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How to successfully take part in an ESCO mentorship

Dr Kraja: Thank you to ESO and ESCO for the opportunity to share my experience on my ESCO mentorship. "How to Successfully Take Part in ESCO Mentorship." Why is mentorship important? Mentorship is a guidance that is provided by a mentor, especially, an experienced person in educational institution. The mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills and improve their performance. The purpose of a mentor is to help you grow. This may involve helping you achieve your personal goals and introducing you to a new way of thinking and challenging. Mentors can help their mentees identify the development objectives. Often young doctors can lack the self-awareness that they may have not a good understanding on the professional strengths and weaknesses. Mentors can also be helpful in identifying the critical skills for potential future role of the mentee. Mentors can give their expertise in order to achieve the goal that you have set. Some tips for successful mentorship are discussed: the goals of the mentorship with your mentor and why these goals are important to you. And also, be open-minded to the new ideas from your mentor. Clarify the expectation: what you expect from a mentorship, how you have planned to achieve it, what kind of support do you need from your mentor. It is important to find a common point of interest or a topic that the mentor has experienced or that maybe he has planned to work on it. Express your level of expertise in the goal you want to achieve, and ask if you need a more active role from the mentor in the steps you lack the expertise or experience. Help your mentor help you. Once you are set on the goal for the mentorship and the schedule meeting, you still need to specify your needs in different steps of the process. Are you looking for encouragement or do you need something more hands-on? Are you looking for ideas and advice? If you have a specific idea already, explain to your mentor how you plan to execute the idea. Your needs may differ from meeting-to-meeting in different steps of your mentorship. The more explicit you can be, the easier is for your mentor to understand what are your needs and to help you. For all the attendees, please feel free to send your questions on the Q&A and we'll discuss them at the end of the session. For successful mentorship, the logistic it's important. Ask specifically your mentor, how you like to meet, for example, by phone or by video or live, if this is possible. If it's very different from the way you prefer then, try to mix-up the meeting. Confirm the frequency of your meeting, and confirm also with your mentor if it's okay to email or call in between the scheduled meetings. Don't assume that your mentor likes to meet any specific way or frequency; always ask him. Always take the initiative to schedule. In the first online meeting, you may schedule a regular meeting day or frequency, for example, the last Friday of each month, or you may schedule as you go, and confirm with the mentors how far in advance they prefer to schedule. Respect your mentor's time. This is really important. Respond timely to your mentor emails, and also, coming to scheduled meeting on time. Sticking on the agenda is also a way to respect their time. Set deadline and respect them. Also, keep your mentor informed. Communicate with your mentor if you are having problems in reaching the goal, or if you are having problems in different steps of the mentorship. And the most important for me that I'll say, it's dedicate the year to the mentorship in order to grow. And so, organise your schedule to work on the goals you have set when you made the application for the mentorship. Thank you. These were my tips and my thoughts on my mentorship experience.

