

MENTORINK™ NEWSLETTER

... the online publication of Mentoring Solutions
Year 17 Issue 8 October 2003



"passing the torch"

UPCOMING :

Book Review: The Tipping Point Pt. 2 • eMentoring & Online Learning • Mentoring Timeline • and more ...



FEATURED PROFESSION: ARCHITECTURE

WHAT DOES E-MENTORING MEAN TO YOU? (go to page 7)

POLL

On Mentoring and Luck: Part 3.

There's a long-standing myth that it's luck that gets you a mentor. Last issue, we looked at more of one scientist's research on "luck" -- how people differ in their outlook on life and the impact this has on success. On page 2, we conclude with Four Principles worth some thought.

Ask Mentor

For some new statistics turn to page 6.

Books

The Tipping Point Part 1

(starts on page 2)

Feature: The Cost of Coaching

On a multi-million dollar industry.

Mentoring Timeline

visits Hollywood (turn to page 4)

What's happening

On page 7, highlights from the Online Learning Conference and Expo 2003, held in Los Angeles September 22-24th.

WHY LEADERSHIP IS THE MOST DANGEROUS IDEA... an overview of this interesting article will appear soon. Stay tuned. For a teaser see Ask Mentor, page 6.

"You can't get it out of your head."

(try page 2)



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**



Books: *The Tipping Point*- Part 1

Right off the bat, I can see why this book is a best-seller. It's compact, approachable, and appeals to the notion that we can do something about making our lives better if we read between the lines of world events. There's always a place for a clever twist on how the world works. And this book does just that. As other readers of the book I'm sure, I appreciated the rather neat pigeon-holing of (1) social epidemics; (2) transmission of messages; (3) character; (4) groups and hierarchies and (5) "stickiness".

contagiousness is a property of all sorts of things...

Journalist Malcolm Gladwell's *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* came out in 2002. He calls it his "biography of an idea ... the best way to understand the emergence of fashion trends... or any other mysterious changes that mark everyday life is to think of them as epidemics...

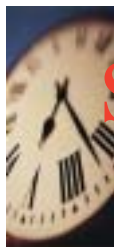
spread[ing] just like viruses do."

To his way of thinking, this contagiousness is a property of all sorts of things -- teenage smoking rates, book popularity, crime waves. The size of the epidemic at its end point is far out of proportion to factors that started it and, according to Gladwell, we overlook this or are ignorant of it. Turning the concept upside down, the author suggests we can model successful tactics of the epidemic and structure them so as to have maximum effect which is important for those creating promotional materials for mentoring programs.

Stickiness

In Gladwell's world, "Stickiness means that a message makes an impact. You can't get it out of your head." He drives home the point that advertising has a classic precept:

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squeezed for time?

Mentoring Interest Profiler™ (MIP)

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). **And it's free!**

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 -- Troy Oppen, Ian Frazer or Wayne Robinson -- to discuss your challenges and how we can help.

Mentoring Myth: Part 3 -Conclusion



Dr. Richard Wiseman's research suggests that lucky people can generate positive outcomes. These he calls four basic "principles".

To reiterate, Wiseman discovered lucky people (a) are skilled at creating and noticing chance opportunities, (b) make good decisions by listening to their intuition, (c) create self-fulfilling prophecies via positive expectations, (d) adopt a resilient attitude that transforms a potential negative into good. So far, so good. Full of terms that would resonate with most of us -- opportunities, good decisions, positive expectations, and so on. In a moment, we'll examine the possible links to mentoring.

Wondering whether these principles could be used to enhance the amount of what is called good luck, Wiseman carried out yet another experiment. He created what he called a "luck school" to teach people to think and act differently. A group of volunteers spent 30 days applying techniques and carrying out exercises designed to help them think and behave like a lucky person.

One month later, the volunteers returned and described what had happened. The results were dramatic: 80% self-reported themselves as happier, more satisfied with their lives and, perhaps most important of all, "luckier".

While lucky people became luckier, the unlucky had also become "lucky". By his own estimates he has an 80% success rate. One woman after graduating from "luck school", had passed her driving test after three years of trying, was no longer accident-prone and became more confident.

Now while most of us probably wouldn't call this luck, it seems clear that a change of mindset had a more positive outcome. And it's this factor to be aware of.

To help maximize this projected change in attitude and behavior, Wiseman created several Principles:

Principle 1. The "unlucky" often fail to follow their intuition when making a choice; lucky people tend to respect hunches. Lucky people are interested in how they both think and feel about various options, rather than simply looking at the rational side of the situation. Possibly this helps because gut feelings act as an alarm bell - a reason to consider a decision carefully. In addition, they take steps to actively boost their intuitive abilities by, for example, meditating and clearing their mind of other thoughts. As Wiseman notes: "Not everything is under control. But a lot more is about your way of thinking and behaving."

