

Mentor Ink Newsletter™

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About our lead item



Five Mentoring Trends - Part 5

Last regular issue (June), we tackled the notion of self-directed mentoring. We conclude by over-viewing the most controversial of all the trends or at least this is what those who provide feedback on trends report ... (see inside)

To understand today
& tomorrow,
you must know the past.
~ Anon.

Other features:



The Intelligent Thinkers Guide to Mentoring

This month we turn our attention again to the components of a mentoring program. A review of types of mentoring sets the scene for future issues... (inside)



The Mentoring Timeline

Here is a feature of longstanding for *MentorInk Newsletter*. This issue we visit the year 2002.



Mentor Muses - The Alphabet According to Mentor (D, E, F, & G)

In which Mentor attempts to work through the alphabet in an ongoing series of several letters per issue. Being a long-lived soul, Mentor makes no promises as to when he will be finished this task. Note that, from time to time, he becomes riled over an issue preferring to shake his hoary locks and expound -- then return more calmly to the task at hand... (see inside)

Announcements: Registration of Trademark



As of last June, *Mentoring Solutions*® was registered as a trademark of Corporate Mentoring Solutions Inc. We have now added our logo (see above) and the phrase "passing the torch" to our trademarks collection.

Interested in mentoring trends?

Editor Marilynne Miles Gray makes conference presentations on the subject of Mentoring Trends & the Impact on You. For details, contact CMSI at 1-250-652-0324.

COMING: Mentoring Benchmark 2002 Survey

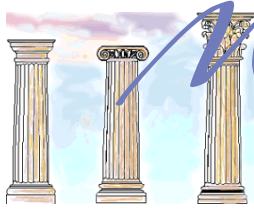
CMSI will conduct its third annual survey of mentoring practices starting with the October issue. You will again have the opportunity to respond to a brief series of questions.

From the Editor

Past issues have carried everything & anything mentoring-related with a focus on programs. Happy reading to all.

Your editor: *Marilynne Miles Gray*





Five Mentoring Trends Part 5

5: Legal issues (cont. from p.1)

In the past several years, legal issues have come in several different “flavors”. For instance, news accounts have appeared describing U.S. court consent decrees with mandated mentoring programs. In other words, as part of a class action law suit, companies have been told to carry out a series of actions, one being establishment of a mentoring program.



Here’s the likely thinking behind such mandating. Should those instigating the case feel they have been excluded in terms of access to promotions, courses, and the like, they may have requested carefully-designed and monitored

coordinated mentoring programs to help rebalance the situation. Further, as part of a generation that has seen the results of formal mentoring programs, they too wish for the same in their lives. (Mentoring Trend #1)

No more exclusivity, is the order of the day. To date, suits appear to have been against large organizations.

This trend has taken a second direction. In several cases, judges ordered U.S. government agencies to reallocate millions of dollars and hundreds of staff to “credential” mentors to work with those in the system who were not being treated equitably; for example students.

Then, in a third direction, there are associations whose job it is to credential their professionals (architects, teachers, lawyers for instance) via government-mandated mentoring programs. In these cases, the numbers involved are very large.

Note that, in all three directions, this points to the need for scalable programs. (Mentoring Trend #3)

This three-pronged trend also translates into mentoring programs now requiring better and more readily available metrics. (Mentoring Trend #2) After all, if the courts are involved, outcomes must be monitored. If credentials are to be earned, this too must be tracked large scale, across great distances over several years.

What are the implications for your organization?

Let’s face it, mentoring programs no longer necessarily resemble those we designed and instituted. The reality is some people believe trend spotting a waste of time. Maybe for them. For others of us who must reinvent ourselves to stay in business or who chose to lead the way by being on the leading edge, it’s time well spent.

In the meantime, my fingers are crossed that I’ve got it right.

NOTE: This trend analysis is not scientific and reflects the research and opinions of Corporate Mentoring Solutions.

The Alphabet According to Mentor

D - design (program): one of the most important activities involving a variety of tasks undertaken by a Steering Committee or Task Force. The program, of course, should never be the “child” of any one person.



Tasks range from exploration of possibilities, to focus group feedback on program components, planning next steps for the roll-out and so forth.

