

# Delivering a positive training environment through mentoring

Dr Jeetendra Jack Patel

Assistant Professor & Academic Development Officer



## Coming up...

- Contextual trends and issues in the aviation industry
- Implications on organizational behavior
- Mentoring: A possible alternative
- Mentoring: A case study
- Successes and Challenges in Mentoring
- Some ideal conditions for mentoring to thrive
- How mentoring fits in with the bigger picture



# Context

**\$8.90**

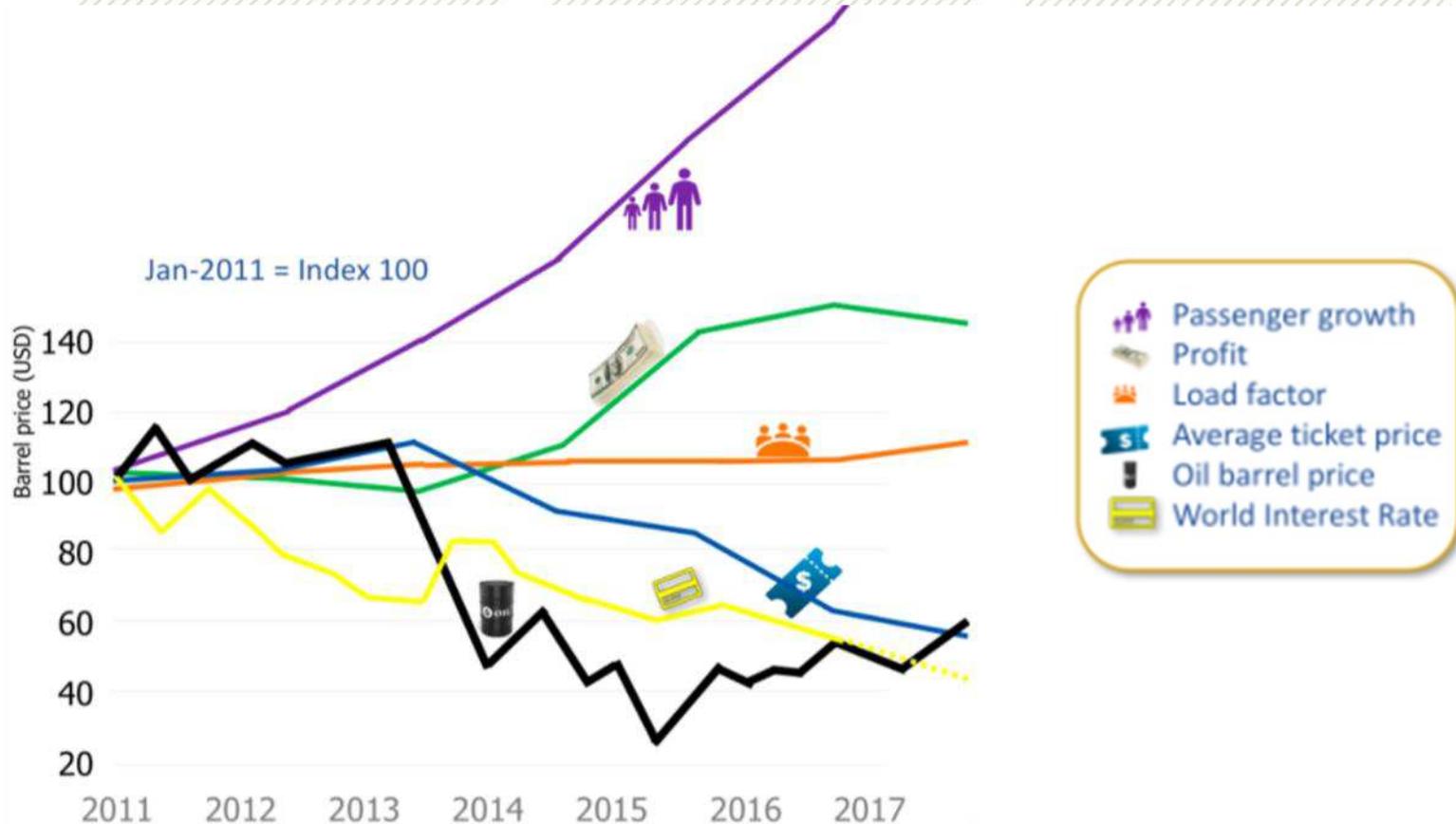
average net profit  
per departing  
passenger in 2018

**\$824<sup>b</sup>**

aviation industry  
revenues forecast  
for 2018, up 9.4%

**4.3<sup>b</sup>**

passengers that are  
expected to travel  
by air in 2018





# Implications

Sluggish markets,  
fierce competition,  
shrinking margins,  
adverse volatile  
economic conditions

