

MENTORINK™ NEWSLETTER

... the online publication of Mentoring Solutions
Year 18 Issue 1 January 2004



"passing the torch"

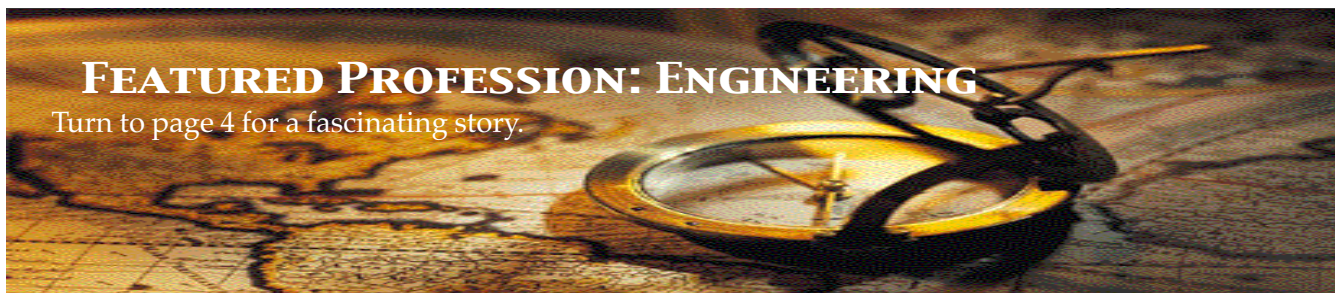
UPCOMING :

Book Review: The Tipping Point, Part 4 (conclusion) • Mentoring Timeline •
Featured profession • and more



FEATURED PROFESSION: ENGINEERING

Turn to page 4 for a fascinating story.



JANUARY IS MENTORING MONTH... Turn to page 2 for details.



THE TIPPING POINT, PART 3... We continue the examination of a book with some intriguing ideas for people to people relationships. (starts on page 3)



MENTORING TIMELINE With page 3, the clock turns back to 1965.

MENTORING CONNECTIONS 2ND NATIONAL CONFERENCE (MARCH 4, 5, 6, 2004)

In 2002, Toronto was the venue for the First National Conference, playing host to several hundred attendees.

This lively and instructive event is back. Don't miss it.
For details, see page 6 or call 1-866-962-4946.



WHEN IS SECURE, NOT SECURE? It's a whole new era for knowledge transfer (KT) via mentoring and coaching. See page 5.



AM I HER MENTOR? Our Editor wonders when a simple Thank You card arrives in the mail... (the story on page 2)



MentorInk
(first published in 1986)
enters year

18!

FROM THE EDITOR

Past issues have carried every thing & any thing on knowledge transfer using mentoring and coaching to support blended learning. Happy reading to all.



Your editor: *Marilynne Miles Gray*

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AM I HER MENTOR?

Normally, I don't agonize over certain things. Being sent a *Thank You* card is certainly on that list. This time, there was a difference.

I've known J for some years, not professionally and not well. Let's call her an acquaintance through my daughter.

By day, she works for a nonprofit organization in an HR support role. Evenings and weekends for the past several years, she and her husband have carried out a labor of love -- creating and selling her 3-D greeting card business.

He -- her husband, that is -- is a computer technician and very talented amateur photographer, an ideal person to support her fledgling efforts and it's clear the card business is hers, not his. He ably critiques and add his own artistic three cents worth.

Over the past two years, especially this past year, I've seen more and more of J meeting her and her husband at local craft fairs and farmer's markets.

I've bought her cards not out of a sense of obligation but because her cards are genuinely clever and different. They've morphed over time into a product line that is doing well enough to go into a local high-profile museum gift shop as a trial run this past December. J's cards were successful enough with museum-goers to rate a reorder. Where will her venture go? Who knows? My bet is she's doing some feet-firmly-on-the-ground dreaming.



Back to the *Thank You* card and why it was sent. In my travels, as I thought of materials for her use and ways she might use things like origami paper, sand glass, felt or anything else imaginable on the front of her dimensional cards, I'd pass along ideas. We spent a good hour one summer Saturday at a popular farmer's market discussing sources for her materials. At her request, I later called her at home with more ideas and sources. That prompted one *Thank You* card (of course one of her own).

Fast forward to the Christmas season and another *Thank You* card arrived. The enclosed message was a glowing tribute to what I had done which was little indeed. But immensely flattering nonetheless.

