



District Heating Divas

Heat Exchanger Mentoring Pilot

Toolkit

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Heat Exchange Pilot Overview

The District Heating Divas Heat Exchanger Mentoring Pilot was launched at the Connecting Women in District Heat conference in London on 9 December 2019. The pilot is aimed at promoting professional development throughout the UK heat network sector both as a mentor and a mentee.

To help build mentoring relationships the pilot will run for 10 months, between February and December 2020. The pilot results will be published in December 2020. The results will help to shape a recommendation as to whether a longer term programme should be set up or integrated with an existing scheme. Any suggestions as to the future shape of a mentoring programme for the Heat Networks sector in the UK would be very welcome.

At present 500,000 buildings in the UK are served by a heat network – 2% of the UK heat demand is served by these networks. However to reach the carbon reduction goals of the Clean Growth Strategy suggests that 18% of all heat could be delivered through a heat network.

In the UK, the heat network sector is relatively small, specialist and young but growing and maturing quickly. With the rapid growth experienced to date, there are an increasing number of people joining the sector – both graduates and those switching from other sectors.

To become a mainstream industry, providing millions of buildings with low carbon heat and hot water with trusted customer services and processes, the heat network sector needs to mature quickly. This issue has been highlighted by the Government who have identified capacity and capability as key issues for the sector.

BEIS has commissioned skills gap research as it is clear that the heat network sector would benefit from sector-wide learning and development, including:

- Upskilling the current workforce;
- Developing programmes for graduates and new sector entrants to learn from established professionals; and
- Bringing in learning from other sectors and established heat network markets.

Professional development opportunities and support programmes such as mentoring will also help to foster and retain talent within the sector and Heat Exchanger hopes to contribute to this.

The Heat Exchanger Mentoring Pilot is managed by a working group of volunteers, on behalf of the District Heating Divas, and are acting independently of their place of employment. The District Heating Divas are an informal networking group for women working in heat networks in the UK. There are a number of groups that meet monthly across the UK.

Mentoring

Mentoring is an informal arrangement between two people. The agenda is set by the less experienced mentee. The mentor provides support and guidance drawing on their experience and also benefits from this learning and development opportunity.

Through a series of regular meetings, which focus on career growth and personal development, the mentee can develop a continuous improvement action plan to help achieve their goals. Progress and challenges can be discussed in subsequent meetings allowing the mentor to develop their communication and leadership skills. This differs from coaching which is often more targeted, shorter in duration and with a trained / qualified coach.

Role of Mentor

- Be focused on the mentee's best interests, which include the aims and objectives outlined in the mentor agreement.
- Support and encourage the mentee to develop to their full potential.
- Allow the mentee to develop their own approaches and questions and seek feedback (i.e. *'don't just tell the mentee what to do'*).
- Share industry knowledge and experience.
- Be open, objective and non-judgemental, enabling the mentee to work towards their own aims and objectives.
- Ask questions to help progress the mentees professional development.

Role of Mentee

- Analyse your own strengths and weaknesses.
- Set and review clear aims and objectives for the mentoring arrangement.
- Prepare for mentoring conversations, activities and discussions by formulating questions, ideas, topics, approaches etc. looking at these from as many angles as possible.
- Develop your own thinking and suggested approaches and questions (i.e. *'don't expect your mentor just to tell you what to do'*)
- Invite feedback and listen with an open mind.
- Invite your mentor to share their ideas and experiences and seek to understand the reasons or process behind this.

Mentoring Tips

Mentoring works well when participants are:

- Giving with their industry and professional knowledge and experience.
- Open and willing to consider change where this is necessary to aid development.

- Open to new ways of learning and working which might challenge your thoughts and ideas.
- Honest with themselves and their mentor/mentee, particularly if they do not feel that something is working in the arrangement.
- Ready to commit to professional development by the giving and receiving of honest feedback.
- Recognising the investment being made in professional and personal development.
- Accepting that commitment must first come before they can reap the benefits.

