Mentoring an Entrepreneur: Guide for a Mentor

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Abstract
A mentor plays an important role in entrepreneurial development of an individual. He guides entrepreneurs from conception of business to product development and business growth. Previous literature on entrepreneurial learning is disseminated and not properly organized; it is difficult to even find pertinent and comprehensive articles on entrepreneurial learning. The research proposed in this article helps mentors to understand and find out what type of entrepreneurs need what kind of mentoring support. This article proposes a conceptual model for mentors and discusses that an entrepreneur may need different mentoring support and skills depending on the type of entrepreneurs, personality traits, or decision-making style and phase at which entrepreneurs are at that moment. This article will also help mentors in understanding what type of skills entrepreneurs need at each stage of mentoring relationship, that is, initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition stage.

Keywords
entrepreneurship, mentoring, protégé, lone rangers, daredevils, technopreneur

Introduction
Different researchers define entrepreneurship differently. Originally, the term entrepreneur is derived from the French word Entreprendre, which means “to undertake” (Dana, 2011). In English, entrepreneur denotes the person who starts a new business and takes all the responsibility and outcome. According to Schumpeter (2000), entrepreneur is an innovator. Entrepreneur innovates either for own satisfaction or for economic independence. This innovation can result in a new product or process and new organization or revitalize existing organization. Entrepreneur is bearer of uncertainty and risk taker. When the novel market is created, it would be on uncertain situation in terms of customer satisfaction and added value. The entrepreneur is the one who takes risk and bears all impacts of creating new venture. The frequent definition of entrepreneur was developed by McClelland (1973). He believes that the successful entrepreneur is someone who is high-orientated achiever, takes initiative, and shows high degree of proactivity. According to him, the successful entrepreneurs commit to others whether they are customers or shareholders.

Literature Review
In today’s world, mentor describes a person with some defined qualities, an expert who oversees and trains a younger person. Young protégé benefits from guidance and support of the mentor. Mentoring is different from other related forms of discrete support such as teaching and coaching; in case of mentoring, the mentor puts the mentees’ interest as complete priority, not as part of a set of priorities (Gibson, 2005). Mentoring can be accomplished in a variety of forms, such as helping a disturbed youth. Also, a lot of mentoring programs are established in large organizations for psychological and professional development of employees. Aims of such mentoring packages are to encourage and develop the protégé and also to create a better overall perception of the organizational culture.

Dyadic Structure of Mentor–Protégé Relationship
The dyadic structure of mentor–protégé relationship refers to the dimension of relationship that increases the probability of meaningful and more frequent interactions, which is an important feature of high-quality relationship (Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006). Mentoring relationships are usually of static nature, unlike relationships created by human beings for all

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Mentoring can be described as a dyadic “communication relationship” consisting of verbal and nonverbal behaviors intended to offer or ask for help (Burleson, MacGeorge, Knapp, & Daly, 2002). When engaged in dyadic mentoring relationship, mentors elaborate and convey supportive messages depicted as “specific lines of communicative behaviour enacted by one party with the intent of benefiting or helping another” (Burleson et al., 2002, p. 386). In this perspective, mentors need to constantly adjust their communications to meet the needs of their protégés, which demands a “deep understanding of their own communication styles and a willingness to objectively observe the behaviour of the mentee” (Radu Lefebvre & Redien-Collot, 2013).

There are different aspects of dyadic structure, which increases the likelihood of frequent interactions in a mentor–protégé relationship. Memon, abd Rozan, Uddin, Shah, and Dzurlilkanian (2013) described 13 different aspects, which were categorized into objective and subjective qualities a mentor should possess as shown in Table 1.

The qualities of mentor mentioned in Table 1 are subjective in nature, and every protégé’s perception about these qualities is different. To form a good dyadic structure of mentor–protégé relationship, protégé should find a mentor who matches with the qualities he or she is looking for. These qualities may be from those listed in Table 1 or may be different.

### Stages of Mentoring

An effective mentoring relationship will pass through four definite stages of mentoring (see Table 2). The time spent at each of these stages differs from relationship to relationship, but all relationships come across four of these stages of mentoring (Kram, 1983; B. R. Ragins & Kram, 2007). This research, which is vastly cited by other researchers, described four discrete stages of mentoring, namely, initiation, cultivation, termination, and redefinition stage.

