



# Mentoring and diversity: Dialogue for personal and organisational change

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## Developing Minority Ethnic Leaders

- A recent (2005) international survey of 1601 professionals in business found that:
- While one in six white males acted as mentors to young people in their communities; one in three African-American women did so

A parallel international study found that:

- 20% of Indian executives act as mentors to young people in their communities (versus 8% in the UK)
- Better access to mentors was seen as a key to improving racial and gender diversity in business leadership by between 88% and 95% of executives (figures vary by country)

Sources: Center for Work-Life Policy  
and *Harvard Business Review* Nov 2005 pp74-82





## Diversity Mentoring/Coaching

Diversity mentoring is a process of open dialogue that aims to achieve both individual and organisational change through shared understanding and suspending judgement within a relationship of mutual learning





## The Institutional Barriers to Diversity

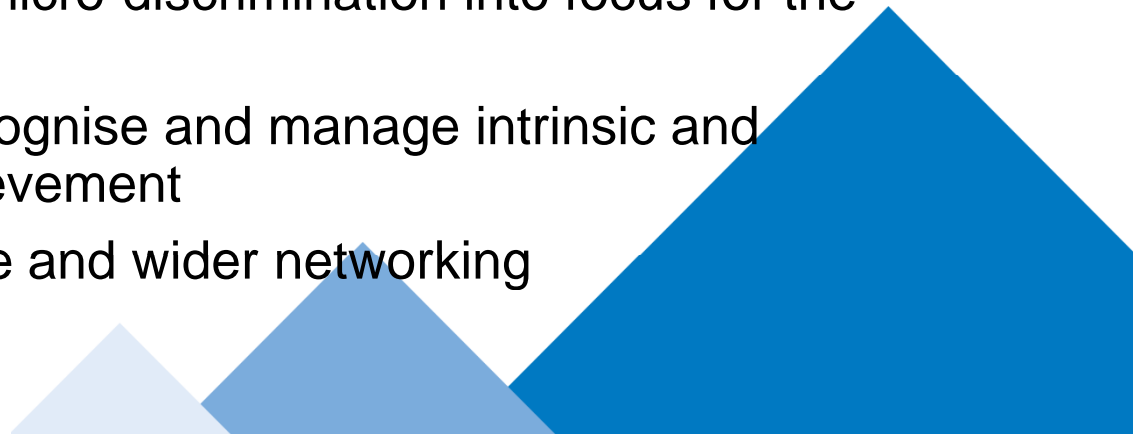
- Recruitment processes
- Appraisal systems
- Project team membership
- Working patterns
- Access to networks of information and/or influence
- The value placed on dissenting or variant opinions
- Informal social interaction at work
- Social and educational backgrounds





## Diversity Coaching & Mentoring: Benefits to coaches/mentors

- Provides senior managers with personal understanding of diversity issues
- Opens dialogue across differences
- Allows input to achieving diversity/equal opportunity management targets
- Helps the coach/ mentor see issues from more than one perspective (so better decisions are made)
- Brings stereotypes and micro-discrimination into focus for the mentor
- Helps coach/ mentor recognise and manage intrinsic and extrinsic barriers to achievement
- Stimulates more effective and wider networking





## Diversity Coaching and Mentoring: Benefits to Clients

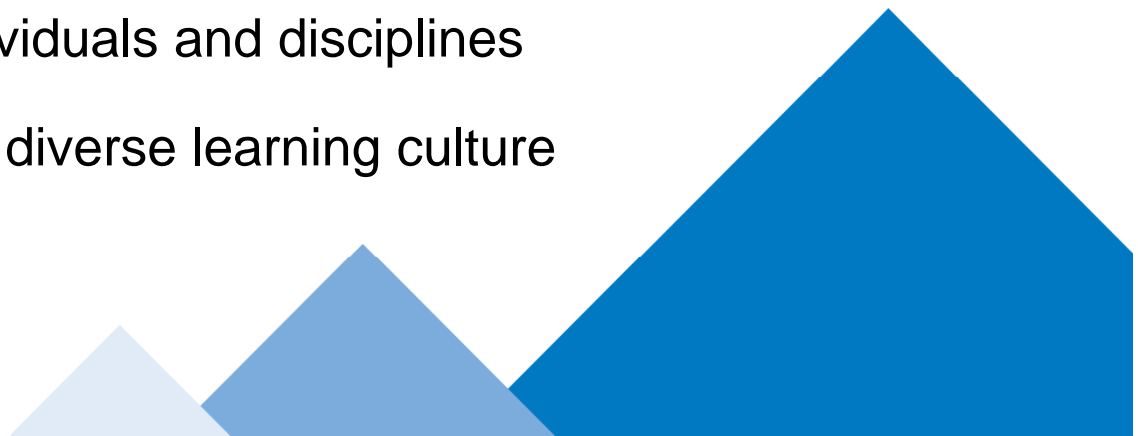
- Encourages mentee to set and work towards ambitious career goals, increasing their confidence
- Provides BME employees with visibility and influence at senior levels
- ... and with insight into management thinking and organisational politics
- Encourages coachee/ mentee to recognise their value and enhance their self confidence
- Stimulates more effective and wider networking