Mentoring meetings

Where to meet

We recommend agreeing on a meeting location that is suitable for both the mentor and mentee in terms of travel and ease of access. A few things that are worth considering:

- Workplaces meeting rooms or breakout space may be free and convenient, however it can be beneficial to meet at a 'neutral' location away from both the mentors and mentees place of work to provide a different environment, remove work distractions or interruptions or being overheard by colleagues. Leaving your place of work to travel to an outside venue can also provide some time for both the mentor and mentee to clear their head from their day-to-day work tasks and activities to allow more focus of the mentoring conversations.
- Public cafes can provide a more relaxed atmosphere however if any of the topics being discussed as part of the mentoring relationship are confidential or sensitive busy cafes may not be the ideal location for these conversations.
- For variation, try walking meetings or visiting interesting heat network related locations. This can provide a different energy and topics of conversation than always meeting in a workplace meeting room or cafe.
- Attend events or conferences together and then meet for a debrief or discussion afterwards about what came up (content, conversations or approaches).

Preparing for meetings

To help prepare for mentoring meetings we would recommend:

- Taking time before each mentoring session to relax and clear your head to allow focus and attention on the conversation - active listening and sharing, valuable mentoring conversations and advice are all more difficult if the mind is distracted by the 'To Do' list or an email that has just been received. To help with this, try to avoid scheduling back-to-back meetings, phone calls and checking emails immediately before a mentoring meeting. We recommend even going as far as blocking out 30-60 minutes preparation for the actual meeting to ensure this happens in practice as it easy to forget this in the day-day busyness of our jobs.
- Reviewing previous conversations, agreed tasks/activities and overall mentoring objectives to ensure a focus and flow of the support

- Preparing any key questions, observations, suggestions or feedback to bring to the mentoring sessions - the general rule is that you get as much from the mentoring sessions as you put in.

Follow up from meetings

At each session agree what tasks or activities each person will undertake and by when - and do hold each other to account as part of the process.

The first mentoring meeting

The first meeting is mostly about getting to know each other both on a professional and personal level to help build rapport for the relationship going forward. To get things started we suggest exploring:

- Professional experience to date.
- Mentee's career goals, aspirations, challenges etc.
- What does the mentee enjoy about their work? What do they struggle with?
- What other professional development is the mentee currently doing?
- Preferred communication style: e.g. does the mentee prefer direct communication/ feedback or advice or assistance to help find out their own answers/ solutions/ approach?
- General interests and hobbies.

In addition, there are a few key items that we suggest you cover during your first meeting:

- Establish what the mentee wants to get out of the partnership: this can be anything from a specific knowledge or skill area to personal development or career advancement support and guidance. This can and is likely to evolve throughout the mentoring relationship so it is worth checking in on this regularly.
- Agree ground rules of the mentoring arrangement: we suggest you use the District Heating Divas Heat Exchanger Pilot Mentoring Agreement available on the [resources page](#) of the pilot website to structure this.
- Arrange logistics:
 - Where, when and how often would you like to meet?
 - What are the best ways to stay in touch with each other?
 - Who will set up meetings?
 - What will be recorded and will anything be shared (and with whom?)
- Agree actions before next meeting: What will both the mentor and mentee do? It can be useful for the mentee to be set an exercise or action to do in between meetings that can then brought to and discussed at the next in person meeting.

Ongoing mentoring meetings

Subsequent mentoring meetings are flexible based on how the relationship between the mentor and mentee develops, however we suggest that they cover:

- Updates, progress and changes since the last meeting.
- Review any activities or exercises undertaken since the last meeting. What are the learnings and what can be put into action?
- Any topics, scenarios or challenges that the mentee wants to discuss (it can be useful to provide these to the mentor in advance of the meeting to allow for reflection or preparation).
- Agree plans for next meeting.