### Initiation Stage

At Initiation Stage 2, individuals informally enter into a mentoring relationship. The relationship is not formal as the mentor and mentee choose to initiate relation on their own, and there is no third party between the mentor and mentee to dictate the relationship. At this stage, both mentor and mentee discuss and clarify their common goals, shared values, and dreams. There may be lack of communication at

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### Table 1. Qualities of a Mentor.

| Objective control | Author | Subjective control | Author |
|-------------------|--------|--------------------|--------|
| Age               | Finkelstein, Allen, and Rhoton (2003) | Experience | Rose (2003) |
| Gender            | St-Jean (2012) | Interpersonal competency | Johnson (2003) |
|                   | Lockwood (2006) |                         | Watson (2009) |
|                   | Thomas (1990)  |                         |          |
|                   | Brickson (2000) |                         |          |
| Race/ethnicity    | Kalbleisch and Davies (1991) | Trust | Cull (2006) |
|                   | Santos and Reigadas (2002) |                         | Botha (2014) |
|                   | Sánchez, Colón, and Esparza (2005) | |          |
| Language          | Feldman, Folks, and Turnley (1999) | Attitude | Malewicki (2005) |
|                   | Stanek (2001)  |                         | Beaunae (2009) |
|                   | | Accessibility | Lavin Colky and Young (2006) |
|                   | | Up-to-date | Rose (2003) |
|                   | | ICT competency | Mutton, Mills, and McNicholl (2006) |
|                   | | Network | Ozgen and Baron (2007) |
|                   | | Shared values | Hiemstra and Brockett (1998) |

Source. Memon, abd Rozan, Uddin, Shah, and Dzurlilkanian (2013).
Note. ICT = information and communications technology.

### Table 2. Stages of Mentoring (Kram, 1983; B. R. Ragins & Kram, 2007).

| Initiation | Cultivation | Separation | Redefinition |
|------------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| Engagement phase | Active phase | Ending phase | Friendship phase |
| Establishing identity of dyad as entity | Confirmation of role | Physical and emotional separation | Supportive colleagues |
| Forging attachment to one another | Mutuality of self-disclosure | Obtaining closure | Possible friendship |
| | Clear relational boundaries | | |
| | Information sharing | | |
this stage as both individuals try to know each other at this stage, and there is still lack of trust between them. Trust starts to develop as the mentor and mentee get to know each other, start meeting often, and discuss professional and personal life (Scandura & Williams, 2001). Once trust is developed, they may enter into a formal relationship and decide terms and conditions of the relationship including monetary terms.

Formal mentoring programs work differently. Here, a third party manages the matching process of the mentor and mentee instead of letting them initiate relationships on their own (B. Ragins & Cotton, 1991). Good matching programs are dependent on demographic variables as well as common professional interests. Mentee assignment to a mentor in a formal program varies greatly as mentors and mentees go through a match-making process. Both mentors and mentees may review profiles of each other and select each other, or program managers may match mentors and mentees (Weinberg & Lankau, 2010). Irrespective of the process, a good formal mentoring program would require both parties to discover the relationship and assess the suitability of the mentor–mentee match.

**Cultivation Stage**

Once trust has been established between mentors and mentees, cultivation is the first stage of entrepreneurial learning and development. Mentors and mentees create a contract for their relationship. The contract outlines entrepreneurial and social goals along with a legal contract, which may include equity in the mentees’ business or other monetary terms. The pair may assess their progress, success, and failures after agreed time period and reaffirm or redesign their goals. These goals of mentees must be their own goals, not the goals set by mentors for mentees. The cultivation phase comprises the period between 2 and 5 years into the mentoring relationship. In this phase, communication increases, forming a deeper, more friendly link between the mentor and the mentee (Briones & Janoske, 2013). Mentors and mentees realize the worth of their relationship as the purposes of entrepreneurial development and psychosocial support grow exponentially. There is also a better mutual interaction between both parties, as the mentee has developed to be more informed and capable in his or her role, leading to the mentee’s improved and distinct growth.