Q: What does this have to do with mentoring and coaching?

A: Feel uncomfortable about the term "intuition"? Some theorists propose this is when people do constant compari-

(go to page 4)

Wiseman carried out yet another experiment. The results were dramatic:

Concerned about

wrong moves
and having

there to



making the

no one

help you?

This a typical worry in your workplace?

Colaboro® is designed to help people.

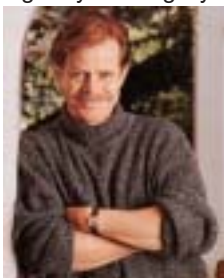
- More than simple e-mail or list-servs.
- Much more than a "technical mentor" who answers questions.
- Lends the personal, confidential touch to every need -- individual or team, distance settings or right next door.
- Take advantage of blended learning -- all the courses, books, networks, brownbag lunches already in use.
- Real life knowledge transfer capability.
- Fully interoperable mentoring & coaching tools woven around a proven process.
- Jump-start and improve results with security.
- Scalable just-in-time mentoring®.

Call Mentoring Solutions for details.



Mentoring Timeline© 1965 A.D.

Though he entered college to study veterinary medicine, in the 1960s actor William H. Macy (pictured below) transferred to Goddard College and met David Mamet (who is only a few years older), a recent grad who had returned to teach acting at his alma mater. Eventually, Macy became Mamet's teaching assistant and a willing vessel for the playwright's terse, talky, psychologically bruising style.



When Mamet returned to his Chicago, he took and fellow member Steven Schachter with him. The trio founded the St Nicholas Theater, and in 1975 staged Mamet's *American Buffalo*.

Acknowledging his debt to Mamet, Macy told

The Guardian in 2000: "*He wasn't just my mentor, he also gave me my career. He gave me crucial roles throughout my career. I just wouldn't have made it without him.*"

Macy and Mamet also co-founded the Atlantic Theatre Company, where Macy has both acted and directed. Despite roles in *Mr. Holland's Opus* (1995), a recurring role on NBC's *ER*, *Air Force One*, *Boogie Nights* and *Wag the Dog* (co-scripted by Mamet), *Jurassic Park 3*, *The Client*, *Murder in the First*, *Searching for Bobby Fischer*. Macy hit his stride with *Fargo*.

"Mamet was my first teacher, the man who really showed what it was to act. You've never seen a happier fellow than Dave working on a movie. There's no place he'd rather be. He just loves it. I've seen that guy say hello to a dozen extras at 7am and then 13 hours later he will say goodnight to them by name! He is the only walking, talking genius I know."

Macy's actress wife, Felicity Huffman, also calls Mamet her mentor. Clearly, Macy enjoys the ongoing relationship with Mamet. "*Most actors are so crazed about David Mamet that they come to set way prepared and they've learned every single syllable. He's loose as a goose about it. I've seen him on more than one occasion when you mess up a line three or four times in a row and he'll say, 'Hold on we'll change the line. There must be something wrong with it or you wouldn't be having such difficulty.'*"

[Sources: *Architectural Digest*, Hollywood.com, Femail.com]

Mentoring Myth: Part 3 -Conclusion

(from page 2)

sons between the current situation and previous experiences good, bad or indifferent then on that basis make decisions.

Some people may be more in tune with this process and thus pay more attention to it. What they may be processing is not only the outcomes of prior experiences (especially with people) but also about what is important, the stress their bodies feel at the moment, their natural rhythms, how role models and mentors might have responded to similar situations, how family and friends fit into the picture and so on.

Principle 2. Unlucky people tend to be creatures of routine. As an instance, they tend to take the same route to and from work and talk to the same types of people at parties. In contrast, many lucky people try to introduce variety into life. For example, one person described how he thought of a color before arriving at a party and then introduced himself to people wearing that color. Taking-off-the-blinkers kind of behavior boosts the likelihood of serendipity.

Q: What does this have to do with mentoring?

A: When people free themselves up to other ways of doing things and viewing the world, they are likely opening themselves up to learning much more from their mentors. This flexibility widens their options and probably sharpens the ability to process what's going on around them. Which is the perfect segue for Principle 3.

Principle 3. Lucky people are skilled at creating, noticing and acting upon chance opportunities. They do this in various ways, including maximizing networking, adopting a relaxed attitude to life and by being open to new experiences.

Q: What does this have to do with mentoring?

