



December 2006 – February 2007

From time to time we have all come across someone who inspires us – someone who seems to be a natural leader or who seems to have the knack of making things happen. Wouldn't it be great to be able to spend some time with one of these people, learning from their experience through a mentoring programme?

For individuals looking to develop their skills, mentoring offers the opportunity to discuss issues and challenges which their own colleagues are unable or unwilling to discuss. Mentoring can help you set ambitious but achievable targets and provide support and knowledge to explore new ways of working. Many people find that mentoring provides support and knowledge in a more flexible way than traditional training. There can be opportunities to access new sources of information and new contacts. Working with a mentor can help develop and expand strategic and other skills essential for professional development.

For those inspirational people offering mentoring this is an opportunity to reflect on their work away from their usual environment with its day to day distractions and to get feedback from someone new.

We are looking for people to participate in the Real Ways of Learning Mentoring Programme between December 2006 and February 2007.

Mentoring through this programme will be for an initial 3 month period and will be supported throughout with individual briefings, support and advice. Once a suitable 'match' has been found, a mentoring framework will be agreed establishing the terms of engagement and what each party hopes to achieve. You will be encouraged to develop reflective practices, including journaling to record your experience.

Your mentoring relationship could be face to face, on the telephone or via email – or a mixture of some or all of these. It will be up to you to decide with your mentor what will work best for you.

Places on this programme are limited and will be allocated following a simple application process. For further information and an application form contact Martha Wilkinson on **01225 465467** or e-mail learning@creatingexcellence.org.uk

Cost: £150 flat fee

(One free place available for volunteering as a case study)

If you or your organisation cannot meet this fee in full, a participation fund may be available. Contact creating:excellence on 0800 328 3234 for further information.

"I firmly believe mentoring benefits both of the people involved, helping focus on strategic skills, developments and personnel issues away from the work environment. Having been on both sides of the relationship it has always helped me reflect on my work. Through discussion I have always come away from sessions with two or three insights into how to develop my role."

Pippa Warin, Executive Director, Culture South West

What will I gain from working with a mentor?

- Learn from the mentor's experience and expertise
- Receive supportive feedback in key areas
- Develop a sharper focus on what is needed to grow professionally
- Increase specific skills and knowledge relevant to personal professional goals
- Network with a more senior and experienced colleague
- Gain knowledge about the cultures and 'unspoken' rules often so critical to success
- Benefit from a supportive listener with whom you can share challenges and frustrations as well as successes

Who will benefit?

Those involved in Local Strategic Partnerships wishing to sharpen sustainable development skills and approaches. Managers working within sustainable communities who are driving change in themselves or their organisations or those who have recently taken on a new role.

Creating:excellence is piloting a year long Real Ways of Learning programme across the South West of England region exploring different approaches to learning. Each event enables people to develop new skills through the practice of collaboration, questioning and reflection. To learn more, visit www.creatingexcellence.org.uk