Effective oral and written communication is principal of the success of the mentor–protégé relation (Allen & Poteet, 1999). Being the very first source of support and challenge for protégés, mentors have the responsibility for effective communication, because the protégés are likely to be younger than the mentors and may possibly be different in culture, ethnicity, and gender. In this case, the mentors must know about the values and culture of the protégé so that communication and attitude of the protégé can be interpreted.

**Closure/Seperaton Stage**

This stage generally defines the end of a mentoring relationship. The relationship may end because of different reasons.

- There is nothing left to learn.
- The mentee has redefined his or her goals, and the mentor may become irrelevant for new goals.
- The protégé wants to have an individual identity.
- The mentor wants the protégé to learn on his or her own and to not become dependent.

It is the obligation of both mentor and mentee to make sure that the end of the relationship is happily accepted by both the mentee and protégé; if not, then this stage can turn sour with either party unwilling to accept the breakup (Merkel, Cole, & Wesson, 2012). Usually, problems between the mentor and protégé increase when one of both wants to end the relationship, and the other person is not ready for it yet. Mentees may feel abandoned, deceived, or unprepared in case of any premature separation. Mentors might feel deceived or used if protégés do not consult mentors or seek guidance anymore.

**Redefinition Stage**

While redefining the relationship, both mentors and mentees confess that their relationships can carry on (Johnson, 2003). To have a successful redefinition of the mentoring relationship, there must be successful termination of the relationship. The protégé should feel a sense of achievement, knowing that while in mentoring relationship, desired goals were achieved successfully. There are more chances of redefinition of relation if the relationship was formed naturally and evolved over time before termination. If the relationship was formal and part of a mentoring program, it is less likely to be redefined. Because in formal mentoring programs, many of the entrepreneurs usually come from different background and challenging situations, they feel that they are abandoned by mentors at the end of the already agreed term (Barker, 2006). Once the relationship is redefined, it is likely to last longer and will be turned into a friendship. Unlike the cultivation stage, now the motivation of the relationship will no longer be the professional development of the protégé. The former mentor may have found new mentoring relationships with another protégé and vice versa.

**Problem Background**

While working on a paper (Memon et al., 2013), which is a guide for protégés who are seeking a mentor, it was realized that the part of this guide that can guide a mentor to “Mentor The Right Protégé” or mentee was missing. Although in a previous article, objective and subjective qualities of an ideal mentor were highlighted, it was not enough. It was just
Prior to mentoring, a mentor needs to know the answers of the following questions:

1. What is the type of the entrepreneur?
2. What is the decision-making style of the entrepreneur?
3. What is the phase the entrepreneur is going through at that moment?
4. What to do when entering formal/informal mentoring relationship?

Proposed Conceptual Model

The proposed model consists of three building blocks that play critical role in mentoring entrepreneurs. These building blocks include the type of entrepreneurs (Andersson, Curley, & Formica, 2010), entrepreneurial decision making (Gibcus, 2004), and entrepreneurial phase (Sullivan, 2000) as shown in Figure 1. These are the factors that a mentor needs to consider while mentoring an entrepreneur at any stage of mentoring (Kram, 1983; B. R. Ragins & Kram, 2007). The proposed framework shows that an entrepreneur needs different mentoring support throughout the career. Entrepreneurs can be at 1 of 150 different possible stages, which are derived using 3 factors that include type, decision making, and phase, and when all these factors are correlated, they form 150 possible stages ($5 \times 5 \times 6 = 150$).

Types of Entrepreneurs

It is hard to say how many types of entrepreneurs exist in the world, as most researchers describe that there are various types of entrepreneurs (Gustafsson, 2006; Westhead, Ucbasaran, & Wright, 2005). However, Thomas Andersson (Andersson et al., 2010) categorized entrepreneurs into five categories, which are described in the following sections.
Creative Entrepreneurs

Creative entrepreneurs unearth novel industry that needs resources, either financial or human capital, such as knowledge and skills to offer solutions to problems of customers. There is need for a strong commercialization culture to support creative entrepreneurship. Once a new idea is developed, it must be validated before creation of prototype. Prototype then needs to be tested and refined after feedback and turned into a product. A creative entrepreneur should create a business plan and look for investors. These entrepreneurs think out of the box as compared with their competitors and are most likely to be found in high-tech industries with significant emphasis on R&D. These entrepreneurs are also called innovation leaders and are classified as those who

- produce their own process innovation and
- bring a new innovative product into the market (Reinstaller & Unterlass, 2011).