It's arrival made me wonder about my role in her life. I thought about the many young women (and men) who might otherwise attach the label "mentor" to people like me who have not really played that role.

Mentors play many and profound life-changing roles over time. I have not profoundly changed J's life. Mine has been a one-note role: that of idea-giver. A fun role and one that held no responsibilities for me, unlike the typical mentor.

My thoughts then ran to others who have openly called me their "mentor". But that's another story.

JANUARY IS MENTORING MONTH



In January, 2002, President George W. Bush proclaimed January as National Mentoring Month. The goals of National Mentoring Month are to raise awareness of mentoring in its various forms; recruit individuals to mentor, especially in programs that have a waiting list of young people; and promote the rapid growth of mentoring by recruiting organizations to engage their constituents in mentoring.

Now in its third year, this event focuses attention on the need for mentors, as well as how each individual in businesses, government agencies, schools, faith communities and nonprofits can work together to increase the number of mentors and assure brighter futures for young people.

*"There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up."
John A. Holmer*



**squeezed
for**

Mentoring Interest Profiler™ (MIP)

time?

Know "How many of our staff are interested in mentoring?" or "What type of mentoring do our staff desire -- formal or informal?" The MIP is our web-based survey tool that can be used organization-wide to determine the interest in mentoring (and coaching).

This brief survey takes approximately two minutes for respondents to complete. Your organization receives a Report of the results as well as all of the raw data for analysis. MIP charts and graphs contain a wealth of detail.

Want to use the MIP? Qualified organizations can contact our Sales staff to discuss your challenges and how we can help.

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MENTORING TIMELINE© 1965 A.D.

This is a Mentoring Timeline tale with a difference. It raises more questions than it answers.



According to report, Subway restaurant chain "founder", Fred DeLuca seems to have had a **mentor** who not only suggested the Subway concept to the 17-year old but also provided the initial funding for the venture. If one didn't know otherwise, by surfing the internet, one would conclude young DeLuca came up with the idea on his own. Not so.

Some background to the company. In 2002, Subway surpassed McDonald's as the largest restaurant chain in the United States with more than 20,000 shops in 73 countries -- at last count 148 more than McDonald's.

The story of Subway is memorable. DeLuca, a recent high school graduate in 1965 was invited to Dr. Peter Buck's new home for a summertime barbeque. DeLuca relates to Buck, an old family friend, that he (DeLuca) has plans for higher education studies. Over dinner, Buck suggests another plan: "I think you should open a submarine sandwich shop."

*"Failure is not quite so
frightening as regret."
~ Anonymous*

Recalling this, DeLuca says: "What an odd thing to say to a 17-year-old kid." DeLuca must have sealed his lips long enough to listen to Buck explain how the business should be operated.

Dinner ends. The DeLucas are about to leave when Dr. Buck writes Fred a cheque for \$1000 for the new venture which would be called Subway. This amount is substantial by standards of the day.

And, as they say, the rest is history except that we all know every venture has its highs and lows and this company would be no different.

What was it the old man saw in Fred? What additional help did he give? Does giving money remove someone from the "mentor" rating? This story nudges the urban myth category. It raises a series of questions about feel good stories told to inspire, and model the American Dream. There's absolutely nothing wrong about relating them or hearing them so long as there's a balanced understanding that most dreams never work out like this.

Taken to another level, it's instructive to consider how one acts as a mentor or protege when the end is failure of one sort or another -- the economy dips and the restaurant chain goes bankrupt, the young person doesn't listen to advice, the consumer isn't ready for the concept, the kindly old man doesn't have any money nor does the would-be protege. And on and on.

[Source: **The National Post**, 2003]

BOOKS: THE TIPPING POINT- PART 3

As noted last issue, journalist Malcolm Gladwell's The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference came out in 2002, moving into the best seller list. Gladwell's book has many stimulating ideas including those about social norms, loyalty and emotions, while offering some contrarian notions that are intriguing.

1. He contrasts old thinking on those with "stunted" psychological development with new theories -- such folk don't understand how to conduct healthy relationships. "People who aren't taught right from wrong are oblivious to what is and what is not appropriate behavior... [and] don't have the same commitment to social norms".

