

# Mentor Ink Newsletter™

MentorInk is the online publication of  
Corporate Mentoring Solutions Year 16 Issue 10 November 2002



## About our lead item



### **A Mentoring Principle**

There are several Mentoring Principles discovered over the years since mentoring programs prompted those of us in the field to research, gather data, test, refine and develop. Here's one Principle to think about in connection with your mentoring initiative.... (cont. page 3)

## Other features:



### **The Intelligent Thinkers Guide to Mentoring (Part 8)**

Tip for successeven and eight appear.

*A man who pays respect  
to the great, paves the way  
for his own greatness.  
~ Chinese saying*



### **The Mentoring Timeline**

In this issue, we visit Nazi Germany of 1933 and watch a brilliant scientist struggling to escape the gathering terror...(cont. page 4)



### **Mentor Muses - The Alphabet According to Mentor (J, and K)**

As you may know, if you have read earlier issues, Mentor is working through the alphabet. He understands that what appears in *MentorInk Newsletter* is but an abbreviated version of what appears in some books on mentoring, for example... (next page)

## Mentoring Benchmark Survey 2002 - topic #2



This is our third survey of mentoring programs. In year one (2002), we published results from our very extensive 15-question study. Answers came from dozens of mentoring program co-ordinators around the world. In year two, the focus was on a different aspect of mentoring.

This year, the survey will be divided into several parts -- one part each month -- with fewer questions so respondents need take only a minute (or less) to answer.

Each set of survey results will be reported in *MentorInk*. If you value intellectual capital on mentoring, make certain you participate. Thanks in advance.

*Please participate*

## Next issue (January 2003)



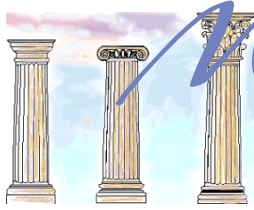
- Mentor visits China.
- The mentoring message in best-selling book, *Good to Great*. (for details see page 3)
- Some survey results.

### *From the Editor*

Past issues have carried every thing & any thing mentoring-related with a focus on programs. Happy reading to all.

Your editor: *Marilynne Miles Gray*





## A Mentoring Principle

*Never make assumptions.*

One of the activities I developed in the mid-80s for mentoring programs was an Assumptions Exercise. This was because during the training session (for both mentors and proteges together), it became evident that both parties were making assumptions that had negative consequences. The exercise was developed to make partners aware of their unspoken (and therefore hidden) agendas.

How was this principle uncovered? At a training session for mentors and proteges more than a decade ago, my partner (Dr. William A. Gray) and I had several "orphans" -- people who were at our training session without their real partners. Now while this is not a recommended way of carrying out training (because such simulations are time-wasters), we agreed to allow people to partner up to get a flavor of the relationship.

One pairing stood out for us from all the rest. As the day moved along, it became clear that this mentor-protége pair felt uncomfortable with one another even though they clearly knew this was only a simulation. The why of the discomfort surprised us.

"She" (\*the protege) expected her mentor to visit her home, meet the family, pat the dog on the head, go to a basketball game together as a social activity. Later, she told us she assumed her mentor would match her in terms of this perspective.

"He" (the mentor) was all business -- meet in formal circumstances in the office only, talk only about what was on paper, no social chitchat in his agenda. Afterwards, he mentioned that this was his ideal of what mentors did.

Both agreed that it would be extremely useful early on to explore assumptions they had made prior to meeting. For us, it brought home the need to develop an activity to forestall such happenings. The nice thing about the activity would be its connection with real life needs. More of the activity in a moment.

It's natural to make assumptions. Assumptions can be mental handcuffs. It's only when the outcome is negative that we wake up to the fact that it should have been done differently. But, by that time, it's too late. Early explorers on horseback, when first seen by North American Indians, we assumed to be some new sort of beast with two heads, four legs and two arms.

Assumptions make us lazy. We can save time by making them; we don't need to check details surrounding the situation -- we can jump in with an answer. We can screen out other possibilities. Let me offer a typical scenario.

Protege discusses career ladder possibilities, and promotion, with the thought is on moving up. Less commonly will the discussion center on moving "down" to a

lesser-paying, less prestigious position, then moving laterally in order to move up. The reality is that there may be more opportunities in this new area.

Equally, the discussion might be short cut by the assumption that a move up in the ranks is positive when it may not be a good choice for the protege.