Prof Franco: Okay, Thank you very much, Fatjona. And I will try to provide you with a perspective of the mentor, if I can. So, why mentoring? Because this is something that a person, a professional might want to invest because mentorship can develop and sustain a professional career. This is at least theoretically. Mentoring can help growing, learning, accomplishing specific goals, transforming. And this is true in different settings. Can be true and can be declined in different settings: the educational setting, clinical practise as doctors, for example, or research. But apart from, like, specific goals, mentoring can be also beneficial because it might be able to insert the person, the individual in a dynamic community that is able to nurture and to grow from a personal point of view and from a professional point of view. And I think the mentorship structure should be something that the institution, academic institution, should work on. For example, identifying a group of a team of mentors that will revise the mentorship policy of the institution and may provide a specific guidance in a specific area. So, mentoring is, I would say, important for personal growth, but mostly, for a professional growth. I think, whenever involved in a mentorship programme, the first-step is to find a good mentor, not necessarily a good mentor, I would say, so, the right mentor for you. This can be difficult because it's not easy to find mutual agreement. You need to be very clear on what you are looking for. If you're looking for a mentor for your career, if you're more into research, so, you want someone that gives you advise in research, or you have a, let's say, a more broad spectrum and you want some advice on a personal life and you want a personal life mentor that has, of course, a more general perspective. Whenever being in a mentorship programme, then, you always need to develop some sort of mindset that allows you to be open and to learn from everyone, from every, let's say, influence that you might get to the external. The idea is always that the reality is complex, so, you can have very specific items that you want to address, but sometimes, a broader perspective can be helpful. And many sides of complex issues can be helpful in developing a right mentorship relationship. A good quality, let's say, of a mentor is that they can, let's say, dissect what is not obvious, right? So, even if someone doesn't ask you a question, the mentor should be somehow be able to connect with the person. So, be curious, be empathic and so, easy, let's say, to connect and to deal with. But it's also good to have a mentor that challenges you, that kind of drives you outside your comfort zone, and can somehow challenge you and somehow help you improve in specific characteristics that maybe you're not that strong. So, it's very important, for example, to try to find individuals as mentor, that they have like complimentary skills compared to your weakness, so they can basically improve the aspect of your, let's say, personality, of your professionally that can be improved. And this is very specific, but when choosing a mentor, someone also may want someone that is able to advocate for you as a professional. Can open doors, can enhance the chance to have new opportunities, new connections, new resources. So, it's very important also that mentor is not like a standalone type of individual, but has connections, and can, let's say, help the mentee to be inserted in a specific network that can of course further enhance the professional career. Yeah, whenever looking for a mentor then it's always very good to research on the profile, on the CV, whether the mentor has funding, whether the mentor applies successfully for research grant, for academic's scholarship. That kind of gives you the context of what type of mentor you will be dealing with and if that mentor could be helpful for you. It's always good to clarify the expectation of the mentorship from the very beginning. So, it's very important to discuss and clarify all the expectations that the mentee has, but also, that the mentors have. And this is always... that saves times, basically. It's very helpful because it maximises the time together and kind of eliminate the redundant questions that sometimes may pop-up and then may somehow waste time. And by agreeing basically on the expectations, you can minimise the chance of running into potential problems and potential issues. So, whenever setting the expectation, since it's a relationship, it's always better to clarify the roles and the responsibility from both sides so that everyone has clear expectations. And also, it has a clear, let's say, environment, where to act in the mentorship relationship. So, everyone knows what to do, what not to do, where to go and where not to go. So, it's always important to clarify in advance whether a mentee is seeking for a limited time commitment for a specific situation, for a specific piece, for a specific project or the relationship, the mentorship relationship should be organised in a more, let's say, developing process, in a more ongoing relationship. And that of course should be agreed at the starting of the mentorship programme. And of course, the mentee has to have time for that, but also,

