



MentorInk Newsletter

the online monthly of Corporate Mentoring Solutions Vol14 Issue 5 September 2000



Inside...
How many different definitions are there for "mentoring"?

From the editor: welcome to *MentorInk Newsletter*™. If you've read earlier editions, you'll know that past issues have carried everything and anything mentoring-related with a focus on mentoring programs.

Let us know your interests and your reactions.

If you wish to unsubscribe, send an email to: mentor@uniserve.com with the subject line reading "unsubscribe", your name and e-mail address in the text so we can find your entry and delete it. Happy reading to all.

Your editor: *Marilynne Miles Gray*



Mentor Muses™

The Mentoring Not Taken

*"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood",
Robert Frost says,
"and I -- I took the one less travelled by, and that has made all the difference."*

Those of us familiar with the poem sense that it captures elegantly the "what ifs" of our lives. The career not pursued. The city we moved to. The university... you, I am sure, get the idea.

However, when I peruse the literature about the impact of mentors in our lives, both those we work with in mentoring programs and those informally met through happenstance, the poem resonates on a new level worth thinking about...

For those who have had the opportunity to work informally with a mentor, some have chosen not to work with that person. A road (mentoring) not taken. There are those who have, for one reason or another, started to work informally with a mentor or protege then terminated the relationship or been terminated. Again, there was a choice made, a what if.

It seems to me that the mentoring-related literature has failed to clarify why some partners choose to end the relationship. Too often, this situation has simplistically been labelled "a bad relationship". No, there is far more to

(con't on page 2)

Mentor Answers FAQs™

Q: "Why the change from The Mentoring Institute to a new name -- **Corporate Mentoring Solutions**?"

A: First, over the years, we had people contact us in the mistaken belief that we were a funded educational institution. Not so. Our new name more accurately reflects who we are and what we do.

Second, we wanted a new name to represent the new direction for our company especially with the development of our Online Mentoring System (the beta version of the OMS was first tested in October of 1999).

Third, because the phrase "Corporate Mentoring Solutions" has appeared as the lead line on our homepage for more than a year, it seemed an ideal choice. We tested it out on dozens of clients and individuals before we registered the name. We've had nothing but positive responses. ~~

Mentoring Program Survey for Co-ordinators

Coming in October

Want to benchmark your program? Here's how you can do that quickly with up to date information...

If you are the Co-ordinator of a Mentoring Program, you are eligible to answer a survey of mentoring program development & implementation practices. Only one survey response (i.e., from the Co-ordinator) will be used per program. We will accept entries for different programs within a given organization.

If you participate, the results will be emailed to you in December.

Mentoring Solutions new website with Flash

Coming September 30th

NEW public domain website for Corporate Mentoring Solutions.
FEATURE: a 3-minute Flash production describing our Online Mentoring System.



Mentorink Newsletter

the online monthly of Corporate Mentoring Solutions Vol14 Issue 5 September 2000

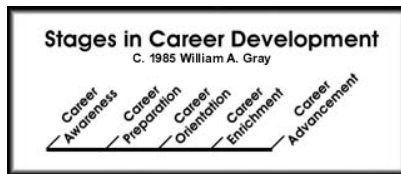
Words that Matter™

Q: "How many different definitions are there for mentoring?"

A: One article, pulled at random from our corporate library, lists 15 different definitions under 3 headings: higher education, management and organizational behavior, and psychology. The findings of the article are inconclusive as to what mentoring means.

Probably there will be as many definitions as there are people. For each person, it will mean something different. For example, in 1982, before we were a company, we designed a graphic to represent the various facets of mentoring -- that which is task-oriented, people-oriented, process-oriented and goal-oriented.

In 1984, we added yet another view to show mentoring as it occurs on a continuum to illustrate that, at different points in our lives, we seek out or need (both formally and informally), different kinds of mentors and mentoring experiences based on where we are in our lives.



could meaningfully capture the mentoring concept. Because mentoring programs are our exclusive focus, we realigned our corporate mission statement to reflect what we believe and do. This realignment is what, we believe, all companies should do when they fit a mentoring program into the larger corporate picture.

Part of our new mission statement reads:

It is the mission of Corporate Mentoring Solutions [formerly TMI The Mentoring Institute Inc] to lead the way in making quality mentoring and coaching more accessible to people everywhere. We use The NEW Mentoring Paradigm to equip and empower organizations and their people to:

- achieve full potential and
- realize dreams

by combining the proven techniques of personalized mentoring / coaching along with the latest in technology...

The definition of mentoring may best be conveyed to you graphically, experientially, verbally. At the very least, it is evolutionary and additive. ~~

If you think you are too small to have an impact, try going to bed with a mosquito. ~Anonymous

(con't from page 1)

Mentor Muses™



it than this. The people in the relationship made choices. This is one of the reasons, in our mentoring programs, we provide training so that people make choices that will move the relationship in positive, productive directions. Our experience show that the vast majority (95%+) of relationships in programs are highly positive on a number of measures.