Tools, resources and techniques

We have provided some techniques and exercises here for inspiration.

Three Stage Mentoring Model

The Three Stage Model provides a useful questioning and listening framework for mentoring. The outline below is taken from the [Chartered Institute of Professional Development \(CIPD\) guidance](#) on the Three Stage Model, including potential questions to ask at each stage.

1. **Exploration Stage:** Begins with opening up the conversation with an open question. It is about the mentor building rapport, paying attention to the mentee and supporting the exploration –be patient; investment in time/care at this stage can pay dividends later. This can be achieved by:

- Taking the lead by listening.
- Paying attention to the relationship and developing it.
- Clarifying the aims and objectives of your mentoring.
- Supporting the exploration.

Things a mentor might say or ask in the Exploration Stage:

- What would you like to talk about?
- Tell me more about that...
- What you seem to be saying is.... (paraphrase/ summarise). Have I got this right?
- Which of these areas would you find most helpful to talk about?

2. **New Understanding Stage:** Once the mentee begins to see things differently the mentor needs to offer encouragement. If the mentee is resistant, the mentor should be supportive and sensitive so that when the mentee is challenged, they are receptive. This stage also involves the mentor challenging the mentee, reflecting back and helping them understand and make sense of what they are saying. The mentor can help the mentee consolidate their learning by sharing their experiences – but be careful not to share too soon and risk taking the mentee away from their own agenda. Ways to do this include:

- Continuing to listen.
- Checking out the situation and summarising.
- Encouraging reframing and rethinking of the situation.
- Flagging up key learnings.
- Introducing challenge appropriately.

Things the mentor might ask or say in the New Understanding stage:

- You said that you want to move forward yet you have not taken any action as yet (challenge).

- What is preventing you from taking that first step? (Rather than ‘Why aren’t you doing anything?’)
- That sounds like a useful insight. Does it sound like one to you?
- Now that we are clear about the issue, what do you see as your options?
- What is there to learn?

3. **Action Planning Stage:** The first two stages can take a while and may be more than one session, depending on the complexity of the issue/quality of conversation. Not every meeting will end in an ‘action plan’, and the only action may be to reflect on discussions and meet again. Ensure that the mentee is responsible for their problems and solutions and that the mentor is there to support and guide them if need be. The mentor can help in the Action Planning stage by:

- Helping to make decisions and solve problems.
- Encouraging practical application of options and choices.
- Agreeing action plans.
- Building commitment to action.

Things the mentor might say or ask in the Action Planning stage:

- Let’s look at the pros and cons of this option.
- How committed to this are you on a scale of 1-10? (If not 10, what needs to happen to make it 10?)
- When are you going to do this by?
- What do you need to do first?
- Whose help do you need?

The process rarely moves in a straight line from stage one to stage three. More often, in use, the conversation moves about between all the stages. The three stage process can be viewed as a map of mentoring, both a map for a mentoring session and a map for the duration of the relationship. A map shows the way and helps us to plan a route, and it can help us to find where we are when we get lost.

There can be a temptation to get to the Action Planning Stage as quickly as possible but often the quality and the commitment to the action is dependent on the quality of stage one and two. Summarising regularly can help to establish the boundaries between each stage and move the conversation either on, or back into the previous stage. It is helpful to share the process within your relationship so that you both understand what is happening. Perhaps the most interesting thing about the three stage process is that, with practice, it becomes very natural and does not seem like an intrusive technique

Key mentoring skills

There are some key skills that can help develop a good mentoring relationship. A few examples are outlined below and we recommend that these are reviewed and the links explored in preparation for the mentoring sessions.

1. Active listening

Key points:

- Remove distractions: fully concentrate on what is being said.
- Show you're listening: eye contact, nod, smile, verbal comments (where appropriate).
- Don't interrupt: clarifications when point has finished.
- (Try to) defer judgement: not thinking about what you want to say, respond or argue.
- Be patient: we listen faster than we speak. Silence is OK.