## Diversity Coaching/Mentoring: Benefits to The Organisation

- Helps the organisation identify and deal with institutional roadblocks
- Encourages reflective practice and greater openness in general across the organisation
- Helps broaden talent pool
- Improves team effectiveness
- Builds trust between individuals and disciplines
- Helps build an open and diverse learning culture





## A Diversity Mentoring Programme: The Audit Commission

- Started as a BME programme
- Impact on organisation and individuals led to inclusion of women and disabled staff; then mainstreamed
- Key role of cross-functional support group
- Early and continued involvement of key stakeholders
- Strong business case and desire by BME staff for a programme
- Continuing support and measurement – especially medium to long-term measures

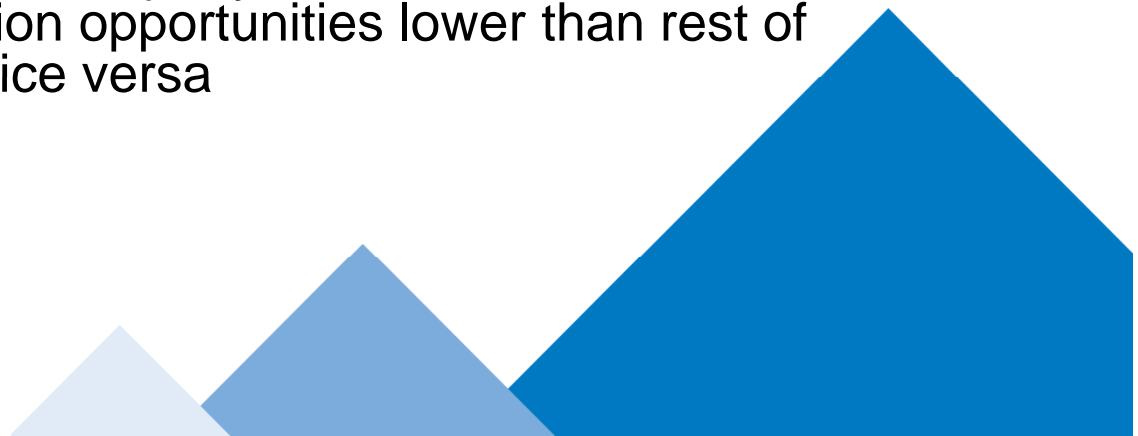






## Audit Commission Outcomes

- 29% of mentees had positive career progression
- 42% of participants have had positive career progression (includes mentors and support group)
- External feedback – AC seen as exemplar employer in terms of diversity; programme seen as key indicator of culture
- Internal feedback – in 2001 majority of BME staff rated development & progression opportunities lower than rest of organisation; end 2002 vice versa





## Upward/Reverse Coaching/Mentoring

Case studies:

- Proctor & Gamble
- BP
- Cabinet Office
- Shadow Boards





## Issues in reverse coaching/mentoring

- Power
- Creating “intense honesty”
- Giving and receiving critical feedback
- Reflection on self, systems and society
- Reviewing the relationship





## Differences

***As a mentee, it doesn't hurt my feelings if someone acknowledges the [racial] difference between us. In some ways I like those relationships better. It makes me feel more comfortable – we're not dancing around the issues in some artificial way.***

***What's uncomfortable for me is when we have to pretend there isn't a difference.***

From Mentoring across differences,  
2003 – report on mentoring in US law firms





## Issues in Matching Coach/Mentor and Client

- How much difference is appropriate?
- Voluntary choice
- Same race, same gender, or different?
  - Perspective
  - Career outcomes
  - Networking
  - Power
  - Role modelling





## Same Race/Gender vs Difference

Issue	Same Group	Different Group
Perspective	More empathy	Wider perspective
Career outcomes	Less likely	More likely
Networks	Sharing same concerns	More influential
Power	Easier rapport	Insight into politics
Networks	Occurs more naturally	Promotes wider range of responses

