

Listen to an excerpt from a radio programme called “Women’s Moment”, with guest writer Ellen Granger who is talking about mentoring.

Radio host = RH
Ellen Granger = EG

RH: Welcome to the programme, Ellen.

EG: Thanks. It’s great to be here.

RH: Ellen, we’re going to talk about your new book today: Mentoring for Women. It’s been out a few weeks and selling well.

EG: Yes.

RH: Why have you written a book about mentoring especially for women?

EG: Because most of the books that are on the market are very male orientated. In a working environment, women have particular issues. Issues that men don’t have. Men have their issues too, of course, but most of what has been written already deals with those.

RH: Can we talk in general terms for a moment. Some listeners won’t be familiar with the term mentoring. Could you just tell us what the role of a mentor is exactly?

EG: A mentor is somebody who is there to help you succeed. Somebody who you can learn from because he or she has had similar work experience. In the case of a female mentee, evidence has shown that a female mentor produces the best results.

RH: And how can women set about finding a mentor?

EG: Well, that’s the same for men and women. It depends very much on the working context. Some businesses organise mentoring schemes in the workplace. Ask your immediate boss about the possibilities. Or, if there isn’t already a mentoring scheme in place there are plenty of ways to sort it out yourself. First have a chat with your boss and explain that you are interested in having a mentor. Then look for somebody inside the company who has experience in the field that you are working in. Most people feel flattered at being asked to mentor.

RH: And if there is nobody inside the business?

EG: Then look outside. Here are more and more big and medium sized businesses setting up mentoring schemes with other companies. Libraries and employment offices usually have information about schemes. There is quite a lot of information on the web too. And, last but not least, instead of actively looking for a mentor, try selling yourself as a mentee. Write up a paragraph about your needs and expectations and send it out to the personnel officers of companies

RH: And what about becoming a mentor?

EG: Yes, the second part of my book is dedicated to becoming a mentor. Lots of people think that you need special qualifications to become a mentor but that’s not true. Some people make better mentors than others, of course. There are lots of training courses for mentoring these days. In local colleges or by distance learning. Anybody who has been working for some time has something very valuable to offer: experience.

RH: Thank you, Ellen. Now I think we have a telephone call from a listener*(fade out)*