What's the new thinking? Rather than being oblivious to the world around, these people are acutely sensitive to the environment and are alert to all sorts of cues but their behavior is a largely a function of social context. No doubt how a person is parented, schooled and befriended is influential but so are genetic factors and these will have a bearing on personality. The example Gladwell offers is that of being honest and how, given a shift in variables, the honesty of people varies rather than stays consistent.

Unfortunately, there are several weaknesses in the book that detract from the intriguing content such that I (the reader) wondered if Gladwell had a thorough understanding of his subject. For example, at this point in the book, the author uses the terms "character", "trait", "personality" interchangeably. The differences between each are large and important.

Again, at this same vital part, Gladwell proclaims: "When it comes to personality... naturally [we] think in terms of absolutes... we're deceiving ourselves about the real causes of human behavior." Given the research he has read, he conjectures it comes down to the evolutionary structuring of our brains. He gives as his example vervet monkeys who are really bad at cuing on the significance of clues in the environment. "This doesn't mean that vervets are stupid: they are very sophisticated when it comes to questions that have to do with other vervets ... [being] very good at processing certain kinds of vervetish information... The same is true of humans."

*Life is made up of several choices.
You have to find yourself
in the resulting information."
Anonymous*

If such creatures are so bad at specific crucial types of behavior, why have they survived? I think that here is an instance of undermining his own best arguments. But let us move on.

2. On peer pressure, Gladwell notes that in a group, we're all susceptible to peer pressure and social norms. As proof, he

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ENGINEERED MENTORING

by Dr. Judith Lentin, President -
The Mentors (Calgary, Alberta)



Every year approximately 2000 new graduates in Engineering and new immigrant professionals begin the process of becoming registered as professionals in the province of Alberta. What happens when a professional organization with more than 40,000 members decides it wants to create a full blown mentoring program?

That was the situation for the Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists and Geophysicists of Alberta (APEGGA) several years ago.

Typical of large organizations, APEGGA created a Committee to construct the framework for a mentoring program. Only one member of that Committee (me) had close ties to a mentoring program. I became a member of this Committee of engineers and want to give you an insider's view of what we experienced.

Initial challenges

Our first concern was that we would be swamped with people wishing to be protégés. We were afraid that we would not be able to provide enough mentors. We worried that if we started too soon, without an effective structure in place that the shortage of mentors would destroy our chances for success. But these were just guesses.

We assumed that everyone would want a mentor – if possible. To do a reality check, we provided a 3-hour seminar on mentoring at APEGGA's Professional Development days in the spring of 2000. We expected a room full of eager, young new professionals who wanted to learn about mentoring. Imagine our surprise when the majority of people who signed up for the seminar were senior professionals!

Although most APEGGA members at the seminar expressed interest in becoming mentors, they also articulated the opinion that mentors should only have protégés who worked in the same company. The overriding reason was the concern that the best and brightest new hires would be poached by competing companies if mentoring between companies was promoted. Further, there was a strong feeling that the very confidential nature of the APEGGA members' work would make it impossible for mentoring to occur between members from different companies. Another problem that had to be addressed was whether this was the right venue to discuss technical questions. Although most

who spoke were in positions of authority at the companies they represented, none were ready to commit to in-house mentoring programs that would address their concerns



Our solutions

After nearly a year of regular meetings, the Committee wrote a Business Plan for a mentoring program and presented it to the APEGGA management. Unfortunately, the plan was thought to be too costly, as it would have required that annual dues go up by a few dollars per member per year. In effect, the plan was to have membership dues underwrite the program. The plan was rejected and the committee was told to find another way to create an

effective mentoring program.

I was given the task to contact more than 150 companies over the next three months to determine if companies would pay for a mentoring program run by the Association. In a flurry of telephone calls I managed to visit 89 oil companies and engineering firms over a three month period.

How did I choose these companies? They had to have a minimum of ten registered professionals on staff. Some rejected us out of hand, others did the same during a brief meeting. From our list, we were fortunate to find eight companies willing to pay to participate in a mentoring pilot project. The Pilot was on!

The Pilot

The Pilot Project started with a 3-hour seminar in each company designed to explain the roles and responsibilities of both mentors and protégés. At the end of the seminar, each participant filled out a *Skills Matrix Questionnaire* that had been created by the Committee so we would have insights into the soft skills needed by the participants. This was the beginning of our competency list.

Mentors with strong skills in a specific area were matched with protégés whose results showed weakness in that same area. In

groups of only 15 to 20 participants, it provided a useful guide.

