



SAIMM

Career Development Day *(continued)*

Report back on Mentoring

The importance of securing a mentor was expressed by many of the presenters during the day. There are two types of mentor:

- A 'hard' or Technical mentor is usually linked to professional registration or hard-core technical development. This type of mentor will usually be accredited, and is usually from the higher levels in the workplace. This was well covered by the ECSA Registration presenter Mr Dirk van Niekerk
- A 'soft mentor' provides support and advice on career choices and alternatives in circumstances in the work environment, and may be from within the organisation or outside the organisation – a sort of confidante. Although it is termed a 'soft mentoring process', this does not mean it does not involve difficult tasks or that it is simply a process of positive support in areas such as communication, self-management, self-motivation, dress, etc., although all these may form the basis of this sort of mentor/mentee relationship. It is advisory and not compulsory in nature. The mentee's selection of a suitable mentor will require the mentee to trust and relate to the mentor – the relationship is mentee driven. The mentor would commit to the relationship and be available to give advice, but could at any time withdraw from the relationship.

The SAIMM Mentorship Programme was introduced in 2007 but has not been strongly active for some years, although reports are received of benefits to a small number of individuals in the early stages of their career. The initiative is still open to any recent graduate seeking support outside of the company to which he/she may belong. The process is web-based, but could easily generate personal interaction between mentor and mentee through a developed understanding. History has shown that this type of mentorship may confer a significant advantage by assisting participants towards a fulfilling and rewarding career in the mining and minerals sector.

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