Useful Active Listening links:

- [Business Balls](#)
- [Mindtools](#)
- [Skills You Need](#)
- [Wiki Books](#)

2. Summarising:

Key points:

- Highlight key points.
- Don't focus on detailed examples.
- Paraphrase and use your own words.

Useful Summarising link:

- [Mind Tools](#)

3. Practice curiosity:

Key points:

- Use open questions:
 - Can not be answered with a 'Yes' or 'No'.
 - Designed to encourage full, meaningful answers.
 - Stimulate dialogue or ideas flow.
- Try to explore initial responses in more detail – go beyond the surface:
 - And what is it about x that confuses you?
 - Tell me more about xx ...
 - Anything else about x?

Useful Practicing Curiosity link:

- [Wiki How](#)

4. Giving and receiving feedback:

Key points:

- Be about the behaviour rather than the personality.
- Be specific.
- Be timely.
- Pick your moment.
- Balanced: identify what works and well as what doesn't.

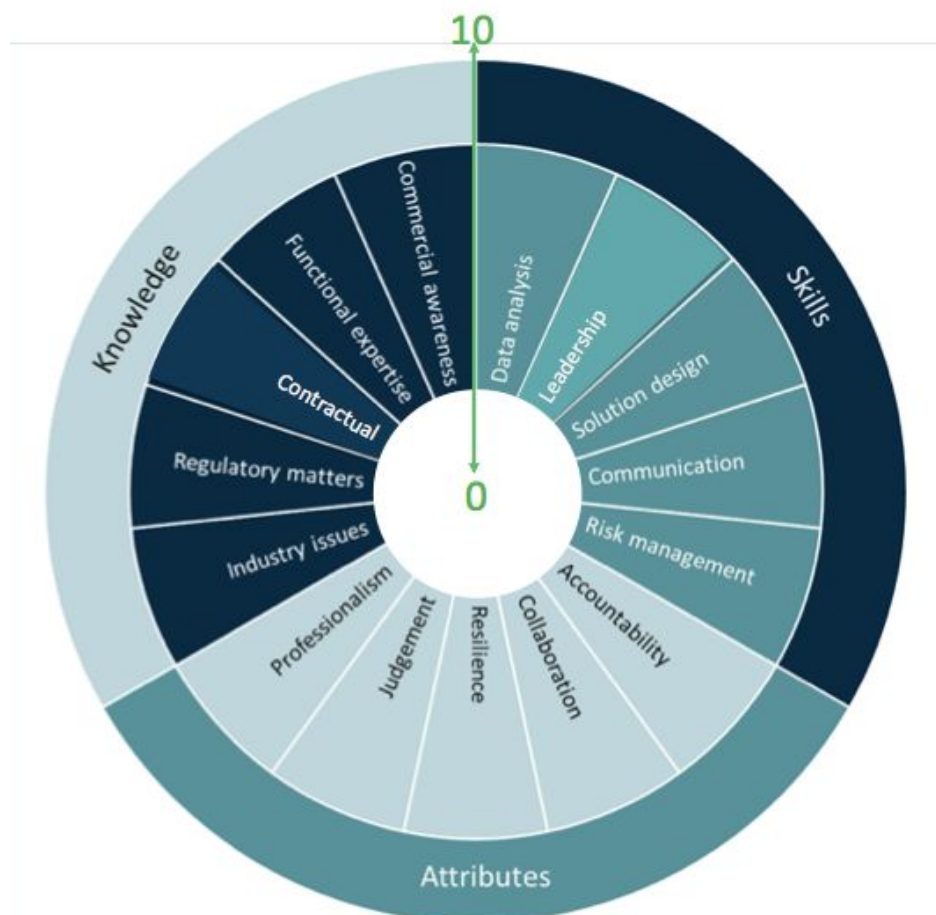
Useful Giving and Receiving Feedback links:

- [Skills You Need](#)
- [Management centre](#)

Skills Audit

A good place to start for both the mentee and mentor is to undertake a Skills Audit to understand which skills or areas or knowledge that would like to be developed (by the mentee) or can be shared (by the mentor).