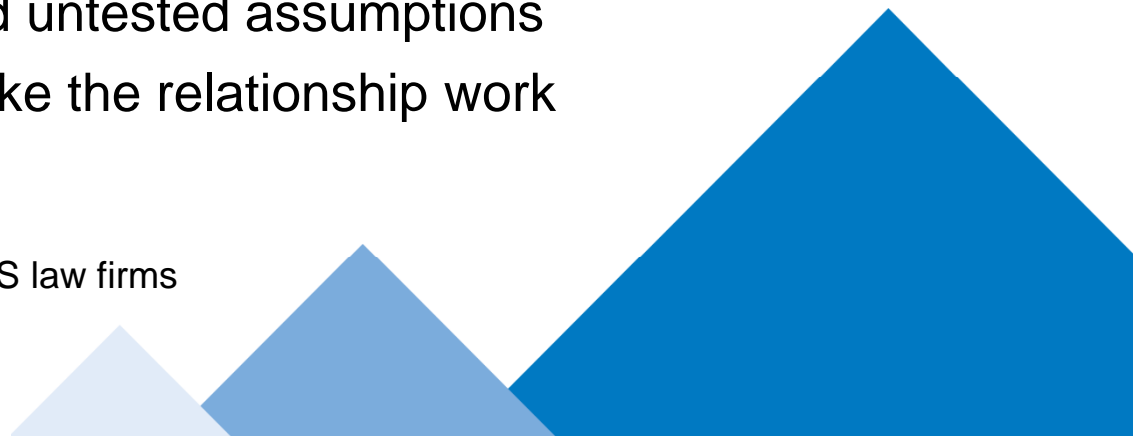




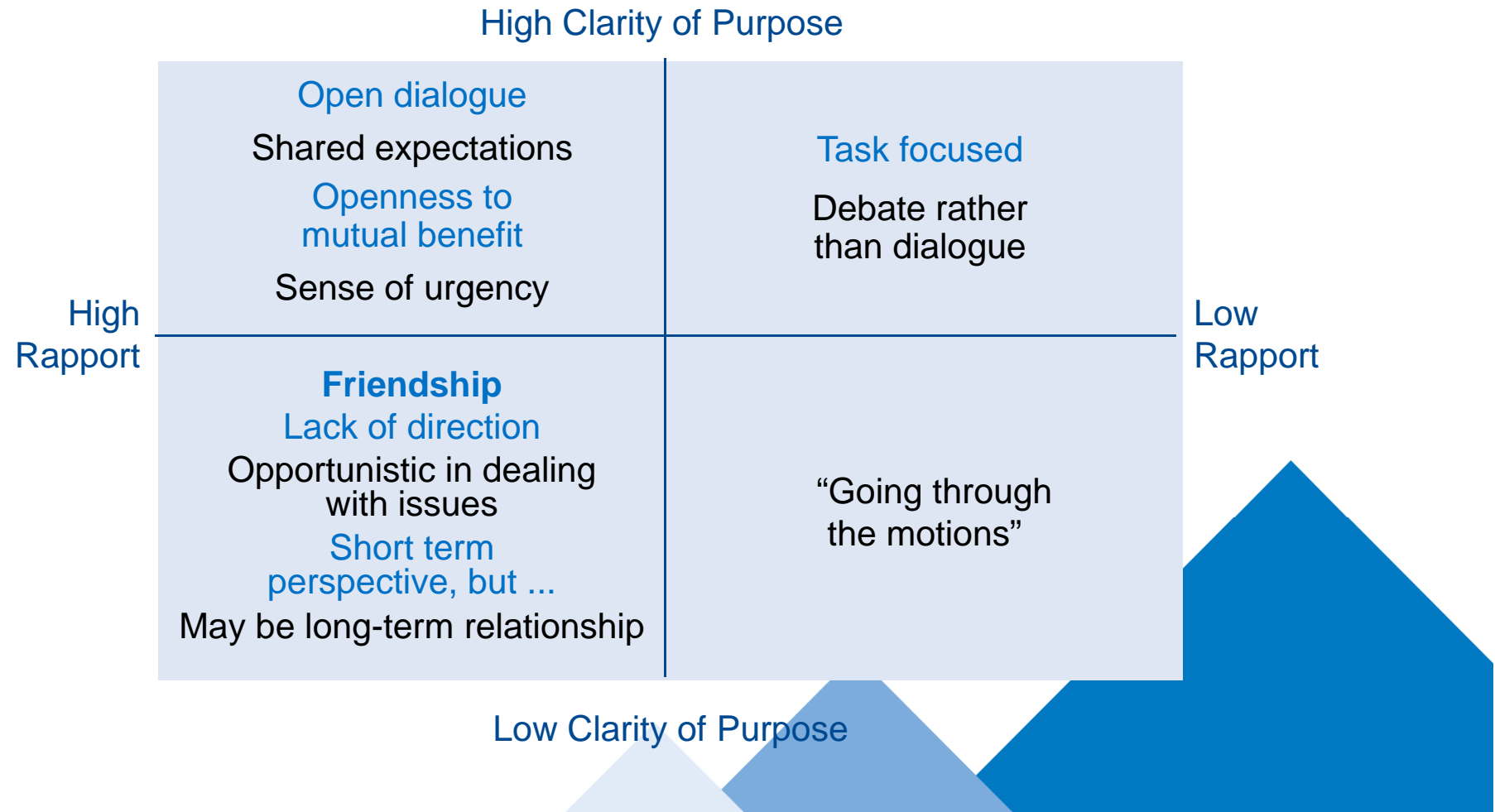
## Cross-gender/ Cross-race Learning Relationships that worked\*