Here are sample questions from the Assumptions Exercise that mentors and proteges over the years have said have helped when they first meet. To get greatest value, participants separately record their answers before they share at length so that there is a high degree of sanctioned honesty.

Question 1: What assumptions have I made about my mentoring relationship (e.g., the outcomes)?

Question 2: What assumptions has my partner likely made about me and the relationship?

Question 3: What assumptions has my boss made about mentoring and the relationship?

These questions and their answers are natural lead-ins to later activities that mentoring partners carry out.

*"Destiny is not a matter of chance,  
it is a matter of choice; it is not a thing to  
be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved."  
-William Jennings Bryan*

## The Alphabet According to Mentor

**J** ℓello: Whenever, I am asked to define mentoring, typically I say: "It's like nailing jello to the wall."

How so?

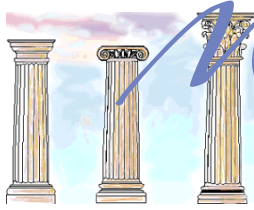
Each person has a unique perspective going into the relationship. The same can be said during the relationship. Thus, there is a time factor. Add to this the fact that the protege, for instance, will also bring to the table, unique experiences, educational background, needs, desired benefits, styles (such as learning and working) concerns and expectations.

The mentor, similarly, brings with him or her expertise, goals, unique styles, culture and so forth.

To demand an all-encompassing definition of the sort that I sense people desire, is challenging at best and perhaps nonsensical at worst. I can no more define what mentoring is to you than for me to pinpoint precisely what it is that makes you tick. For this reason, when people in a hurry want the couple-of-words "definition", I fall back on the non-dictionary definition: "The most complex of all human relationships." Think about it.

January 2003 issue - The letter K and more.





## The Intelligent Thinkers Guide Pt 8

### 3. Co-ordinated mentoring

In previous issues, we've looked at two types of mentoring with this being the third type. And, we also reviewed six tips for ensuring success in a co-ordinated program. Here are a number of additional tips based on CMSI experience since 1978 with a wide range of initiatives.

#### Tips for success #7-8

7. Primarily, mentoring is a close personal relationship and a process of working together to achieve agreed-upon goals. This relationship and process must be carefully monitored on a regular basis to resolve emerging conflicts and problems before a crisis develops and to ensure partners receive the needed resources and support to carry out their activities.



*Do all the good you can,  
by all the means you can,  
in all the ways you can,  
in all the places you can,  
at all the times you can,  
to all the people you can,  
as long as ever you can.  
-John Wesley*

It is a mistake to assume that a training program, no matter how well designed and delivered, will automatically result in mentors and protégés correctly applying those skills taught in the training session. With this in mind, a key person within the organization is needed to provide ongoing monitoring and additional training when needed. This monitor is usually the program coordinator or a human resources development staff member.

*[Editor's note: again, electronic systems can be employed to do much of the administrvivia associated with this part of the program, freeing the co-ordinator to focus him/herself on more important aspects.]*

8. At some designated point in time, previously-planned program goals should be formally evaluated to determine

benefits for mentors, protégés, and the organization. Quantitative data from questionnaires can be collected as a means of measuring perceived group gains/benefits. Qualitative data from interviews is a means of obtaining in-depth information about worse and best case situations. Both types of data are then used to improve the pilot program until it is ready for expanded use with more mentors and protégés. It is important to note that since mentoring is such a personal experience and matching of mentors and protégés is so crucial to success, it does not make sense to randomly match mentors to protégés as required when using a rigorous control group research design. This means that relationships between program interventions (e.g. training, mentoring style, etc.) and program outcomes must be determined in other, more appropriate ways.

(Source: excerpted from "Advice on Planning Mentoring Programs by Dr. William A. Gray, *Mentoring International*, vol 3 #3, summer 1989)

Next issue: [Details on the components of a mentoring program.](#)

### In our January 2003 issue...

Many of our readers will be familiar with Jim Collins' 2001 best-selling work, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap.. and Others Don't*. His earlier work, *Built to Last* has also been a staple of thought-provoking reading.

Reading it last year prompted some thinking about the parallels between principles of mentoring and the 11 companies Collins and his team of 20 researchers placed on the list of "great. Under the category of "the right circumstances" for moving from good to great, he mentions "self-reflection, conscious personal development, a **mentor...**"

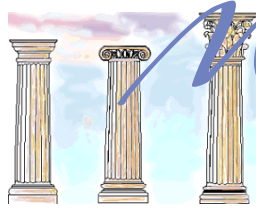
Join us for more in the next issue.

