# Guideline Tutor support

## 1   Problem

This guideline aims to support tutors of (groups of) students in EPIC and is focused on the international and interdisciplinary nature of the projects and the way they guide students from a distance. A distinction is made between the basics of coaching and possible tools. The roles and activities of the tutor are described and linked to project activities and contact moments.

The starting point of this document is the role of the tutors as supervisors of the process, not being experts on the content of each project. Student teams need to be aware of the fact that expertise on issues related to their project is available within and outside the consortium, but not necessarily in the person of their own tutor.

## 2   Context

An important question in tutoring students are the beliefs and underlying ideas from the tutor. Research by Carol Dweck shows that the effect of underlying beliefs regarding the development of personal qualities and intelligence is high. The differences in mindset find their explanation in the upbringing and the way your environment (including management, coaches, partners, friends and supervisors) deals with the successes and failures. Dweck's research can be summarized in the base in a distinction between two types of mindsets: the static mindset and the growth mindset. The **growth** mindset is the belief that you can cultivate and improve upon your abilities through practice and effort. Someone with a **fixed** mindset believes these abilities are predetermined and largely unchangeable.

Tutors with a growth-oriented mindset are distinguished by the emphasis which they lay on the development of the people. But there are more interesting side effects:

- They also try to get better themselves, and therefore surround themselves with the most capable people they can find.

- They are asking real questions, honestly facing their own mistakes and shortcomings and requesting feedback

## 3   Factors that affect selection

There are many definitions of coaching, most of them capture common themes. Most of them define coaching as 'A collaborative solution-focused, results-oriented and systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of work performance, life experience, self-directed learning and personal growth of the coachee' (AC, 2012).

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A possible model is the GROW Model (Alexander, 2004). The GROW model can be seen as a journey. First, you decide where you are going (the goal), and establish where you currently are (your current reality). You then explore various routes (the options) to your destination. In the final step, establishing the will, you ensure that you're committed to making the journey, and are prepared for the obstacles that you could meet on the way. GROWS stands for: Goal, current Reality, Options (or obstacles), Will (or way forward).

## 4   Solution

These are the steps you can follow in the meetings you have with your students when collaborating together and facing problems.

**Step 1: Establish the Goal**

The first step the students need to look at the behaviour that you want to change, and then structure this change as a goal that the student wants to achieve. The student has to make sure that this is a SMART goal: one that is Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound.

Possible questions:

|  | Individual | Group | Possible resources |
|---|---|---|---|
| Goal | • How will you know that your team member has achieved this goal?<br>• How will you know that the problem or issue is solved?<br>• Does this goal fit with her overall career objectives?<br>• Does it fit with the team's objectives? |  |  |

**Step 2: Examine the Current Reality**

The next step is to describe the current reality. Sometimes students try to solve a problem or reach a goal without fully considering their starting point and they're missing some information that they need in order to reach their goal effectively.

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| | • Individual | Group | Possible re-sources |
|---|---|---|---|
| Real-ity | • What is happening now (what, who, when, and how often)? What is the effect or result of this?<br>• Have you already taken any steps towards your goal?<br>• Does this goal conflict with any other goals or objectives? | | |

## 3. Explore the Options

Once the student has explored the current reality, it's time to determine what is possible – meaning all of the possible options for reaching her objective. Help the team thinking about as many good options as possible. After that discuss these and help the student decide on the best ones.

| | Individual | Group | Possible re-sources |
|---|---|---|---|
| Op-tions | • What else could you do?<br>• What if this or that constraint were removed? Would that change things?<br>• What are the advantages and disadvantages of each option?<br>• What factors or considerations will you use to weigh the options?<br>• What do you need to stop doing in order to achieve this goal?<br>• What obstacles stand in your way? | | |

## 4. Establish the Will

By examining the current reality and exploring the options the student will now have a good idea of how he can achieve his goal.

That's great – but in itself, this may not be enough. The final step is to get your team member to commit to specific actions in order to move forward towards his goal. In doing this, you will help him establish his will and boost his motivation.

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|  | Individual | Group | Possible re-sources |
|---|---|---|---|
| Will | <ul><li>So, what will you do now, and when? What else will you do?</li><li>What could stop you moving forward? How will you overcome this?</li><li>How can you keep yourself motivated?</li><li>When do you need to review progress? Daily, weekly, monthly?</li></ul> |  |  |