentoring. It should not feel like 'work' to the extent that mentee loses motivation.

While flexibility is necessary, accountability and boundaries should still be respected to

- achieve the purpose of the mentoring conversation.

Summary

Structure is a way to start the mentoring engagement to help set goals and boundaries. However, any structure must be flexible to allow for adaptation to life.

Upcoming Virtual Learning Circle Series

23rd April 6:00-7:00pm

Real Play – Practice With Cases

Registration is on a first come first serve basis. Details will be announced shortly via Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn & AIM website.

Thank you!