- Established confidence by beginning with work-related issues
- Identified common interests and values
- Made efforts to learn about each other
- Showed empathy
- Were clear about needs and expectations
- Avoided stereotypes and untested assumptions
- Risked discomfort to make the relationship work

\* From Mentoring across differences,  
Dec 2003 report on mentoring in US law firms



## Clarity of Purpose vs Rapport





## Values Matrix

<b>Self</b>	Who you are Who you aspire to be What makes you feel good/bad about Yourself	Your responsibility towards other people
<b>Others</b>	How you want others to perceive you	Your expectations of other people's responsibility towards you





## Barriers to Diversity Dialogue

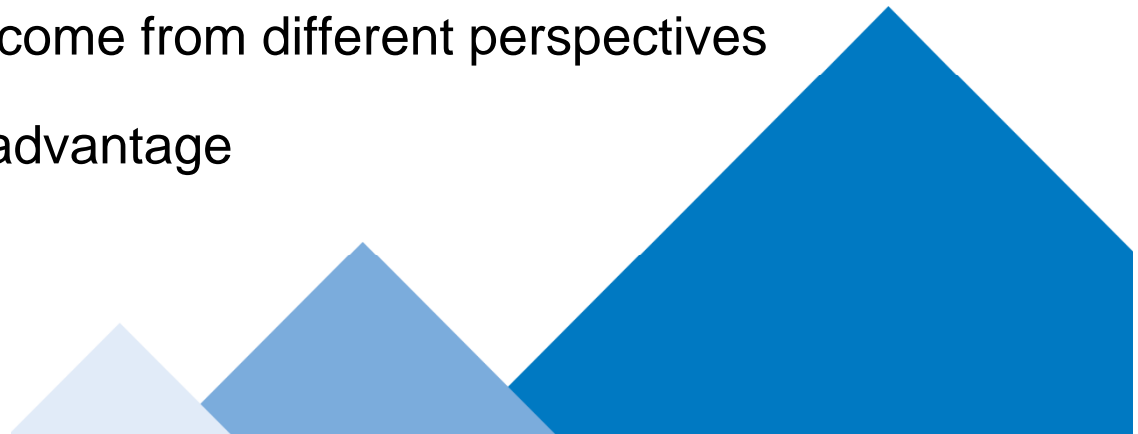
- The hierarchy gap (“Speaking truth to power”)
- Political correctness (overcompensating)
- Same words/different meanings
- Avoiding exploring own feelings, attitudes and values
- Problem denial





## The Skills Of Diversity Dialogue

- Managing stereotypes
- Permission to explore
- Fearless questions
- Analysing assumptions, behaviours and values
- Achieving clarity
- Valuing the insights that come from different perspectives
- Circles of advantage/disadvantage