A: There's no procrastination involved. While these people ACT, they do so after having processed their thoughts (Principle 1). It's a fine balancing act worthy of emulation.

Principle 4. Lucky people tend to see the positive side of ill fortune. While imagining how things could have been worse, they are certain the future is going to be full of good fortune. Wiseman says there aren't any quick fixes. "*You can't just say 'cheer up'. The whole thing is about looking at living in different ways.*"

In one interview, a lucky volunteer arrived with his leg in a plaster cast and described how he had fallen down a flight of stairs. Asked whether he still felt lucky, he cheerfully explained he felt "luckier than before. After all, I could have broken my neck."

Q: What does this have to do with mentoring and coaching?

A: These expectations become self-fulfilling prophecies by helping people persist in the face of failure, and by shaping interactions with others in a positive direction. They use various psychological techniques to cope with the bad. Further, they spontaneously imagine how things could have been worse, do not dwell on the ill fortune and take control of the situation.

Postscript: Wiseman's book, *The Luck Factor* (2003) details his findings, Principles and exercises. He says there is a serious side to his work and why he promotes it: children labelled as unlucky often carry this attitude through life. "*If people do want to change their luck, NOW is a good time of year to do it.*"



The Cost of Coaching

If you've paid attention, *MentorInk* (and Mentoring Solutions Inc.) uses the term "coaching" as a subset skill of mentoring. Clearly, some people like to use the terms interchangeably and still others have substituted the newer term (coaching) for the original and, this seems to have resulted in some interesting developments.

"*Business coaching is a trend that's exploding among small businesses and entrepreneurs nationwide. It's estimated that up to 20% of American small businesses are using them, up from 4% just four years ago.*" So said *Chicago Business* in 2000. Sound familiar?

Another take on the phenomenon (*Business Wire*, 2001) claimed: "...the number of career coaches has grown from 5,300 nationwide in 1998 to approximately 10,000 in 2001... a \$250 million industry [with] no sign of slowing. And it is not just a U.S. phenomenon. It has been reported that there are currently over 15,000 job coaches active in China alone, with other countries also using coaches... For career changers in uncertain economic times, a job coach is someone who can help them advance in their careers and achieve their goals, can make the difference between a satisfying career path and ongoing unemployment."

The International Coaching Federation (ICF) currently estimates that 15,000 people call themselves coaches in the United States. Harvard Business School professors claim to be inundated with requests to coach.

Note that some of the following studies, contain results that are self reports only or have small samples or are estimates. Some results might be attributable to the self-fulfilling prophecy. That is, given the high cost of each hour spent with a coach, the recipient of the services might inflate the sense of the results. Finally, none of the results are longitudinal or necessarily controlled for other factors. This being said, let's take a look at paid coaching.

Why?

Call it career coaching, job coaching, performance coaching, executive coaching, behavioral coaching (or any one of a dozen other like terms, it's "... a \$100 million business second only to the IT industry in its US growth rate ...the latest must-have lifestyle and business accessory - the solution to both workplace underachievement and premature stress burnout." according to *Vive* (2000).

Companies hire them to shore up executives (or, in some cases, to ship them out), or to act as

change agents. Workers at all levels hire coaches for guidance on how to improve performance. Most people who hire executive coaches are professional people whose average age is 41 and who have college or advanced degrees.

In April 2001, IES Research (a group of 30 of the UK's leading employers) noted: "With the aggressive marketing of executive coaching by consultants, it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain an objective view about what it is."

According to IES, the phenomenal growth in the use of executive coaching appeared to have several causes. Downsizing of the 1990s, resulting in 'lonely' and isolated senior managers who welcome support and challenge from someone external to their immediate work environment. If they didn't like the word "mentor" (who already met these needs without being paid) and wanted a "must have", then a paid coach was it.

IES claims there has been an increasing demand by organizations for senior managers with key 'soft skills'. Because business schools and in-company standard development programmes apparently failed to embed the kinds of feedback-based approaches necessary for self-insight and the acquisition of soft skills, for managers when they were more junior, companies and individuals have concluded a paid coach would do the job instead.

A third suggested cause is that some senior managers who consider they have 'made it to the top', worry that needed "development may be seen as an admission of weakness. Executive coaching (like mentoring) is private and avoids that public gaze.

Finally, some see whole-day courses or regular classes as an imposition on an already-busy schedule. Sessions with executive coaches can be fitted in as needed.

Based on a study of 56 executives at Widener University, corporations realize that helping staff with work-life balance is part of business. Many corporate executives also felt the pressure personally affected their productivity and quality of work.