E - evaluation: commonly both quantitative and qualitative with satisfaction rating scales, participant interviews, and questionnaires being the most common forms of gaining feedback. Corporate Mentoring Solutions’ Benchmark 2000 survey, evaluation was rated as being important with a rating of 7.6 on a 9-point scale. However, 33% of programs surveyed did not evaluate the outcomes.

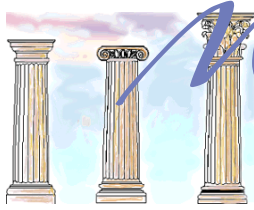
*To be conscious that you are ignorant
is a great step to knowledge.
- Benjamin Disraeli*

F - facilitated mentoring program: a term often used in place of co-ordinated, planned or formal mentoring initiatives

- formats for matching: at last count, we had experience with 17 different ones. Here’s four instances:
- cascade (in which the program pilot starts at one level such as with the leaders mentoring one another then cascades down with the leaders acting as mentors to those at the career development level and so on)
- group and cross-gender
- reciprocal (in which colleagues or peers mentor one another by exchanging expertise and relevant intellectual capital and corporate experiences)

G - group mentoring: often little more than a series of per-arranged classes and lectures prescribed to clusters of would-be proteges. Also sometimes requires that proteges rotate through a different mentor for each meeting. This latter aspect has both positive and negative aspects that should be clearly understood and considered. When appropriate, certain features of group mentoring can be incorporated into more conventional programs to great effect.

October issue - The letter H and more.



The Intelligent Thinkers Guide to Mentoring: Pt 5

Three types of mentoring

1. Informal life mentors

This concept was first popularized in *The Seasons of a Man's Life* (Levinson, et.al., 1978). Here, mentors are 8-15 years older than their protégés and fulfill many, many roles -- teacher, guide, sponsor, exemplar, wise counsellor, supporter of the protégés' life transitions, and facilitator of their dreams, to name just a few.

Informal mentoring typically starts with a more experienced person (usually a higher ranking male) identifying a promising younger person to guide. These mentors spontaneously begin to exert a comprehensive influence on their protégés' total lives, both personal and professional, often without the protégé knowing about it for one or more years. Usually, such mentor-protégé relationships last 2-15 years or longer, as in the celebrated case of Annie Sullivan and Helen Keller. While this type of mentoring is often thought to be what mentoring is, it represents an ideal that happens infrequently for only a chosen few and should properly be viewed as such. It is useful to keep in mind that perhaps 80-90% of what was written on mentoring before 1988, describes informal life or career mentoring and may have only indirect relevance for co-ordinated mentoring programs.

2. Career mentors

Much of what Levinson and Sheehy have said of mentoring has been mistakenly adopted by subsequent researchers and writers who have focused on informal career mentoring contending that mentoring cannot be planned or formalized because of the special "chemistry" that needs to develop informally between mentor and protégé over years spent together.

The logic is that career mentoring typically lasts for a shorter time (usually up to five years) and focuses on career advancement of selected protégés, usually



within the same organization. If it actually is informal mentoring, typically, the select few are unaware of what is occurring and may even resent it during the early stages according to some research.

The contemporary knowledge of mentoring has tended to shift the weight of activity to planned mentoring of the sort described next.

3. Co-ordinated mentoring

The Essential Components: Since 1978, I have identified certain generic components related to success. Thousands of researchers, practitioners, and writers have documented the importance of these components to varying degrees. These generic components must be carefully adapted to fit the contextual aspects of each situation, or success is not likely. What follows are eight key points to note.

#1. Planned mentoring must be supported from the top as well as at the grass roots level so that voluntary participation occurs. Imposed programs seldom work as well as those in which people want to "buy in" as volunteers because they see the benefits for themselves and the organization, and they can meet program expectations.

To attract volunteers, the program's structure, organizational expectations, and anticipated benefits must be communicated to potential participants. Focus groups comprised of prospective participants and needed supporters provide useful input for improving the program's design. Having such input increases support for the program.

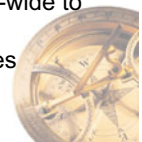
(Source: excerpted from "Advice on Planning Mentoring Programs by Dr. William A. Gray, *Mentoring International*, vol 3 #3, summer 1989)

Next issue: [More key points on Essential Components.](#)

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 series of reports of 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.