the mentor at the same time needs to have time for this long-term relationship. So, it's always good to be clear, clarify the specific needs or the specific questions at the very beginning, because that helps in establishing a profitable relationship. It's always good when you start this mentorship programme to have different time-points where you can re-evaluate the mentoring and the relationship, because of course the mentoring doesn't really need to be some sort of pre-established path. It can be somehow revised. It can be modified depending on the feedback you get from the mentee, from the mentor. So, it's some sort of like changing relationship that can be developed over time to basically to try to find the fit, the best fit for both the mentee and the mentor. Starting from a general, let's say, set of needs and of expectation, it's always very good to try to frame it in a realistic way so that the mentor knows what really can do for the mentee, and the mentee can have like very precise objective after achieving one objective, you can go to the next objective. And at least also you have like a sense of fulfilment because you were able to achieve, let's say, step-one, and then you can move to step-two without stress and with the satisfaction of having been able to achieve the first step. It's always good to try to balance the help you get from the mentor with the chance to be there yourself and need to try to solve the situation. So, there's always like a trade-off between help and taking on more responsibility. Try to challenge yourself and try to fulfil and to solve, let's say, the issues that are presenting to you in the mentorship. So, it's always good to try to find a balance between help, advice and support, but also, to be able to take on responsibility as an individual and by himself or herself. If there's a project, a research project or a project ongoing, then, it's always very good to clarify beforehand the roles: who's doing what, with what kind of deadline. And also, it's also always like better to try to clarify, for example, if the project is based on a publication, who will be, say, the first author, also the authorship is important. At least one can know from the very beginning what type of investment he can put and what will be the reward at the end. And so, no one will get disappointed. So first, another thing is very important is set realistic goals and develop a plan. So, it's somehow like having a contract between the mentor and the mentee, right? You can just like write down some very realistic goals so, step-one, step-two, step-three, step-four. You can go through that, and during the time-point of re-evaluation, you can assess whether you achieved that and then you can move to the next one. If you're working on an academic type of project, it's always good to have short-term goals so that you can achieve easily and in a realistic way, but also long-term goals that can give you, let's say, can give a broader perspective to the mentorship relationship. And this should be also always declined in a time-frame. So, whenever you set the goals, you need to say, okay, when I want to achieve it, and then, at that time-point, you need to assess, re-evaluate and say, okay, did I achieve it or not? And then, you can move to the next one. So, it's always good to agree on the time to update on the progress. It's better to have regular meetings, not like just random and scattered meetings, but to have like timeline, because of course that helps, that helps in establishing the relationship, but that helps also in organising the work and also, be flexible and versatile. So, if something is not good for you or can be changed, just no problem, you can modify, you can make it more suitable for you, for the mentor, for the mentee. There's no blame on that; it's normal. Things change, the expectation changes, the relationship changes. So, everything can be made best suited for that specific person, in that specific situation. So again, feel free to ask questions. We will try to have a bit of a discussion at the end of the talk. I will give you the perspective of a mentor. Fatjona gave you an idea also why mentorship is good for a mentee. I will try to stress the fact that the mentorship is also very good for mentors. So, mentors can learn a lot during the mentorship project. They can enhance their personal and their professional knowledge during the teaching, during the support, during the training. During the mentorship programme, normally, you tend to provide guidance, you give support, you give advices, you are involved in other insights to the mentee. So, basically, you learn to be a leader, and then, you enhance your leadership skills, which of course is always very helpful. So normally, mentees are younger than mentors so, when like a mentor, who's supposed to be an old person, meets with a mentee, he can have a fresh perspective on research issues, and he can give you some sort of renew, sense of purpose in meeting challenges and in leading an educational endeavour or like a specific research programme. So, it's somehow some sort of refreshing compared to maybe daily routine clinical activity. So, it's a sort of fresh wind that comes to the, say, professional life of the mentor. And then of course, you have

the chance to meet very talented colleagues. And of course, it's always very good to be in touch with good colleagues where you can collaborate work and develop a project. And then, normally, the mentor is always satisfied in being involved in a mentorship programme, because you feel like you're contributing to the legacy of developing the next-generation of very good professionals or of academics or creative faculties. So, of course, it's always very good. Some advices for the mentors. So, evaluate your skills and times, meaning that not all the mentors are the right person for that specific mentee in terms of expertise, in terms of profile, in terms of time or of availability. So, at the very beginning, try to, let's say, analyse yourself and ask yourself, am I the right person for that specific mentee? Will I be able to sustain his expectation and achieve the goals as they are planned? The other tips would be, just be honest, right? Be open. If you want to say no, just say no. If you feel you're not the right person, or this is not the right time for you to be a mentor, because you have other commitments, you have like, let's say, distressed professional life or personal life in that specific moment, you can just say, no, you can, for example, give an advice and suggest someone else that has like a similar expertise, but that, let's say, has more free time or more time to dedicate to the specific mentorship project. Then, be available, be flexible to your mentee, which means that, of course, mentoring is a sort of compromise, so, you need to, let's say, somehow try to be flexible in the relationship with the mentee. And another advice could be, if you're engaging in a mentorship programme, do it once at a time. It's more complicated to be involved in multiple mentorship programmes. So, to manage different mentees, that takes time. It has to be done together with the other commitments, the professional activities, the family. So, I would suggest to go for only once at a time mentorship relationship. Be curious, and this is always helpful, in general, in research and in professional activities. Be courteous and be gentle. So, if someone approached you, just respond timely to emails, to telephone calls. So, don't let the mentee chase you, or always like needing to send you twice or three times the email to get an answer. Try to be in touch on a regular time-line through email, through phone. Agree beforehand what is the mean of communication that you prefer to have with the mentee and be honest about the relationship. So, clarify your roles, discuss what the expectations are, clarify your own boundaries. So, just like frame the territory where you and the mentee can move from a psychological point of view but also, from a practical point of view. And being honest, if something is not going on well, and the relationship needs to be changed, or the programme needs to be changed, then just say it and reframe it the way you want it to be because it's fair; it's a human relationship, so, everyone needs to adjust on the others. So, that's fair and that's normal. Be involved in a specific and very practical project, but try to play a role in the career development of the mentee. So, try to be helpful, for example, with the mentee to have a role in this institution, try to introduce them to others, try to introduce to a, let's say, international, national network, international network, to a national or international society. And if a possibility shows up, let's say, in an international society, just maybe try to recommend, if you think the mentee is available, try to recommend his or her name to that society or that specific project. Help establish a goal. Give feedback; this is very important. Like the mentee kind of needs some sort of feedback, some honest comments, some suggestions to address the positive attributes, but also, to address the area where the mentee can improve. Uphold professional standard. This is, of course, it's a mutual relationship, but it's a peer relationship. So, it's not like a top-down relationship, so everyone is in the same place or establish a relationship that is based on respect and trust. And consider your own needs and put on your own oxygen-mask before assisting others. So, whenever committing to a mentorship programme, you need to be in a good position, in a good time of your professional career and your personal career. So, do it only if you feel you can do, you can contribute and you can really help the mentee. Yeah. So, I think that was the last slide. Then I'm ready to have a nice discussion with you on this very valuable and important topic.