## The Mentoring Interest Profiler™ (MIP)

Here's a starting point to answer questions such as: "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 to be used organization-wide to determine the interest in mentoring. And it's FREE to appropriate organizations!

This 7-question 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. If your organization is interested in using the MIP, please contact [sales@mentoring.ws](mailto:sales@mentoring.ws).





# Mentor Ink Newsletter™

MentorInk is the online publication of  
Corporate Mentoring Solutions Year 16 Issue 10 November 2002



## CMSI's Mentoring Associates

Meet Nancy Rehbine (by Stephanie Mills)

Diagonally across the continent from our CMSI office in British Columbia, Canada, Nancy Rehbine is promoting our mentoring products from her Coral Springs, Florida base.

As President of Employee Development Associates -- a human resource management and organizational development consulting firm -- she also conducts seminars while completing a PhD in Organizational Development Management. Nancy Rehbine is a very busy lady.

In November 2001, she became a CMSI Sales Associate. To date, most of her work on behalf of CMSI has involved North Broward Hospital District (NBHD), the largest healthcare provider in Florida. She identified a group of nurse-managers in need of competency development. Before initiating the program, Rehbine planned her approach to mentoring program design by brainstorming and consulting with hospital advisory committees to best fit the needs of NBHD.

*"Before we began this program we had to look at who our audience is,"* says Rehbine. *"What outcomes do we want to achieve? What is our vision?"*

Rehbine recommended use of OMS™ (Online Mentoring System) to seasoned managers mentoring to nurse managers. The System also helped new nurse managers in their transition role and has improved the level of managerial competency.

In addition to improving retention rate of nurse managers, encouraging diversity and skills, and enhancing career development, OMS™ has been able to help NBHD with employee relations and provided an opportunity for seasoned managers to develop mentoring skills. Proteges noted they

could more comfortably discuss difficult issues with experienced managers while fostering good working relationships.

With the success of this six-month pilot (January to June, 2002), other NBHD groups are expressing interest in this mentoring format. Early November will see evaluation of the program and discussions around expansion to all position levels. For the next cycle of participants, Rehbine is proposing another CMSI product -- Colaboro™ -- to enable "just in time" (self-directed) mentoring to include more participants with less administration.

Congratulations to Nancy on her success with the North Broward Hospital District.

[Next issue: Profile of another CMSI Sales Associate.](#)

[Stephanie Mills, author of this profile, is the new Sales Coordinator at Corporate Mentoring Solutions Inc. having joined the staff in August 2002. She has been hired to assist both Ian Frazer (VP, Business Development) and Troy Opper (Director, Sales and Marketing) as liaison between the sales and IT Departments.

An English and Political Science graduate from the University of Victoria and Canadian National Team Cross Country and Track member, Stephanie is excited to excel with the CMSI team.]

## CMSI Sales Associates

Live in the UK or Europe? If you are in the mentoring field and wish to work with the leading online mentoring products, OMS® and Colaboro™ please call, or send us an e-mail to discuss the opportunities.

## Mentoring Timeline™

### 1933 A.D.

It was, to his thinking, a passing phase. That's what Gerhard Herzberg thought in 1933 about the rise of Adolf Hitler to Chancellorship of Germany. At the time, Herzberg was a researcher in quantum mechanics. His niche area of scholarship was on spectroscopy (the light emitted and absorbed by atoms and molecules) along with his scientific **mentor**, James Franck, a Nobel Laureate. Herzberg thought they would be safe and free to continue their ground-breaking work.

Fortunately, Herzberg woke to the threat to himself and "the Jew Franck" in short order. However, once he attempted to get out of the country, despite his reputation, everyone he contacted had some reason for turning his pleas down -- with one exception -- a young chemistry researcher in the prairie town of Saskatoon (Canada), who had been corresponding for a year. Dr. John Spinks listened and responded positively.

Originally, Spinks had written asking to join Herzberg and Franck. Now the tables were turned and Herzberg wanted out even if it meant leaving sophisticated labs behind and working in isolated Saskatoon. It took two years to manage their escape. They landed with \$2.50. It was mid-Depression.

The "father" of modern molecular spectroscopy and the Canadian National Research Council had an amazing life still ahead of him. Also ahead was his own Nobel Laureate in physics for work with atomic hydrogen and helium and in chemistry for the determination of molecular structures. (Source: Saturday Post, September 28, 2002)