Our Pilot Project lasted for one year with reviews inside each company carried out on a quarterly basis. Two of the participating companies chose to do their own mentor matching, based on personalities and office politics. Unfortunately, both of these companies cancelled their mentoring program by the 6-month mark. The six companies where the matching was done using the *Skills Matrix Questionnaire* successfully completed their programs. Bit by bit, we were learning the insides of mentoring program and what it takes for success.

Beyond our Pilot

At the end of the Pilot Project, our Committee was ready to begin a full-blown program for the entire organization. We hit a major stumbling block – the simple fact that there was no way to do mentor matching in a scientific way. This caused some agonizing especially in light of our results to that point and the enthusiasm we had detected.

At this point, we decided to build an ARPEGGA web site with a bulletin board set up for potential protégés to request a mentor. We placed all of the documentation (developed during our year-long Pilot Project), most important of which was *Strategies for Success in Mentoring: A Handbook for Mentors and Protégés*. It contains individual

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MAJOR STUMBLING
BLOCK ... NO WAY
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MATCHING
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SCIENTIFIC WAY...



ENGINEERED MENTORING

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work sheets for every step in the development of the mentoring relationship.

The Handbook has been used for over a year as the basis of training during APEGGA Professional Development seminars. It's available on the APEGGA web site without charge to members.

The dilemma of how to match larger numbers of mentoring pairs was a problem that we did not know how to solve. Constrained by financial limitations, we could not develop software to have the matching done automatically, nor could we hire a full time staff member to oversee the matching.

Although we had decided to try a bulletin board approach on our web site – potential protégés could post resumes, in the hope that potential mentors would go to the site and select a protégé – we didn't believe it would be successful.

Before you read any further, can you think of any issues raised by such an approach? Your list should be long!

At this advanced point in our program's development, I discovered Colaboro© during a web search. Although the software does a great deal more than just match mentors to protégés, it is this particular facet of the software that especially attracted us. In addition, because it allows users to pay for access to the software, we were able to design our program so that APEGGA members who do not wish to participate in the mentoring program do not have to support it by an increase in membership fees.

All in all, Colaboro software provides a complete solution to the problems that were holding back the launch of the new APEGGA full-fledged mentoring program. We are now programmed to launch on March 31, 2004.

Lessons Learned

We have learned a great deal in the nearly three years that it has taken our Committee to go from an inspired idea to reality. Granted, a program-by-committee approach always takes longer and the amount of work involved doesn't lessen but it can be shared. There was a huge amount of work required by the volunteer members of the Committee, all of whom were working full time as engineers or geologists. Specialists can set up most aspects of mentoring programs, but we did not have the luxury of hiring a consultant to work with us, and had to learn the basics on our own.

We now have a mentoring program for engineers designed by engineers. With the help of Colaboro software, we believe we will have a very successful mentoring program.

WHEN IS SECURE, NOT SECURE?

Security: *noun: the act of making safe.*

When knowledge transfer is aided by mentoring and coaching, it's a requisite for a good program to consider confidentiality -- of what is said between a mentor and a protegee. As we all recognize, that's the reason direct reports typically do not work with their bosses in a mentor-protegee relationship.

Of course, that's not quite what we're talking about when the work "security" is said these days. Years ago -- actually in a previous century -- when we at Mentoring Solutions started our first mentoring program in September 1978, we had to learn (like others who followed in our wake) that confidentiality was vital to the well-being of the relationship and, in turn, of the program's well-being.

*The mind has exactly
the same power
as the hands; not merely to grasp
the world, but to change it.
~ Colin Wilson*

Once we invented paper and pencil mentoring tools, like *The Mentoring Style Indicator*, *Mentoring Compatibility Indicator* and others, things changed. Now we had to keep confidential what participants wrote on those pages. We had to determine who saw what and at what point.

Next turn of events was when mentoring programs started to use e-mail to connect the relationships. At this point, we had several new issues to consider on behalf of ourselves and our clients. There are many online mentoring programs that largely depend on e-mail and not much more. In other words, they do not contain online tools which add a whole new level of challenge as noted below.

When, not much later, we started to put our tools online then link them into a System (now called Colaboro), a whole series of issues developed especially with the advent of worms, and other nasty internet spawn.