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah, thank you, Professor Franco and Dr Kraja. It was really helpful slides. I have some questions. Is there a difference in the role of teacher, a tutor and a mentor? And is there difference between mentors and immediate supervisors?

Prof Franco: Yeah. Who wants to go first? Am I going first, Fatjona? That's a tough question. So, there can be a difference or there cannot be a difference. It really depends on the way you frame the mentorship

programme and the mentor-mentee relationship. A supervisor, to me, it's more on a professional type of environment, and it's someone that is looking for a specific task that you are supposed to do, and he's like looking after some specific commitment that you have, and it sort of evaluates the way you're doing and can give tips to improve. But the way I see mentorship is a little bit broader, I would say. So, it kind of touches different aspects of your life, it can be professional, it can be research and academic, it can be personal. It has to set with realistic goals, but it's a little bit more transversal as it has to do with you as a human being and as a professional. And it's not necessarily like a short time-frame, could be like a medium-term or long-term relationship. And it's something that it changes over time, I would say, because, let's say, if you start with a specific type of relationship, because you are as a mentor in a specific time of your career, and the mentee is a specific time of your career and the relationship is long-term, and then, you still have that relationship, professional relationship one year after or two years after, then, you are a different person in a different professional profile, and the mentee is different. So, it's a little bit more looping type of relationship. It can be a little bit more dynamic to me. And it's a little bit more comprehensive, I would say, than the supervisor. But yeah, that's my point.

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah, sure. Do you think there is a difference between mentoring in academic and non-academic medicine? Putting in mind that academic has clinical scientists, teachers, founded research programmes.

Prof Franco: Yeah, Fatjona, you want to go first?

Dr Kraja: In the academic institution, I think that the mentorship it's quite different because, as Professor Franco said, it's more in the research, it's more in networking, it's more in getting experience, not in the practical point of view. And for example, if you want to get mentorship, for example, in non-academic institution, you may have a more specific mentoring if you want to learn something specific or if you want to learn a skill. So, for me, it's different. And the mentorship, ESCO mentorship, in my point of view, offers this comprehensive possibility on learning, not only on clinical research, but also, having support from your mentor in different steps or different goals that you have, things that you miss from the mentoring of a supervisor or from a non-academic institution.

Prof Franco: I think it's very true because, and this is very applicable to the ESCO mentorship programme. So, basically, the mentorship can be what you want the mentorship to be. So, you can frame as you want. If you have like a research or academic needs then you can frame it this way. If you have more, you want to improve as a professional, as a doctor, then, of course, the frame is a little bit different, I would say. And the timing, and the programme, and the structure should be different. If you want to, let's say, improve more as a person, then, it's even different. So, the different frame kind of requests like different structure, different programme, different timing. But the good thing about the ESCO mentorship programme is that it's basically versatile. You can, depending on who you are and who the mentor is, then, you can frame it differently, in the best way it suits you basically.

Dr Abdelaziz: My next question. Do you think that mentorship being virtual is an obstacle in the process of mentoring? Would it be better in person?

Prof Franco: Yeah, Fatjona.

Dr Kraja: Okay. If you have a mentor who doesn't live in the same country as you, I think that the virtual it's a good way of mentoring. During my mentorship, it works fine. So, you just have to stick to your agenda, schedule your meeting. And there are periods during your mentorship when you may have even frequent meetings, so, having live meetings becomes a little bit difficult if you live in a different country, or even if you live in different cities. So, I think that the virtual, it's not the obstacle to achieve your goals or to work and you have what you want to work on the mentorship.

