

Parallel Sessions D
D4 – Perspectives on New Skills and Roles

Saturday, September 21, Room E, 10.00

Mentoring as a Tool for Staff Development

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Inspired by a continuing education course at the EAHIL workshop in Estonia, Karolinska Institutet Library (KIB) has developed an in-house mentoring program.

The objectives were:

- To increase contacts between the 11 departments at KIB
- To increase contacts between staff with long experience at KIB and more recent employees
- To increase possibilities to learn from each other
- To provide tools for staff to take an interest in areas where they have not been involved before

28 persons on all levels in the organisation participated in the mentoring program. All of them acted as both mentor and mentoree, a form of two-way mentoring relationship.

All interested staff was asked to do a SWOT-analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) to determine what they needed and what they could supply in terms of mentor-mentoree. Much thought was put into finding partners for everyone. We wanted, if possible, the pairs to consist of one "old" and one "new" employee, with each supplying a skill that the other needed. Preferably they should not come from the same branch library (KIB has five libraries in Stockholm). After the pairs had been put together they had one year to work together with the skills/weaknesses they had put down in the SWOT-analysis.

The project co-ordinators kept up contact with the pairs during the year to try to aid when problems arose.

In the evaluation process of the program we have found both success and failure. But even without an evaluation it has been evident that the program has been successful in increasing contacts between different levels in the organisation, between older and younger staff members and between different departments and branches, which was the most important objectives.