More study results:

According to ICF, clients report these outcomes as a result of working with a coach: • Self-awareness improved 67.6% • Setting better goals 62.4% • More balanced life 60.5% • Lower stress levels 57.1%.

Xerox Corporation carried out several studies, one of which showed that in the absence of follow-up coaching 87% of the skills change brought about by a program was lost. That's 87 cents of the skills dollar. However good skills training in the classroom, unless it's followed up on the job, most of its effectiveness is lost without follow-up. For example, most sales people try out the new skills for a few calls, find they feel awkward and /or the new method isn't bringing instant results, so they revert to the old ways. Coaching is one way (not reciprocal) to reinforce new skills until a learner -- such as a person in sales -- is through the dangers of RD (Results Dip). Once through RD and new skills bring results, the theory is that new skills become self-reinforcing.

A small sample study (featured in *Public Personnel Management Journal*, 2001) reports that managers (31) in a managerial training program increased productivity by 22.4%. When a second group was provided coaching following training, their productivity increased by 88%.

A larger study *Business Wire* reported (2001) was of 100 executives, (mainly from *Fortune* 1000 companies) who received executive coaching

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The Cost of Coaching (from page 5)

results achieved through coaching. Do the maths: more than \$17,000 US was spent per person. Multiply this by 100 executives and it's clear some serious money goes out the door per year.

Among the benefits to companies providing executive coaching were improvements in: productivity (self-reported by 53%) quality (48%) organizational strength (48%) customer service (39%) reducing customer complaints (34%) retaining executives who received coaching (32%) cost reductions (23%) and bottom-line profitability (22%).

*"Ideas are capital.
Everything else is money."
~ Anon*

Among the benefits to executives were improved: working relationships with direct reports (reported by 77%) working relationships with immediate supervisors (71%) teamwork (67%) working relationships with peers (63%) job satisfaction (61%) conflict reduction (52%) organizational commitment (44%) and working relationships with clients (37%).

Drop some names

According to a recent survey by The Hay Group, an international human resources consultancy with a \$10 million coaching practice, *"Between 25 percent and 40 percent of Fortune 500 companies use executive coaches"* IBM hired 30 organizational psychologists to coach 300 top managers, crediting coaches with *"creating a climate where everyone in the organization feels empowered and capable and committed."* Motorola expects to spend "in the low millions" in one year on executive coaching for their best middle managers. Anglo-Dutch conglomerate, Unilever, has 30 coaches working in Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa with its 250 top managers. Eastman Kodak uses coaching to point out things people would not notice themselves. This *"plays a big role in shaping behavior."* Abbott Laboratories started an in-house coaching program to supply executive coaching as a way to help valued employees evolve in a swiftly changing business environment.

What does it cost?

At the time of writing, one study of Fortune 500 companies, claimed coaching was used widely from Marriott International and Glaxo Wellcome, to Dow Chemical used corporate coaches with

fees ranging from \$600 to \$2,000 a month for three or four 30- to 60-minute phone conversations; \$400 an hour is not unheard of -- far more than psychologists or psychiatrists earn. The ICF says users should expect to pay the equivalent of a management consultant's fee, from \$150 to \$375 per hour. Executive/business coaches charge by the hour, by the month or by the project.

In 2001, the Associated Press reported: "People, rather than companies, do hire their own coaches -- some of whom charge as little as \$50 an hour for phone or e-mail consultations. Companies pay up to \$100,000 for yearlong engagements with CEOs, or \$5,000 to \$15,000 for a three-month engagement with senior managers."

HR.com comes up with other figures: *"Fees range dramatically. Business coaches can range from \$150 to \$1000 per hour, with \$300 to \$500 per hour being the more common range. Personal coaches rates are typically much less, with \$75 to \$100 per hour being usual."*

Who qualifies as an executive coach? At the moment, just about anybody. So, due diligence is a must. Trainers, spiritual advisors, consultants, bartenders, motivational speakers and media personalities refer to themselves as coaches. How to distinguish quality from hype. Certification for instance as a "personal coach" does not qualify someone to be a business/executive coach. As with most emerging professions, the rules and guidelines for how to make executive coaching work have been scanty at best. This gap has been felt by executives seeking help, their organizations, and the scores of people putting up shingles as executive coaches.

Benchmark

The Business Journal suggests a review and verification of the coach's level of education/ training and credentials be done plus confirmation of the coach's experience and skills; agreeing on what diagnostic instruments and interventions will be used; consideration of the projected ROI and establishing how the coaching success will be measured and evaluated. Real assessments must be used to measure change - no crystal balls or "coaching from the heart". A reputable coach will welcome these requirements.

