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# Mentoring Clinical Occupational Therapists Offering Vocational Rehabilitation in Public Healthcare. Critical Reflections on Four Years' Experience.

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## Ingredient list:

- Framing mentoring
- Background
- What not to do
- What worked
- Critical reflection
- Summary and suggestions on positioning mentoring to impact occupational therapy





# Mentoring

“Overused and much abused” – Janis Ian





# Definition of Mentoring

Mentoring is a professional relationship in which an experienced person (the mentor) spends time with a less experienced colleague (the mentoree) in developing skills and knowledge that will enhance the less-experienced person's professional and personal growth.



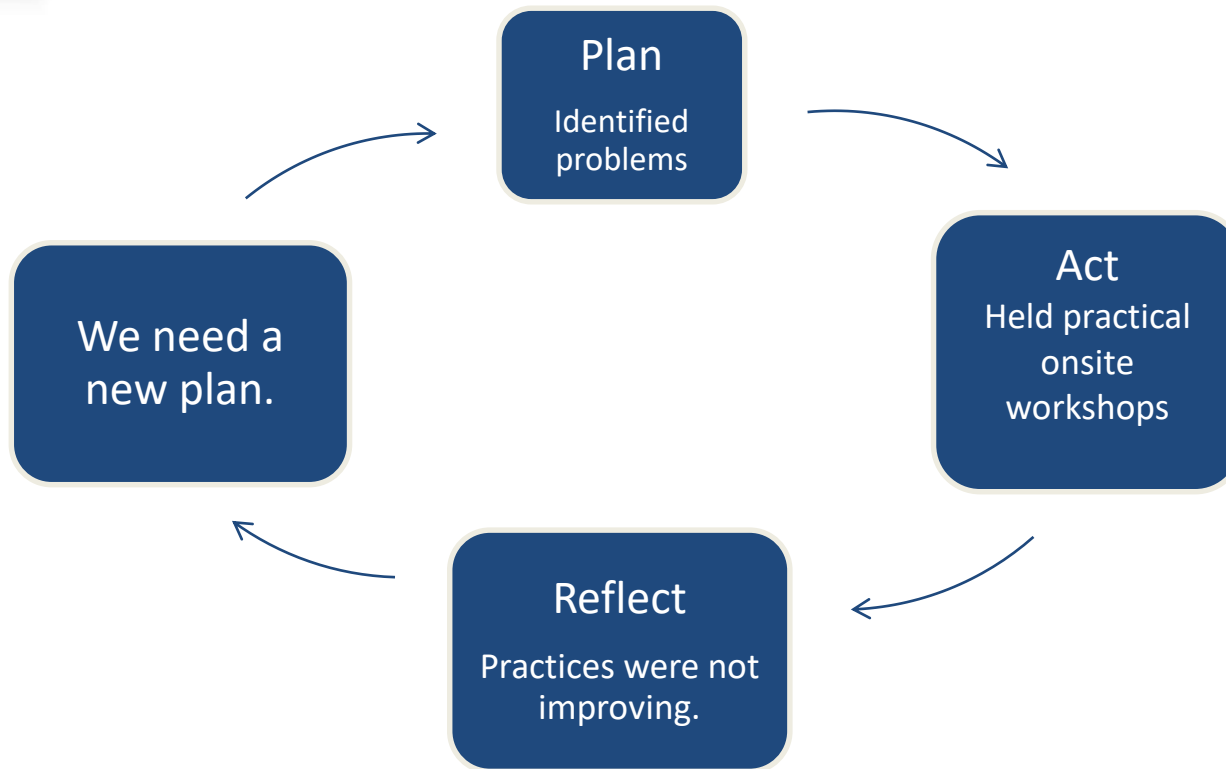


# Transforming the Vocational Rehabilitation Services of Occupational Therapists in Gauteng Public Healthcare through Action Learning Action Research.



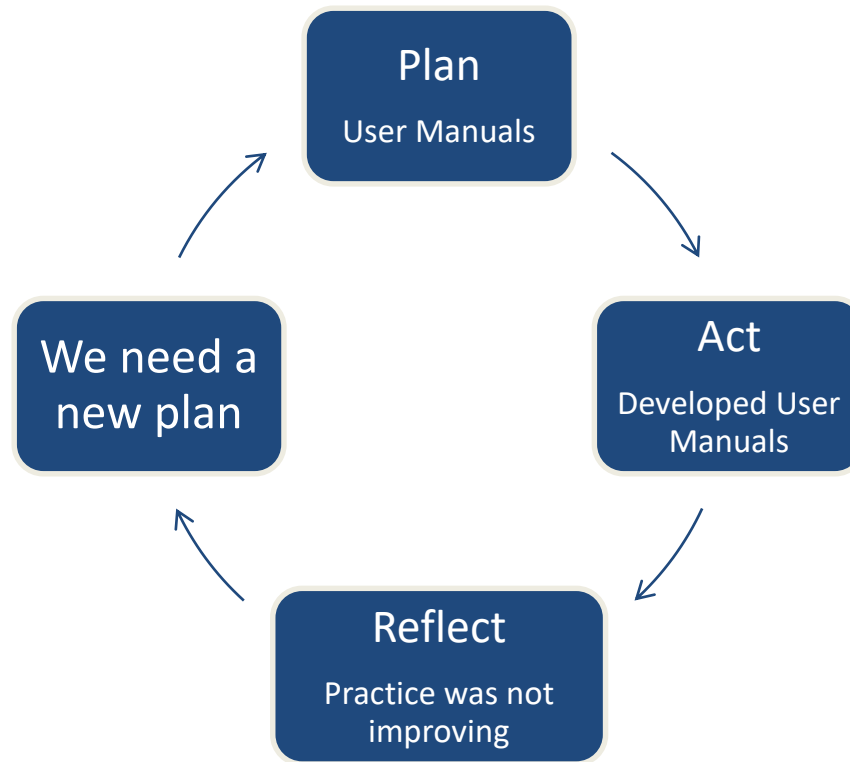


# The first 'mistake': Workshops





# Another 'mistake': User manuals



# Mentoring



“ I have come to realise that you cannot fix clinical occupational therapy practice by remote control. I have to get involved at the coalface. It is only by working alongside clinicians within their everyday practice realities that there is going to be transformation.”







## What not to do ...

- Don't kick down doors
- Don't formalise the mentoring program
- Don't sweat the small stuff
- Don't fraternise with the management





## What worked ...

- Mutual consent
- Allow clinicians to set the place, format, content and time frame for mentoring
- See one, do one, teach one
- Be one of them
- Avoid power relations and catch what they drop





# Critical Reflection

- Mentoring in real time clinical practice is hard
- The personalities of the mentor/mentee affected the quality and the speed of the transformation
- There is value in workshops and user documents
- Mentoring is time consuming and expensive
- The Action Learning Action Research approach was central to the success of the mentoring that took place





“End? No the journey does not end here.” - Gandalf

## **Mentoring offered with an ALAR approach can change occupational therapy vocational rehabilitation practice.**

To establish mentoring as a change agent within occupational therapy we need to

- develop a mentoring culture
- foster the political will
- find, train, regulate and remunerate mentors
- generate and publish evidence