Technology-Based Entrepreneurs (Technopreneurs)

The word technopreneur is of modern origin. It was first used in Singapore to highlight the need to produce more entrepreneurs in the technology sector. A technology entrepreneur is an individual who successfully uses talent and ventures capital, innovative ideas, and managerial skills for either commercial production of effective and viable technological innovations or effective leverage of innovations using technology. Technopreneurs need to attain managerial competencies for survival of technology-based ventures (Foo & Foo, 2000).

Technopreneurs deal with all aspects of integrating technological issues into business decision making and new product development process. What differentiates a technopreneur from a conventional entrepreneur is the way of doing business (Milton-Smith, 2003; Verburg, Ortt, & Dicke, 2006). A technopreneurial firm is usually marked with a high growth potential and high leverage of knowledge and intellectual property. Technopreneurs are technically conversant and able to spot opportunities in high-tech or high-value added products and processes. Like a typical high-tech firm, technopreneurs tend to emphasize invention and innovation in their business strategy, deploy a significant percentage of their financial resources to R&D, use a relatively high percentage of scientists and engineers in their workforce, and compete worldwide (Mohannak & Matthews, 2011). A study by Marvel and Lumpkin (2007) shows that technical knowledge is a pre-requisite for technopreneur to spot the opportunity to innovate a business or process.

Knowledge Entrepreneurs

A knowledge entrepreneur is capable of producing and using intellectual assets of self for the growth of new start-up or services that can later guide entrepreneurs to prosperity and wealth creation of community and provide better and superior services. The knowledge entrepreneur must have enough intellectual capital that can help to create value wealth by using that knowledge (Bouchikhi & Kimberly, 2001).

Knowledge entrepreneurship is all about the acquisition of information and knowledge-related opportunities to develop, expand, and circulate a domain-related knowledge base and pursue new ventures related to this knowledge base (Davidson & Vaast, 2010). According to Skrzeszewski (2006), knowledge entrepreneur is “someone” who has command on creating and using intellectual assets of self for the development of new ventures that will eventually lead to public, personal, or community development and wealth creation. There must be sufficient knowledge to make difference through the use of that knowledge. Consultants, journalists, academics, and pundits can be potential knowledge entrepreneurs (Wang & Ramiller, 2009). For example, an academician who establishes a research journal for the purpose of development and promotion of knowledge base is a knowledge entrepreneur (Senges, 2008). Knowledge entrepreneurs may need access to social networks to disseminate and access information. The social network has transformed the circumstances of knowledge entrepreneurs by transforming the channel through which information flows and by allowing for wider circulation of information and ideas to larger audience. For example, we can say that Ariana Huffington, founder of the Huffington Post website, is a knowledge entrepreneur. Ariana relies inevitably on her social network, on technical advances (e.g., blogging), and on the ad revenues generated by the growing readership of her website to pursue knowledge-based opportunities (Davidson & Vaast, 2010).

Entrepreneurial Scholars

Entrepreneurial scholars are least exploring the breed of entrepreneurs to date. These scholars turn into intellectual venture capitalists by founding knowledge-driven companies. Entrepreneurial scholars are typically but not necessarily scientists. They work on curiosity-driven research and have strong belief that their research will lead to a successful commercial outcome or research-based spin-off (Muster et al., 2006). Over the time, research of entrepreneurial scholars develops into business- and goal-oriented work (Carayannis & Formica, 2006). Entrepreneurial scholars are not driven by monetary profit, but rather, they focus on prospects with the aim to improve the product via research. Entrepreneurial scholars are relatively clearer about the success of the commercial outcome of their product than traditional business entrepreneurs. That is because product of entrepreneurial scholars is based on curiosity-driven research, and the probability of another researcher working on exactly the same research is very low.