Prof Franco: Yeah. True. I mean, live is more fun and it's more interactive for sure, but not all the time is feasible because if the two persons live in different countries, then, could be costly, and could be time expansive and complicated. For us in particular, for the mentorship that we had with Fatjona, that was basically that happened during COVID. And the different ways of COVID that really was the only solution. And so, we were very glad to have this opportunity because we were able to do it anyway regardless of the pandemic situation, so, it was very helpful.

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah, that was the next question. And also, it's in the chat. Can you share your experience in setting up goals, communicating with each-other, the time-frame and the outcomes you had after completing this mentorship?

Dr Kraja: Should I start? Okay. During the first meeting, we discussed the same goals that I have in my motivation letter and the goals of my mentorship were to successfully be involved in clinical research and how to write a review. And we discussed with Professor Franco and decided. It took even some weeks to think about the topic of the review in order to be a topic that both of us have interest on it. And we have worked on the big part of the project for the review. And our scheduled time of meetings, it depended on the step of the mentorship, because at the first we had quite a meeting every month, but in the second part of the year, there were months that we had even a meeting each week, at the end of the week, each Friday. So, that were really frequently. And as for my mentorship, networking was a really important goal. And I expressed my interest to Professor Franco, and he helped me to introduce with the working group of ESTRO and to be part of their group in their project on clinical research. So, I think that I have achieved the goals of my mentorship. Okay, the review is not yet finished, but we are still working, as Professor Franco mentioned, the mentorship it's not just one-year work or so, it should be a possibility to connect with your mentor even later, or to work even on something else outside the mentorship. So, the more important part for me, it's networking. So, you have a very experienced person that you can reach out if you have a new idea, or if you want to collaborate, or you want to discuss something that you want to work on.

Prof Franco: Yeah. Yeah, that's good. And vice versa from a mentor point of view, then, of course, it's always refreshing to deal with a younger person, very enthusiastic and very talented. And then, so whenever you have an idea and you want to work on a project that you could rely on someone else that you already know that is interesting. And particularly in our mentorship experience, I think it was quite successful and useful because it was sort of double-sided. So, we had like a very specific project that we work on, that was on methodology, and that was something that was very framed and very precise, but at the same time, the other goal was to try to improve the collaboration and the network, and to introduce like Fatjona, the mentee, in a broader network, so, she could gain more experience, to have more exposure and, let's say, also have useful feedback also from others in the network rather than only my feedback. So, it was like a sort of a double-type of approach which I think was quite useful.

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah. And what were the obstacles you were expecting and how did you overcome them?

Dr Kraja: The obstacles that I had, because I was honest to Professor Franco about my experience on writing a review. So, I have been part of writing a review, but not being the main person of working on it. And the lacking of experience on the statistical analysis. And so, we discussed these problems even in the first meeting, but even during the other meetings. And this was the support that Professor Franco gave me. Or even if during the mentorship, if I had any kind of problems in finding literature or not being so sure in how to organise my work, so, we had the possibility to discuss them in the meetings, and he gave me his expertise and his advice how to overcome that problem. So, just talk to your mentor about your problems that you are having, because hiding them will not help to achieve your goal. Be honest.

Prof Franco: That's a right suggestion, be open and be honest. I mean, everyone has a rough time from a family point of view or professional point of view, So, that happens. So, if you have a specific task, there is

always something you cannot do for whatever reason, that's fair. No one is perfect. So, that happens just be open, be clear, and I'm sure amongst a reasonable person, you will find an agreement, you will find a solution.

Dr Abdelaziz: Okay, and so, Professor Franco, could you give us examples for realistic goals? Could be burn-out alleviation, breaking bad news? Most of us would like to get help with improving articles, writing publication, choosing journal, steps of submitting and to be implemented practically. What do you think?