Below is an illustration of a skills audit wheel. Draw your own wheel and add in relevant knowledge, skills and attributes. The mentor and mentee then score themselves on each segment from between 0 and 10 with ten being the most to learn / offer and 0 the least. A list of skills for inspiration are below.



Administration
Board/committee
experience
Change management
Company administration
Conflict resolutions
Customer care
Digital
Business development
Facilitating meetings

Finance
HR
Learning and Development
Influencing
Leadership
Legal
Line management
Listening
Marketing
Office management

PR/communications
Process design
Project management
Relationship management
Sales
Service user
Task management
Team development

Personality Profiling

A *personality profile* is a useful professional development tool to provide an evaluation of an individual's attributes, values and life skills in an effort to understand how they 'work' and therefore recognise attributes and an individual's general approach to work situations. Questions in a personality profile test, are generally designed to seek out information about temperament, decision-making methods, communication style and general attitude towards work.

Undertaking a *personality profile* and exploring the results with a mentee/mentor can be a useful exercise to undertake as part of a mentoring relationship to see how this is reflected in the mentee (and mentors) approach to work scenarios to help understand 'how they work' and what they may wish to recognise or develop as a result.

Myers Briggs

One of the most common *personality profiles* is [Myers Briggs](#) type indicator to explore preferences in how people perceive the world and make decisions. A full Myers Briggs questionnaire usually requires a subscription and feedback from a trained learning and development professional however free, abridged versions can be taken here: <https://www.16personalities.com/> or here <https://www.truity.com/test/type-finder-personality-test-new>.

Goal ladder

Dreaming big but don't know where to start? A *goal ladder* is a useful way to break down the steps required to reach an overall goal, objective or dream to make it more manageable or achievable.

Goal ladders can be used as a useful mentoring tool to discuss progress towards a career or development goal by breaking it down into the smaller steps of a ladder. It can be useful to undertake this exercise early on in the mentoring relationship to allow it to be reviewed and discussed between the mentor and mentee throughout the mentoring programme.

There are a number of free templates to download from a [simple internet search](#). Essentially the tools prompts the mentee to draw a ladder, add an end goal above the top rung and describe where they are now on the bottom rung. Through discussion with the mentor, the mentee can discover what steps are needed to achieve their end goal.

Force field analysis

(Identifying Drivers and Blockers of movement towards a goal)

A *Force-field analysis* is a tool to help with decision making and movement towards a goal by providing a framework for looking at the factors (*forces*) that influence a situation. It looks at *forces* that are either driving movement toward a goal (*helping forces*) or blocking movement toward a goal (*hindering forces*).

If the mentoring objective or support is looking at working towards a particular goal or discussing a potential decision, this tool can be useful to undertake and discuss. Further guidance and templates for Force Field Analysis can be downloaded at the following websites:

- [Mindtools](#)
- [Business Balls](#)

Additional suggestions

The working group would welcome suggestions for top tips and exercises. Please submit suggestions to working.group@heatexchangermentor.net.

Heat Exchanger Mentoring Pilot

Commitment

Timescale & length of pilot programme

To help build mentor relationships the Heat Exchanger pilot will run for 10 months, between February and November 2020. Either party is free to end the mentoring relationship at any time if circumstances change or there is mutual agreement that it is no longer beneficial.

Expected time commitment

This is flexible and to be agreed for each matched mentoring pair however as a guide a minimum of one meeting of at least an hour every four to eight weeks is recommended.