Minniti and Lévesque (2010) describe entrepreneurial scholars as research-based entrepreneurs because they commercialize
their technological discoveries after extensive R&D. Minniti described the rest as imitative entrepreneurs as their products do not incur any R&D cost. Building on Gancia and Zilibotti (2005), Minniti and Lévesque (2010) offered an analytical model and set of conditions to describe the economic growth. It was established that economic growth can be achieved if the number of research-based initiatives or imitative initiatives or both are increased. China is being seen as one of the examples of imitative entrepreneur growth where technology was developed elsewhere but used in China for economic growth (Yao, 2006). However, U.S. and European economic growth was due to large expenditures on R&D, which resulted in the establishment of private multinational corporations in the field of pharma, ICT, defense, and so on.

High-Expectation Entrepreneurs
Once the entrepreneurs attain advancement in technology, market innovations evolve into high-expectation ventures, and start-up firms are created by entrepreneurs with high expectations and with the purpose of developing their companies significantly and rapidly. Contribution of high-expectation entrepreneurs is usually higher in the economic growth at the macro level than entrepreneurs in general (Stam, Suddle, Hessels, & van Stel, 2009). It can be said that high-expectation entrepreneurship is in fact high-impact entrepreneurship that energizes the growth of technology industries. High-impact entrepreneurship is one of the factors that help to form the economy as an open, complex adaptive system.

Entrepreneur Decision Making
Strategic decisions made by entrepreneurs make or break the small and medium-sized business and can therefore be considered vital for economic development. Very little is known about the decision-making process of entrepreneurs who are in charge of these small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Gilmore and Carson (2000) maintained that decision-making process of entrepreneurs is different. Therefore, existing strategic decision-making models, which are largely applicable on large multinational organizations, cannot be applied on entrepreneurial decision making. Gibcus (2004) developed a typology of entrepreneurial decision making based on experiments. Gibcus maintained that every entrepreneur’s decision-making style is different from others, so it is important to understand how different entrepreneurs take decisions based on their nature or personality. Gibcus (2004) divided entrepreneurs into five different groups, namely, daredevils, lone rangers, doubtful minds, informers’ friends, and busy bees.

Daredevils
High amount of risk-taking ability distinguishes daredevils from others. They are considered experienced decision makers because of the number of decisions they have taken in the past. Daredevils are innovative and have got more alternative options than others. According to Gibcus (2004), daredevils are biggest spenders along with busy bees. It is mainly because of their high risk-taking abilities but that does not make them a blind risk taker. They are quite aware of the potential problems and bottleneck, but that simply does not influence their abilities to take risk. Daredevils’ decision usually involves taking over other firms, innovations, and cooperation with other firms. These decisions often require significant investment (Vermeulen & Curseu, 2010).

Lone Rangers
These types of entrepreneurs work independently and dislike asking for any advice or support in decision making. These entrepreneurs usually know what to do and how to do, and they usually do it their own way. Thus, they do not see any bottleneck, which may mess up their plans, or seek any kind of assistance (Vermeulen & Curseu, 2010). Lone rangers are more reserved when it comes to cooperation with other firms. Therefore, one would need to use a different approach to reach out to lone rangers than daredevils or others (Gibcus, 2004). A research conducted by Gibcus, Vermeulen, and De Jong (2009) ranked lone rangers last in list of five in decision making related to organizational change. It is mainly the nature of these types of entrepreneurs that probably makes them self-confident.

Doubtful Minds
A doubtful mind is not at all sure about his or her decisions unlike a lone ranger. They are most unconventional when it comes to considering the alternative options. They usually go through many alternatives before arriving at a decision. It is probably because they think that they might not be able to pull it off (Vermeulen & Curseu, 2010). These kinds of entrepreneurs are less experienced and usually search for information to support their process of decision making (Gibcus et al., 2009). Gibcus (2004) thinks that economic condition of doubtful minds is also one of the reasons that these entrepreneurs usually avoid taking risk and seeking alternative options (Gibcus, 2004).