Mentor as Catalyst?

The revelation came several years ago at a conference. I sat at a table with a cluster of six other women doing Q&A with one successful person relate how she dealt with the challenges of being a career woman.

She was very firm in her declaration: "*Ladies, lower your expectations.*" This wasn't actually about career. No, she meant neat, dust-free houses, meticulous kitchens worthy of Martha Stewart, gourmet meals worthy of -- well, *Gourmet*.

What this person said resonated. Still does.

There are some who would have you believe this makes the conference speaker my **mentor** because the "lightbulb went off" for me when she spoke.

Nope. Not even close. Certainly she wasn't and isn't my secondary mentor either. And I'll explain why.

Words with impact are best reviewed with a person who knows me well -- my mentor. This woman isn't my mentor. For her, I'm simply one of hundreds of people she will meet in the course of several days at a large gathering. It's not her role to help me make big decisions or hold up a mirror to help me be more objective. For others at my table, what she said might rate a "been-there-done-that" reaction or "this-isn't-important to me" -- she isn't their mentor either.

In real life, I can ask my actual mentor to *advise* me on what I've heard or we can debrief. Together we can fit concepts I've learned at the conference into the context of my lifestyle or my desire to achieve work-life balance (or not).

Perhaps, as a protege, I can ask my mentor simply to be a *sounding board* rather than to give me advice.

Perhaps I have a male mentor and we determine that I need to seek *advice* and do a *Q&A session* with a *secondary mentor* -- a female -- who knows much more about these issues first hand.

Notice that I've not mentioned the speaker yet have listed different mentoring roles which arise out of her comments -- advisor, debriefer, sounding board.

Yes, her words acted as a catalyst for me as an individual.

She happened to say them at the right time for me. I know this because, as a longtime neat freak, I think about them often and use them as an unofficial guide to a number of actions.

Coincidentally, several days after starting this article, I spotted an item about the famous symphony conductor Boris Brott. The headlines state his decision to become a conductor was born during a conversation with a "**mentor**", Igor Markevich, Musical Director of the Montreal Symphony Orchestra. I conjecture this was simply a serendipitous moment not born out of a mentoring relationship.

As a 13 year-old, Brott was unhappily pulled in two directions-- compliance to his parents and a desire to be a regular kid and non-nerd. As he phrases it: "*I liked people. When you play an instrument [violin], you spend hours in a room by yourself. I told this to Markevich. He looked at me and said, 'You should conduct.'*"

Brott clearly needed much more assistance over time -- via teachers, mentors, courses, travel, applied and guided experience to find out if Markevich's suggestion was a good one. The fact is mentors play more than one role in the life of any given protege. At the same time, because of the needs and background of the protege, the roles each mentor will play with each protege will vary widely. Thus, it is entirely possible for the mentor to act as a catalyst (or not). But I view this, out of long term mentoring experience, as one of the more peripheral roles and one that takes on an accidental aspect in the relationship.

With the growing need to be more deliberate as to the mentor's roles, it becomes clear that we should take care not to label someone a "mentor" simply because that person's words have extraordinary importance for us at this hour, in this place. Just the same, my thanks to the speaker for saying the right words at the perfect moment -- I was ready for them.

Mentoring Timeline™

2002 AD

The Thomson family (right) sits at number 13 on *Forbes* list of richest families in the world with holdings in media, financial, scientific and legal arenas. Unusually, these are three generations of **mentoring** -- founder and grandfather Roy, Lord Thomson of Fleet, father Ken and current Chairman, David.

David says of his grandfather: "*He was very lonely and we conversed for hours about business and people.*" Grandfather Roy designated David for future corporate responsibilities. Of his father he says, "*... his contributions to the family and business have been absolute inspiration.*" He calls his father his "*art mentor*" referring to a shared passion.

At age 44, David has been in training for his job all his life. His grandfather ensured in the late 1970s, that the business would stay family-run for at least another 80 years. A fourth generation is already growing up.

Thomson, as of mid-2002, became head one of the world's largest electronic information providers noting that one of the secret to successfully managing people is "*patience and a great deal of empathy.*" Fenelon (see July-August 2002 issue) would have agreed completely.