"What ifs" of regret for opportunities missed or not taken in a mentoring program are negatives. This is why mentoring programs need to be carefully planned and executed. We developed Gray's Mentor-Protégé Relationship Model (1984) for use in mentoring programs to bring choices to a conscious level. Wrong choices may keep partners stuck inappropriately in what should be an evolving partnership. For those of us not fortunate enough to be part of a mentoring program, there is no road to choose. There is no saying:

"[I] took the other, as just as fair, And having perhaps the better claim... And that has made all the difference."

What if you could hear the words of regret (sometimes expressed in exit interviews)? What if you are in a position to start a good mentoring program that will *make the difference*? Will you act? ~ ~ *Mentor*

Mentoring Myth #1:

©Corporate Mentoring Solutions 1996.

Myth: A mentoring program will fix our problems.

Reality: A mentoring program is not a quick-fix panacea for endemic problems. But, carefully linking a mentoring program to other initiatives will enhance the outcomes they aim to produce.

For example, mentoring linked with training can reduce learning time and increase the correct application of new competencies.

One of our clients, a Canadian bank, before the advent of their mentoring program needed 12 months (on average) to help its new managers learn some 103 competencies. The mentoring program we helped them to develop and run cut that time to 9 months. The key here is that they realistically saw the mentoring as something similar to wheels which would move that particular initiative forward. Changes -- as a result of what was learned through the pilot -- would provide data to feed into the next cycle of the program for those who would follow. ~ ~

Mentorink Newsletter

the online monthly of Corporate Mentoring Solutions Vol14 Issue 5 September 2000

A diagnostic model for mentoring career-immobile women- Part II (1989)

by Andrea C. Zintz



Transitions and transformations

In 1975, Robert Kahn introduced the concept of the convoy of social support: "the idea that each person moves through the life cycle surrounded by a set of significant others related to him by the giving or receiving of social support."

Two notable features of this concept are, first, that it implies movement and change, and second, that it emphasizes the "giving as well as the receiving of social support." Kahn suggests that "the adequacy and stability of social support is a determinant of objective and subjective well-being, of performance in the major social roles, and of success in managing changes in those roles" (p. 3).

From the results of my research, protégés and mentors alike perceived the benefits of support-oriented interaction throughout the transition process, regardless of their orientation or Style in Gray's Mentoring Model. As people move through their careers, they continually experience change and transition and these changes often result in new networks of relationships, new behaviors and new self-perceptions. My research shows that individuals differed in their ability to adapt to change. Moreover, the same person may react differently to different types of change, and may fall into different arenas during different stages of the transition/transformation process.



**Did you know?
Athene's name comes from the word "light-bringer"?**

Formal mentoring programs

Formal mentoring programs in corporations might assign managers to provide help... in order to aid the socialization and advancement of career-immobilize protégés within the organization. Research indicates that multiple mentors may be more effective than having just one. A number of relationships may provide needed career and psychosocial functions for a protégé at times when these different functions are most useful to the protege's growth and development. This may suggest the need to modify formal mentoring programs to encourage the formation of several relationships with the goal of creating a developmental support system that would change as individual needs change.



**Did you know?
There are times when Athene appears to others but not to Telemachus (the young king-to-be): "since it is by no means to every-one that the gods grant a clear sight of themselves"
- The Odyssey, Book XVI**

Summary

The range of mentoring functions indicates that developmental relationships vary in the ways they support individual relationships. A mentor should consider what motivates him/her to develop others. Those who are immersed in advancing themselves in their own careers or consumed with some sort of personal crisis, may not have the energy to be truly supportive to others. It is possible to have simultaneously the motivation to be needed by a younger, less experienced person, and the motivation to empower the individual. However, unless one is fully conscious of the balance between them, the need for dependency may interfere with the phase of the relationship when the mentor is required to encourage the protégé's independence.

The mentor must have a comfort level with both supportive and challenging behaviors. Even though building rapport and increasing trust are prerequisites for increasing the range of mentoring functions, by offering only support, the mentor may miss opportunities to challenge the individual and help the person grow. This requires conscious use of support and challenging behaviors on the part of the mentor. Being cognizant of the attitudes, postures, and needs of the protégé will help the mentor provide the optimal mix of support and challenging behaviors for an effective developmental relationship. ~~

Q: What's one suggestion to make the most of our mentor-protége meetings?

A: In the heat of our hectic lives, sometimes we revert to old, unproductive patterns even though we know better. It's somewhat like training for the Olympics. Without the disciplined practice and reflection to improve, the relationship quality might not be all you desire. For example, it's best to agree in advances to the focus of each meeting. This is one of the reasons we developed *The Protege Needs Inventory™* and *The Mentoring Action Plan™* to guide the process at a conscious level.