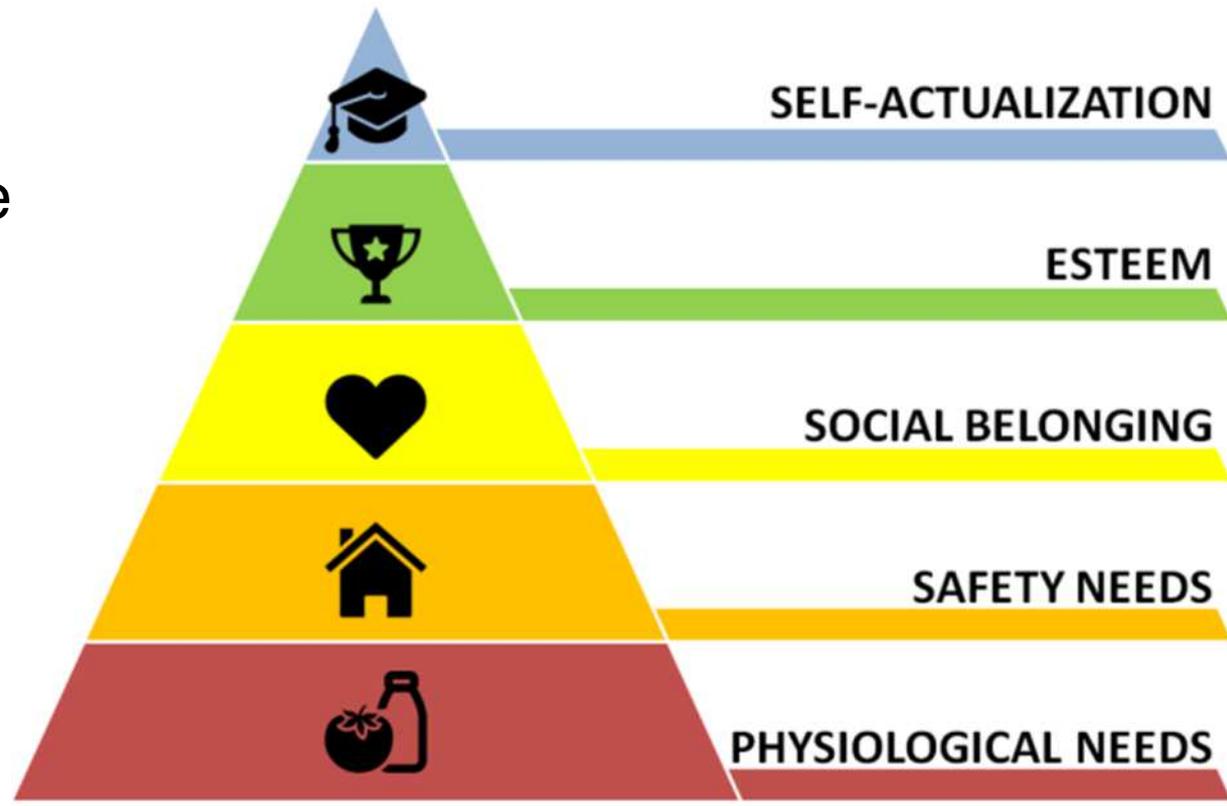
Tensions between  
training, safety and  
profits (should be a  
+ correlation)

Diverting the focus  
of management  
away from training,  
wellbeing and safety  
issues



# A need to rethink training culture?

- It is essential to have a positive training culture to support organizational culture, which in turn benefits **safety, wellbeing, performance** and ultimately the organization
- Maslow's (1943) **'Hierarchy of needs'** is a useful reference point





# Mentoring

- ...As a **process** whereby a mentor and mentee work together to discover and develop the mentee's abilities
- ...As a **relationship** with a responsibility to provide the support, knowledge and opportunities that can facilitate professional success
- ...As a **personal process that combines role modeling, apprenticeship and nurturing**

For further information -

Daloz, L. (1999). *Mentor: Guiding the journey of adult learners*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.



# **Mentoring at ERAU:**

## **A case study and timeline**

The faculty mentoring program at ERAU Asia, set up in 2017 and trialed with all incoming faculty over a particular semester.

- >**A month prior to the start of semester:** Initial email contact
- >**Two weeks prior to the start of semester:** F2F meeting
- >**Friday prior to Week 1:** Orientation
- >**Week 1:** Cooling off period: Classes begin
- >**Week 2:** Informal F2F catch-up to discuss initial thoughts
- >**Week 3-5:** Group reflections and peer observations
- >**Week 10:** Reflections and faculty development workshops



# Successes

- WhatsApp Group mentoring enabled **Instant Q&A over a 24/7 time frame** to answer specific queries.
- Positive and supportive group dynamic through **peer to peer support and two-way learning**
- Majority of faculty felt more **confident** in their roles by the end of term and expressed interest in returning to teach for ERAU Asia
- Overall **positive experiences** related to classroom experience, students and impression of the organization
- Intangible yet important benefits such as feelings of **inclusion, comradery and a team identity**