Readers of *MentorInk* will know that we have printed articles on the appropriate use of e-mails in mentoring programs and on the need for those in HR to be much more aware of the impact of computer technology and software on their mentoring programs.

In sum, at CMSI, we've had to consider many things which brings us to what we broadly call security.

Over the past year, due to the fact that our clients require upgraded security, due to the fact that so

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BOOKS: THE TIPPING POINT- PART 3

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offers the instances of the evangelists Calvin, Graham or Wesley and then Rebecca West's best-seller book *Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood*.



Wesley "realized that if you wanted to bring about a fundamental change in people's belief and behavior, a change that would persist and serve as an example to others, you need to create a community around them, where those new beliefs could be practiced and expressed and nurtured." Sounds a lot like what happens when a mentoring program is created, doesn't it?

Here, Gladwell is basically talking about his concept of "stickiness" -- making a message memorable such that people will act on it. It is his claim that why the Ya-Ya Sisterhood went on to best-seller status was not the quality of its ideas but because its contents invited reflection and discussion. In group settings.

In turn, this group setting made it easier to remember (and "stick"). "It's easier to remember and appreciate something, after all, if you discuss it for two hours with your best friends. It becomes a social experience, an object of conversation."

Just the same, the content of a book like this one is not something people are expected to act on. Thus, it's not the best example of what he is trying to get at. Further, because the novel is a story, it could well be more memorable than other pieces of literature such as pamphlets to people to participate in mentoring programs, for example.

What's the import? For this, Gladwell refers to the Rule of 150 -- humans can handle only so much information at once before being overwhelmed. He gives readers an interesting quiz:

List all people you know whose death would leave you truly devastated. The average is 12 names. Why not more? In part due to a lack of time. People on the "devastation" list are those who receive most attention. Any longer a list and the amount of time spent on each person would be less and, as he asks: "Would you still be as close to everyone?" The answer goes without saying.

To be a close friend requires a minimum amount of time and emotional energy. Deeply caring about someone is exhausting. He goes on to explain what it means to know and understand the personal dynamics of one-to-one relationships and groups. Keeping people happy, juggling different personalities, managing the demands on your own time eventually stretches the limits of the neocortex. The bigger the group, the more complicated hierarchies, rules, regulations and formal measures must be imposed to develop cohesion and loyalty. Bottom line, when people claim they can juggle several different mentoring relationships in a program, think about this research and ponder its implications. This part of Gladwell's book I found intriguing as it summed up what I had been reading in scientific journals at the time I first read his book (earlier this year).

Next issue: We wrap our review of *The Tipping Point* with a look at Band Aid solutions.

WHEN IS SECURE, NOT SECURE?

(from page 5)

many of us have faced internet virus threats, and due to the fact that each of these factors require a different mindset on the part of our staff so they may serve clients better, we've had to develop a series of policies several of which are briefly described (following).

As of November 5, 2003, Corporate Mentoring Solutions (CMSI) Quality Assurance and Security practices were being upgraded and will continue to be upgraded as laws are enacted and as conditions warrant. Our activities are now governed by policies drafted specifically to fit the relevant situations:

1. *Information Sensitivity Policy: intended to help CMSI employees determine what information can be disclosed to non-employees and the relative sensitivity of information that should not be disclosed outside of our company without proper authorization.*
7. *Anti-Virus Policy: establishes practices for a secure and safe environment for the use of IT resources; guides configuration of anti-virus tools and software and defenses against viruses, Trojans, worms and other malicious code. This policy emphasizes CMSI's commitment to providing safe and secure services both internally for our staff as well as for our clients.*

*First find all the holes,
then plug them.
Anonymous.*



8. *Ethics Policy: guides CMSI's business behavior to ensure ethical conduct and emphasizes our commitment to fair business practices as legislated by the laws of Canada and the United States plus various agencies to which CMSI provides services. Our personnel security guidelines have been developed with documents such as the Computer Security Act of 1987, Title III, US Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) of 2002.*

Clearly, all this will be an ongoing consideration. A decade ago let alone two decades ago, we were blissfully unaware of what the future held in store. Happily, being motivated to make these changes means we keep on the leading edge and are even more aware of the impact each change we make in our software will have on our policies and vice versa.

For further information on current standards, readers might wish to visit the following sample websites:

SANS/GIAC	http://www.sans.org
ISO 17799	www.induction.to/bs7799
NIST	csrc.nist.gov