Prof Franco: So, I see that the mentorship is a sort of a tailor-made approach. So, it's very different, and it really depends on the needs and the expectation and the type of mentee that you are facing. So, at least I would suggest to frame, from a general perspective, the type of mentorship you are looking for. If you're looking for research-oriented, academia-oriented, if you're looking for clinical practise, let's say a specific field if you're a doctor, or if you are, let's say, a medical physicist or another type of professional then, there would be a different frame. Or if you're looking from, let's say more... let's say, if you're the head of a department and you want some like organisational support, because you don't know exactly how to, let's say, manage your department. Or you want some psychological help, because you need to, let's say, try to decrease the level of burnout in your department, or you want to improve the professional wellbeing. So, there's, of course, very different fields and very different teams that imply a different relationship between mentor and mentee, a different structure, a different content, a different timing. So, I would suggest to frame it at the beginning. And then, once the frame is chosen, then, you can tailor-made. You can see who is the mentee, what are the needs, what are the expectation and who is the mentor, what can you give, if you really are the right person or not. And then, you can... I would suggest to write down like a sort of thick list where you can make explicit the needs, the request, the expectations so, everyone knows what is dealing with and knows whether those expectations and those requests can be successfully met or not. So, first, I would say to suggest the general frame, and then, depending on the characteristics of the mentor and on the mentee, try to tailor-made the relationship and the mentorship programme, being clear and being open, and being honest.

Dr Abdelaziz: Okay, you know, some may have unclear goals, a candidate reminds what he really wants to a mentor, or how mentors can help them. How can the mentor help you to clarify your goals?

Prof Franco: That is complicated. It's not always very, very easy. Sometimes you meet mentees that have like a very clear mindset and they have like very specific requests. And that is easy. Sometimes it's a little bit more general, the expectation or the needs are a little bit more general. It could be framed differently. So, that is a little bit more complicated. So, the first suggestion would be to talk just like by having like a random talk or like a informal talk, then, you get to know each-other, you get to know what type of person you are and the other, the mentee is. And so, that kind of establishes a connection that is always helpful. And if the outline and the request doesn't come out because maybe it's not yet there, then, I would suggest to ask very specific questions. So, it's like, are you looking for this, this, this, this? Do you prefer during this, this, this? And that helps like giving some sort of like a general identity to the mentee. And so, you can have more information by which you can judge whether you are the right person or not. It's very important not to stay general because general can lead to nothing, or not a very profitable relationship. If the expectation, the needs and the requests are there, it's better, otherwise is the mentor that has to somehow try to take it out from the mentee. But I would say if you don't get the depth, if you don't have specific stuff to work on during the mentorship, don't start the mentorship programme. Because if it's too general, then, it's very likely not to succeed, I would say.

Dr Kraja: I would say that, okay. I would say that the mentee should go on the first meeting with a mentor with a list of goals, at least three or four, so, they can discuss with each-other, which would be better, which is more possible to work on. So, in order to give even the mentor a topic or a goal that even he has interest to work during one-year with the mentee, because if the mentee doesn't have a clear idea what he is going

to do during the year of the mentorship, as Professor Franco said, better apply the next year, when you have something in your mind or when you have a goal that you want to spend a year on it.

Dr Abdelaziz: Okay. Another question. What do you think are the characteristics of a successful mentoring relationship, and what do you think are the reasons of failure?

Dr Kraja: First, to have a successful relationship is be honest, be open-minded, be responsible, respect the deadline, because in that way, you are respecting your mentor-time, but even your time, because even you are spending time on this mentorship. And dedicate the year to the mentorship, because it's a great opportunity, so, don't waste it on being confused or having other things working on. So, I think that to have a successful mentorship, you have to dedicate the year to the project. It's difficult to work on different things in the same times. My point of view.

Prof Franco: That's a good suggestion. So, if you think it's relevant for you, it's important for you from a professional point of view, then, make it a priority. So, don't try to do this and that and that, and then try to squeeze it in with all the other commitments. And if you think it's relevant for you, then, put it like in a first, second, third place in your priority list. So, make it important because otherwise you will somehow waste your time, which is a pity, and probably you would waste a possibility because another mentor could get that position within ESCO, and that's a pity. And probably, you are also wasting partially at least the time of the mentor, which is not good. So, if you feel it's important for you, make it a priority.

Dr Kraja: And because in that way, you don't show that you are serious even to your mentor. Because as was mentioned before, it's different if you have a problem during the mentorship, and you should be honest with your mentor and explain that you are facing a family problem, or at work. And it's totally different from not dedicating your time to the project that you are working, so, you have to be serious.

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah, sure. And poor communication also are one of the causes of failure.