Informers’ Friends
Entrepreneurs in this category are modest in their frequency of decision making. They are all influenced by other persons. Their ability to consider alternatives is below average, and only few of them perceive risk. Usually, the help of other person, which, in this case can be considered as mentor, friends, family, acquaintances, seems to be enough to make a definitive decision while reducing perceived risk (Gibcus, 2004). This may be the reason why informers’ friends do not perceive risks (Vermeulen & Curseu, 2010).
Busy Bees

When it comes to decision making, busy bees are considered above average. It is because they are more experienced and often take many strategic decisions in a single year (Gibcus, 2004). They are juggling many ideas for future strategic changes at any point in time. Busy bees are more social and do not hesitate to throw ideas back and forth like informers’ friends, but unlike them, busy bees are not dependent on others’ advice to take decision. They often throw new ideas, which are often innovative and bring added quality of service (Vermeulen & Curseu, 2010). Daredevils and busy bees are the biggest spenders, which is due to their risk-taking ability. According to Gibcus et al. (2009), a survey of small businesses revealed that busy bees were the highest spenders in expense threshold of 500,000 to 2.5 million Euros, whereas they were the lowest in 25,000 to 100,000 Euros (Gibcus et al., 2009; Gibcus, 2004).

Entrepreneurial Process

Different researchers describe entrepreneurial process differently. All researchers talk about same phases but use different terminologies to describe those phases. Morris and Kuratko (2002), Sullivan (2000), and Timmons and Sapienza (1992) came up with a framework of entrepreneurial life cycle. The number of phases and time it take in each phase vary depending on type of industry they are applied (Roberts & Dowling, 2002). Information technology (IT) and Internet-based companies usually take short time in start-up, whereas biotechnology companies take long time because of testing and evaluation of products. Figure 2 shows different entrepreneurial lifecycles.

- At pre-start-up or conception phase, the company has not been formed yet. This is the time when entrepreneurs start thinking about a business idea and write a business proposal to arrange finances. Entrepreneurs need to test and evaluate their business plan. Entrepreneurs often need money at this stage usually between $10,000 and $25,000 for developing prototype, arranging road shows, and collecting market information (Clarysse & Bruneel, 2007). At the end of the phase, the decision of whether to start a business or not takes place.

- During survival phase, the company has been formed, and the product is in market. The entrepreneur meets basic challenges by the market, particularly establishing...
acceptability, overcoming obstacles and surviving, and showing business management skills. The company needs to generate enough cash to pay for employees and other expenses and break even (Sullivan, 2000). The business should continue to grow at stable pace.

- During the early growth phase, the entrepreneur starts hiring and building a team. If one looks at the successful start-ups today, although it is the entrepreneur who gets all the attention, there is a hard-working talented team behind him or her, so it is important for the entrepreneur to have skills to select the best team around. Maintaining cost is also the key, as a wrong decision may push the entrepreneur back into the survival phase (McGowan, 2012).
- During maturity phase, it is essential to understand that unlike the traditional growth perception, the companies are still growing during the maturity phase. Many companies at this stage are on the brink of going big. The key challenges a company faces are regarding expenditure control, efficiency, and search for growth opportunities (Scott & Bruce, 1987).
- During harvest phase, it is established that company is growing fast and now entrepreneur want to go public. Entrepreneurs need to be very careful when going public and must study the market first. They need to check the pricing of initial public offering and also have a look at the rate of return venture capitalists (Petty, Shulman, & Bygrave, 1994).

Conclusion
This article proposes a conceptual entrepreneur framework, which highlights the factors and skills required for a mentor to know in advance before he or she enters a mentoring relationship. These factors have a positive effect to improve mentor–protégé relationship. For example, a “technopreneur” who is at the “conception” phase and is a “lone ranger” might not need entrepreneurial mentoring because he or she takes decisions on his or her own and does not seek guidance. He or she might need a psychological mentor. An “informers’ friend” whose decision making is influenced by friends/colleagues/mentor’s advice can be mentored at each phase, but if that “informers’ friend” is an “entrepreneurial scholar,” then he or she might be compatible with a mentor who is related to R&D. This article will help mentors in understanding that each entrepreneur is different and needs different mentoring support and skills. It will help mentors in creating a long-lasting relationship with their protégé by providing them the support they need.

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