

# Mentoring Coaching and Beyond

## Handout 4 Structural Thinking

- the presenting problem – immediate need
- the presenting problem – longterm need
- the presenting problem – how does it relate to the person/ organization/ overall? does the structure of the organization contribute to the problem? does the problem relate to the overall social, political and economic context

Strategic thinking arises from the third point.

- are there training needs? relationship problems within the organization that effect the problem?
- is there an anomaly in the organizational structure that needs remedy?
- is there a need for political lobbying?
- is there anything underlying the presenting problem

An example:

Chris is feeling undervalued, has no idea whether he/she is doing a good enough job or not.

- ask for some feedback
- is there a regular appraisal system in the organisation?
- is there anyone undermining Chris?
- is the management group skilled in being a good employer?
- does the organization need some employment policies?
- what if a management group member had gone for the job and thought they should have got it?

Work with this – or another example from a group member's experience – and tease out the presenting, structural, strategic issues that need attending to. It may be a simple matter of asking for some feedback, which no one thought to give because everything is going fine or it may be highly complex.

In practicing, make it complex enough to give something to work with.

Remember, the coach/mentor is not offering solutions.