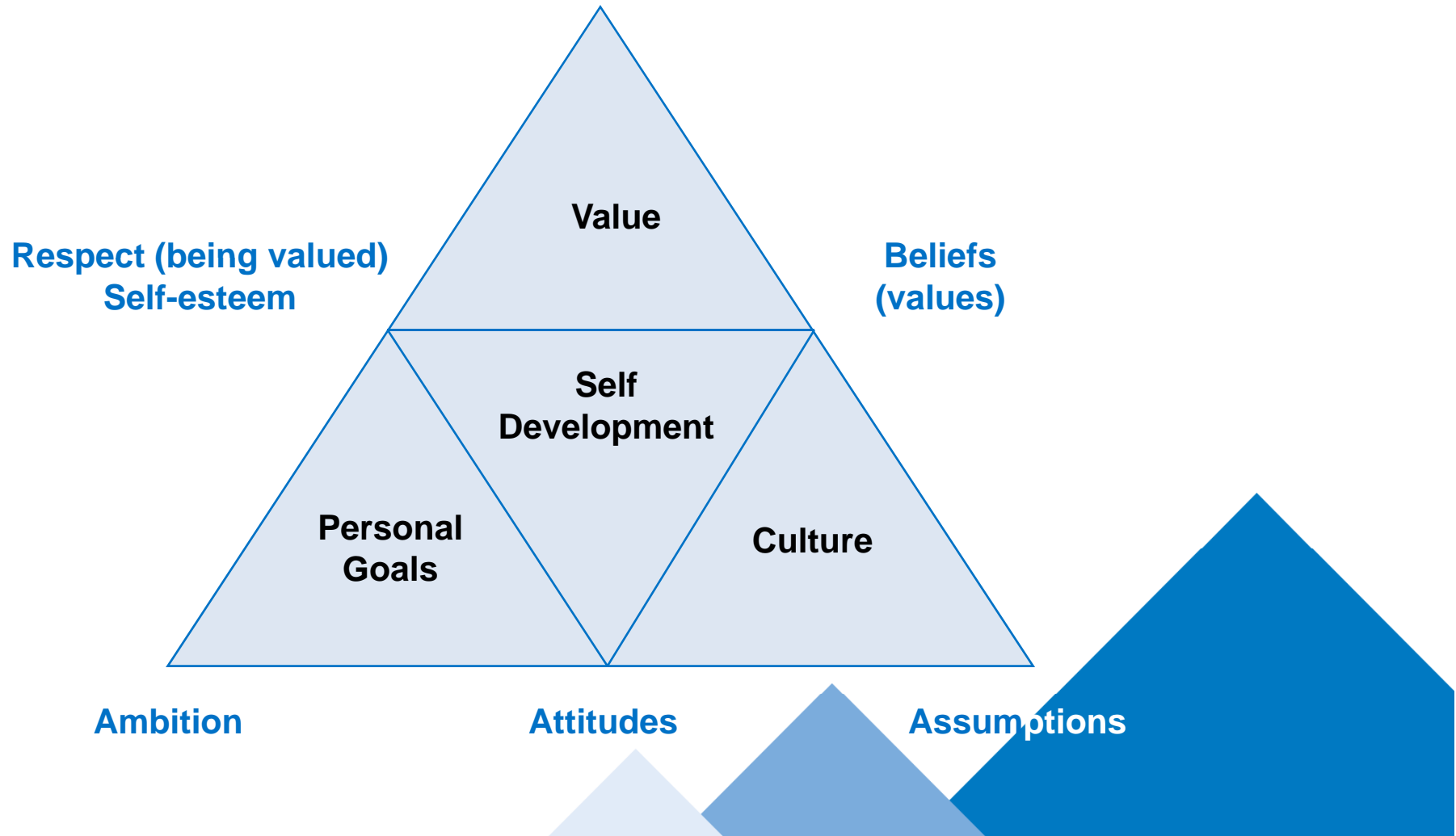
## Helping Clients Empower Themselves

<b>EXTERNAL</b> <i>- what you are permitted</i>	<b>Influence of other people's perceptions &amp; stereotypes</b>	<b>Restrictions imposed by context/ authority</b>
<b>INTERNAL</b> <i>- what you permit yourself</i>	<b>Influence of own perceptions &amp; stereotypes</b>	<b>Restrictions imposed by personal capability</b>

**Personal Empowerment**



**Worth (reward) including success**





## Support vs Challenge

<b>Challenge</b>	Stretching horizons; giving encouragement and self-belief	Direct feedback about areas of conscious or unconscious development need
<b>Support</b>	Encouraging when things get or progress is slow	Being pragmatic; helping to find practical solutions
	<b>Empathy</b>	<b>Objectivity</b>





## 'Insensitive' Statements

Mentor and mentee should not assume that an insensitive statement is malicious; it is more likely to be the result of ignorance – and hence an opportunity for learning





## Issues Mapping: An Example