The Heat Exchanger Mentoring Agreement

The purpose of a mentoring agreement

The Heat Exchanger working group has drafted a [template mentoring agreement](#). The agreement aims to set out clear definitions and expectations from both the mentor and mentee prior to any mentoring sessions taking place so that both parties are aware of their individual responsibilities, in order to foster an effective mentoring relationship. It also sets out how your data will be used.

How to use the agreement

Each mentor / mentee pair matched as part of the District Heating Diva's Heat Exchanger Mentoring Pilot will be expected to complete and both sign a mentoring agreement. The mentor and mentee will each keep a copy of this. It does not need to be returned to the Heat Exchanger working group. The mentoring agreement is a template with key elements to be agreed at the outset of the pairing, but additional elements can be added by the pair.

The mentoring agreement must be agreed at the outset of the mentoring arrangement but it may, if necessary, be renegotiated by the mentor and mentee during the course of the mentoring relationship.

Confidentiality

Conversations and activities undertaken as part of the mentoring programme should be treated as confidential, unless otherwise agreed by both the mentor and mentee. This is clearly set out in the mentoring agreement. Please ensure that confidentiality is protected in the storage of any files shared between mentors/mentees, including any notes taken at sessions.

Monitoring and Feedback

To help monitor progress and impact of the Heat Exchanger mentoring programme we would be grateful if participants could record the following as they progress with the Heat Exchanger Mentoring Pilot:

1. Number of mentoring hours (please record both face-to-face as well as any preparation).
2. Exercises or activities completed.
3. Any particular exercises or activities that worked well (or didn't).
4. General feedback: what works well, what could be improved.
5. Any key successes, developments, learnings and breakthroughs that the mentoring help contribute towards (we'd love to develop case studies if we get time).

Feedback can be provided at any time via [this confidential form](#) or by emailing working.group@heatexchangermentor.net.

Additional support

If there is demand, and it would be useful, the Working Group may look to organise mentoring events and get together as well as facilitating online communication between people involved in the mentoring programme.

FAQ's

Is there any financial support for things such as travel, mentoring activities or meetings?

This is the pilot year of the Heat Exchanger mentoring programme and is reliant on volunteer time to organise, facilitate and create resources. Therefore, unfortunately at this time there is no financial support from the programme to help with any associated costs for either mentors or mentees.

If you have agreed participation in the mentoring programme as part of your professional development with your employer, any associated costs may be supported from a training or learning and development budget.

What happens if the Mentoring relationship doesn't work?

For a variety of reasons a mentoring partnership may end early (e.g. where the rapport does not develop sufficiently or one of the partnership has a change in circumstances) and this is ok. It's better to walk away from a partnership that is not working and seek an alternative mentor/mentee than continue with a relationship which is of no benefit to the mentor/mentee.

That said: do try and stay open-minded even if your initial mentoring chemistry gets off to a slow start - sometimes, working with someone who approaches things from a completely different angle than you can feel jarring at first but can prove very valuable over time. It may be that your mentor challenges you, and this promotes your growth.

However, should you ever wish to end the mentoring arrangement you should absolutely feel free to do so.

Please contact the Heat Exchanger working group if you need or wish to end a mentoring partnership and wish to re-matched with another mentor/mentee.

Do we need to keep a record of mentoring activities?

Yes please - this will help us to monitor the success of the pilot programme. See the [Monitoring and Feedback section](#) above for more information.

Contact and more information

The Heat Exchanger Mentoring Pilot is being coordinated by a working group of volunteers working on behalf of the District Heating Divas and are acting independently of their place of employment.

The working group consists of:

- Nicky Butterworth, Guru Systems
- Will Routh, Chirpy Heat
- Lily Frencham, ADE

Disclaimer: The District Heating Divas and the Heat Exchanger Mentoring pilot working group are purely acting as facilitators to matching pairs and providing limited tips on mentoring. As such they have no liability arising from mentoring activities.

To contact the Heat Exchanger working group please email working.group@heatexchangermentor.net

And further information is available at: www.heatexchangermentor.net