

## MENTORSHIP AND PROFESSIONALISM: TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN?

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“Mentoring is a developmental partnership through which one person shares knowledge, skills, information and perspective to foster the growth of someone else” (De Wit, Schaumberger & Salami, 2013: 26).

Sign Language Interpreters often work alone (De Wit et al. 2013). Every interpreter has her own knowledge, skills, talents and perspective she brings to the assignment. Over the years, every interpreter builds up experience. Interpreters practitioners might have informal talks about the assignment and their skills during breaks, but ‘longitudinal supportive relationships’ to further the quality of one’s decision-making process before, during and after an assignment, are scarce. “Lifelong learning, which is at the core of skilled interpreting practice, means tapping in to resources all around us, including turning to others and guiding each other in turn” (Whynot, 2013: 20). The results of an online survey among sign language interpreters in Austria, Italy and the Netherlands, indicate that interpreters are in need of mentoring. In order to find out how mentoring can facilitate professional development for sign language interpreters (Johnson, 2003), we will address the following question in our presentation:

What character virtues, intellectual and emotional abilities, knowledge and skills (competencies) should an ideal mentor have in order to foster the professional growth of a sign language interpreter?

In our presentation we will include perspectives from existing research in the field and suggestions for further practise according to mentorship in the field of sign language interpreting.

### REFERENCES

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