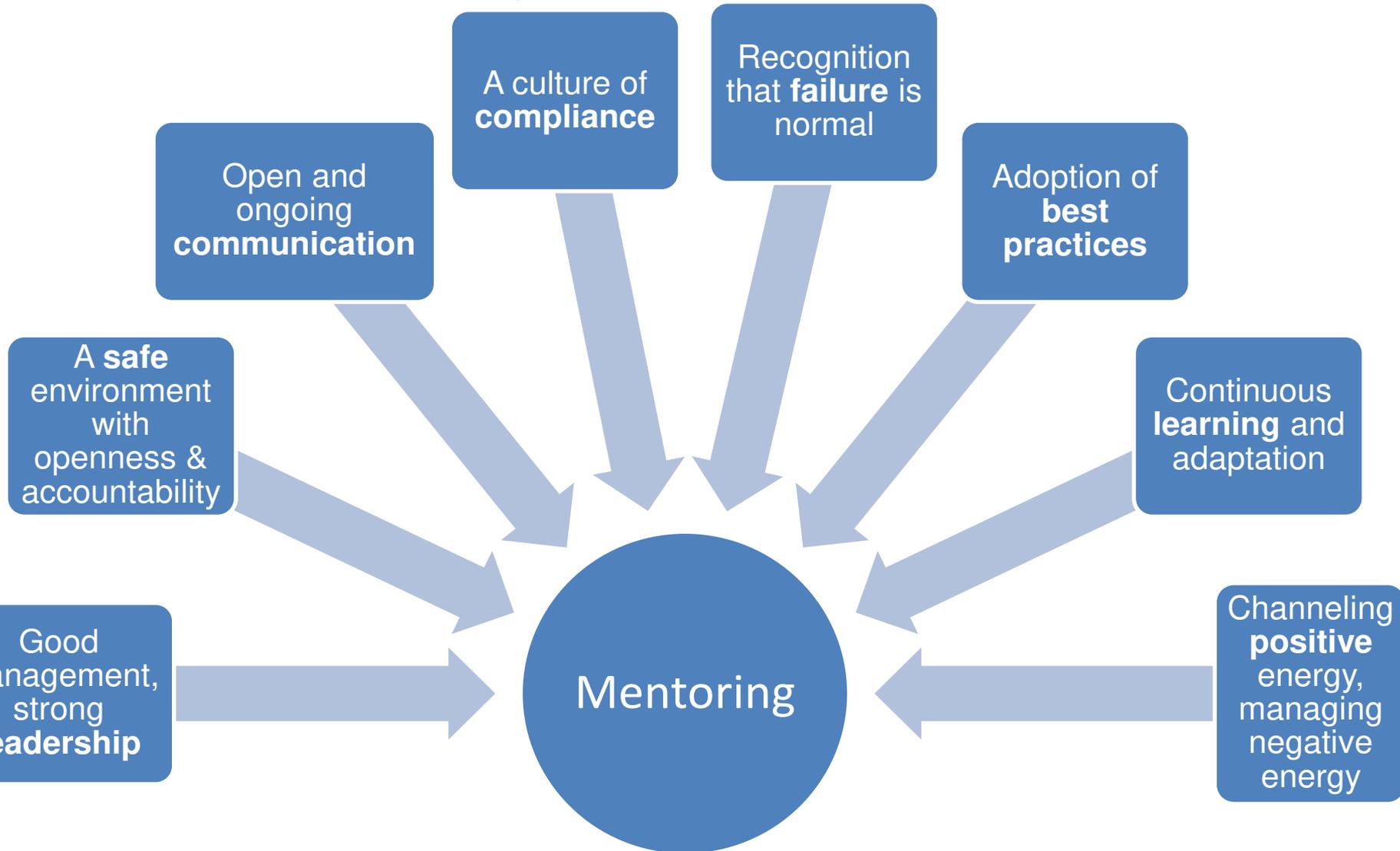


# Challenges

- Different faculty with **differing** support requirements
- **Individual vs group** mentoring
- **F2F** meetings vs **virtual** meetings
- Flexibility, patience and compassion required to meet **individual needs**
- Varied levels of '**buy-in**' from different stakeholders.
- Skepticism over the role and **value** of mentoring.
- What are the possible **limitations** of mentoring?
- To what extent do resource constraints **hinder** mentoring?



# Conditions for effective mentoring





# The bigger picture

- How can we attempt to **capture and quantify** the affect of mentoring?
- Can mentoring programs change organizational culture and promote gender **inclusivity** at work?
- What role can mentors play in closing the **gender gap**?
- Do mentoring programs contribute to greater **awareness** of gender issues and challenges?
- Could mentoring help foster **cross-cultural** learning?
- Could mentoring help promote **recruitment & retention** of personnel, **regardless of gender**, in the aviation industry?