Dr Kraja: Absolutely. Yes.

Dr Abdelaziz: Another question. How would mentees and mentors identify the appropriate resources to assist in the individual's development or the mentorship courses?

Prof Franco: That's a tough one. It really depends on the type of mentorship, if it's more, of course, more academic and research, you might have different type of resources, either literature or databases, or like statistical tools, or hardware or software. If it's more from a clinical point of view, that is more like a, sort of a personal level, individual level as an experience or expertise as a doctor, like discussing clinical cases, or setting up protocols or revising the organisational protocols within a department. If it's more on a personal perspective, then, it's even different. That is more on communication, conversation, personal development, and, of course, there's like different techniques that can be used. I don't know if we answered your question.

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah, sure. There are many resources sure for, along the process, according to the type, as you mentioned. Another one. How to measure progress and achieve the goal through the mentorship?

Prof Franco: So, that is something that is important. Because I think mentorship is not to be perceived as a static thing, like something that starts this way and stays the same until the end, right? So, it's something that they can be re-assessed, re-evaluated and implement changes and modification that best suits the relationship. But to do this, it's very important to set some time-points when you re-evaluate what you achieved, what you didn't achieve, the reason why you didn't achieve, and so, you can re-assess the whole process and you can change it and make it more profitable and more likely to succeed. So, this is something that I would, I don't know, Fatjona, if you agree that, I would suggest to try to...

Dr Kraja: Yes.

Prof Franco: ...think about some time-points when you re-evaluate the situation and if you need to change, then, you can implement changes agreed between the mentor and the mentee.

Dr Kraja: For example, during our experience, we had different steps of the project that we... okay, we'll finish this step and we'll go on to the next step. In this way, we measured a kind of progress during our work. So, setting deadline on working on a specific thing helps you to measure that the project is going on and it's not stuck.

Dr Abdelaziz: Okay. A last question. How can mentees deal with mentors who are not committed or give them satisfactory help? As you know, your behaviour affects the mentees' learning and development.

Dr Kraja: So, how to deal with mentor that are not...?

Dr Abdelaziz: Committed.

Dr Kraja: Committed?

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah, committed or give the satisfactory help.

Prof Franco: Kick them out.

Dr Kraja: No, I think that first of all, the mentee is the one that should be 200% committed if he wants his mentor to be 100%. So, because he is the mentee that has his own goal and he's going to... So, the mentor is spending his time to help the mentee. So, I think that is the mentee that should be committed in, as I said, 200% more than the mentor. And as I mentioned, I said, that is the mentee should try to reach out to the mentor and then if they don't find a way communicate, I don't know, I don't have experience with that. I have had only good experience with my mentor, so.

Dr Abdelaziz: That's great.

Dr Kraja: I don't know how to.

Prof Franco: No, but the other thing is that... the good thing is that the mentorship programme and the ESCO mentorship programme is done and run within an umbrella, right? So, ESO, the European School of Oncology and the College of the European School of Oncology in some sort of protection type of institution, right? So, if a mentee feels that the mentor is not committed or is not doing a good job in the mentorship programme, you can just reach out to ESO or ESCO, and I am sure the people there at the office will help them mentee dealing with this situation, so. Luckily, it's not like on an individual basis. We have ESO as a platform, as an umbrella that can help in dealing with this situation.

Dr Kraja: But first the mentee should be sure that it's not the mentor the problem, and that the goals are very clear, because if the mentee asked to a mentor something general and maybe, it's the goal the reason that the mentor is not committed, so.

Dr Abdelaziz: Sure, and as Professor Franco said, it's a win-win situation, so.

Dr Kraja: Yes.

Dr Abdelaziz: Yeah. I thank you both for this really great discussion. You are very helpful for all of us.

Prof Franco: So, thank you very much, Riham...

Dr Abdelaziz: We have to thank you, no question.

Prof Franco: ...for the moderation of the discussion, was very, very nice. And thank you, Fatjona.

Dr Kraja: Thank you. Thank you, Professor Franco for the great year of the ESCO mentorship, so. Thank you, Riham and...

Prof Franco: Thank you to, ESO and ESCO.

Dr Kraja: Absolutely.

Prof Franco: Have a nice evening.

Dr Kraja: Have a nice evening. Bye.

Dr Abdelaziz: Bye.

Dr Kraja: Bye.