Ask Mentor



Q: Have you written about leadership and mentoring before?

A: Yes, often. In case you've missed it, here's the key connection as I see it.

The mentor, from time to time takes on a leadership role. On the other side of the equation, no matter what the field the protege is learning how to lead -- become fully competent, independent, fully functioning and responsible. The problem is, there are misconceptions about which are the best elements of leadership to apply in the situation.

Recently, I spied a provocative article whose contents reminded me of what was said by Jim Collins in *Good to Great* (reviewed early this year in *MentorInk*) on the subject.

Readers can look forward to some challenging ideas in future issues.



The Tipping Point (from page 2)

Unless I remember what you told me, why would I ever change my behavior, buy the product you're selling, or participate in the Mentoring Pool? Obviously, around the water cooler, there are some learners who lap up what another person advises, changes behaviors and joins the community of practise -- well outside of the mentoring initiative. But as has been pointed out before in MentorInk, in this regard, how do you know what the "water cooler mentor" really knows? how do you know what knowledge is being passed on? and, how much more knowledge does the protege-learner need to know, from whom and when?

The foregoing is not a polemic against informal mentoring but it is an underscoring of the place for systematic, well-considered, proactive learning that can and does take place within mentoring programs.

The author suggests "...there are specific ways of making a contagious message memorable" -- presentation, and structuring. Gladwell doesn't make enough of a further two factors that enter into the equation. All the "just right" phraseology and presentation in the world won't counteract a clash of style. Some people won't get a message packaged in a style contrary to their own -- they are global learners and the message is for detailers, for example. Further, some people are not ready for the message. It could be another ten years before they are truly ready and at this moment they are independent enough to keep on the same rutted path of life.

The disconnect or disjunction and the mismatch are supposedly overcome "by making small but critical adjustments in how" ideas are presented. As a jumping off point, the book has some interesting ideas and stories but it may oversimplify and, to his credit, Gladwell acknowledges this. For instance, he notes: "*Stickiness sounds as if it should be straightforward. When most of us want to make sure what we say is remembered, we speak with emphasis. We talk loudly, and we repeat what we have to say over and over again.*"

If we accept his examples, interesting ones at that, he suggests we ought to conclude along with him that "as often as not the elements that make them [messages] sticky turn out to be... small and seemingly trivial." Current social conditions overwhelm us with "people clamoring for our attention." Any Mentoring Program Coordinator will recognize this problem: many other things compete for the attention of program participants.

In this instance, what does he think is the answer? People do not need "an avalanche of new or additional information." The shift must be from the abstract "to a practical and personal piece of ...advice."

*"Learning is remembering
what you're interested in."
~ Saul Wurman*

POLL What does e-Mentoring mean to you?

Go on the internet. Type in the word eMentoring. What will you find? Is it the same concept as online mentoring simply worded differently? Is there a range of what is to be found as is the case, for example, with online learning?

We're conducting a poll. Let us know what you think. What's your experience? *MentorInk* will publish results in a future issue. Your input is valuable.

*"Happiness is not a destination.
It is a method of life."
-Burton Hills*

What's happening

Online Learning Conference and Expo 2003, held in Los Angeles September 22-24th, should be of interest to all those wanting to stay in touch with current developments. Session presenters were grounded in reality -- no hyperbole allowed (well, almost none). It was the first conference I've attended at which no one was allowed to go overtime. "What!" you say? True. For instance, in one main stage session, 11 gurus were given 4 minutes each. If any went overtime, the mike went dead and the spotlight disappeared only to reappear on the next person at another podium. Refreshing.

Hyperbole was reserved for the trade show. To be fair, some of the software is pretty amazing. These people are trained to make it look easy. End users know there's always a learning curve.

Out of the hundreds of sessions, key themes were: simulations, compliancy (especially SCORM), ROI (return on investment), how to buy (courses, software, etc.), and the role of learning objects.

Saul Wurman, prolific author of 80 plus books, opened the show with what (to the uninformed) sounded like a boorrrringggg presentation: "The ABCs of Information Architecture for Better Learning". It was funny, informative, and thought-provoking. As a bookend, noted writer, Thomas Stewart (whose book *Intellectual Capital* has just been reviewed in *MentorInk*), closed the conference with a talk: "After the Ball". An equally interesting speaker, Stewart opened with the question: "If e-learning's so good, why am I here [at the conference]? What happened to The New Economy?"

Though readers will be at all levels of sophistication in regard to mentoring, elearning, and technology in general, we think it's important to share in future issues of *MentorInk* some of the highlights of this conference.