

## TIP SHEET: Role Model Mentors and Facilitative Mentors

From *Coaching, Mentoring and Succession Planning*  
by Clark Reed and his associates at Netgain Partners Inc.  
(Cultural Careers Council Ontario and Cultural Human Resources Council, 2003).

Mentoring follows an open and evolving agenda, and deals with a range of issues including career guidance and passing on in-depth knowledge of cultural matters and management. Mentoring usually exists because of the mentor's lengthy experience and wisdom in a particular role in the cultural community, and their track record of success.

There are two types of mentors:

**The Role Model** in a cultural organization is usually a senior person who has "been there, seen it, done it". They may have been in senior positions in two or three cultural organizations or even different cultural sub-sectors. They pass on the benefit of their lengthy experience of what works and what doesn't.

They need good listening skills and the ability to withhold judgment and advice, until it's needed. This can be very frustrating for the mentor who is itching to pass on their accumulated wisdom and many of these mentors spoil the role by trying to give more than is wanted. In doing so, they risk taking the ownership of the relationship totally away from their employee. Employees can end up feeling that something is being done to them, that they are *being mentored*.

Good role models tend to be very well connected in the cultural community and able to introduce the person to new sources of information and specific learning resources, often outside their organization. If the relationship works well, it often leads to an enduring friendship.

**Facilitative Mentors** operate at a more focused level than the role model. They help people explore their own issues, build their own insights and self-awareness and develop their own unique ways of handling how they interact with key colleagues and the organization. They use current issues to look at recurrent patterns of thinking and behaviour, asking penetrating questions and stimulating the person to take control of issues they have avoided. They build the employee's confidence through greater self-understanding. In short, their strength and contribution is in *facilitating* the employee's growth.