Coaching and Mentoring

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About the Tutorial

Mentoring is the act of identifying and nurturing potential areas of improvement in an individual. This could be a short-term action plan targeted towards a specific goal in mind, like career growth, higher learning, or could be a life-long process of improvement. The goals and processes are always set here by the learner. The job of the mentor here is to just facilitate, guide, and provide feedback after long stages of intensive observation.

Coaching relates primarily to performance improvement, and is more often a short-term achievement in a specific skills area. The goals, process and suggestion are that of the coach. While the learner has primary ownership of the goal, the coach has primary ownership of the process. Feedback is often shared instantaneously.

Audience

This tutorial is for designed primarily for those working professionals who are assigned the responsibility to either coach or mentor the new employees or junior talents in their companies to improve their skill-sets, or help them grow in their careers. This tutorial aims at teaching trainers the difference between coaching and mentoring, and how the approaches change as per the requirement of the learner.

Prerequisites

Before proceeding with this tutorial, you are expected to have a detailed knowledge on the working process of your company, and the job responsibilities that you will handle, and the expectation your management has of you, in terms of productivity and performance.

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Part 1 – Coaching

In today's competitive business world, there are two basic realities that drive the workforces. First one is getting people who get results. Second is to get people who get results stay.

Today's world of globalization, customized employee enhancement plans, competitive benefits, and demographic changes make it very tough on companies to get and then retain talent. That's how the **managers of today are not just managers**. They are recruiters, planners, motivators, and trainers, all rolled into one.

To keep this already-complex chain of operation from spiraling out of control, the companies have found the best way to manage their staff is to coach them. The role of a coach in a company, in this regard, is to take a group of people with diversified proficiency, understand their strengths and improve them, and at the same time, realize the cause of their weaknesses and eradicate them.

The Role of a Coach

The role of a coach is significantly different from that of an instructor. In coaching, employees are asked to grow in their strengths and address their weaknesses so that they realize their self-growth. It keeps them motivated and happy in the workplace – **both keys to retaining talent**.

Leaders take their staff from where they are to where they've never been before. Nothing could define coaching better than this statement from **Henry Kissinger**.

Coaching, in the true sense, is tailor-made for people who have the potential to grow to greater heights and yet, **are too content in delivering just satisfactory performance**. These employees are different from slackers who don't perform properly, either due to non-interest or inferior knowledge.

The employees we are addressing are employees who like their professional life just the way it is at the moment, and have fit in snugly to the demands of the workplace, which is not bad in itself, however, every organization needs its employees to grow. That's the way every organization grows too, being a sum total of different talented groups. The job of a coach, therefore, is to ensure that the employees improve their job performance through a constant process of encouraging and suggesting improvements.

2. Why is Coaching Needed?

In today's competitive world, recruiters no longer hold on to traditional methods of recruiting through traditional one-to-one interviews. Thanks to the added competition, which has resulted in a shortage of talent, companies are fast resorting to technology, and platforms like Skype, GoToMeetings are fast replacing the old model of interviewing.

Companies are increasingly adopting **employee-centric** approaches to working by providing flexi-times, work-from-home initiatives, in addition to many other perks and benefits. Organizations are also getting the option to employ people they want, as compared to the ones who were available to them.

When an organization is located over multiple areas, the big challenge is to connect all the employees located in different offices spread all across the world, to the organization's vision, identity, and rules – the big picture. That's where coaching comes in. It is the best way to develop junior talent and provide the skills and expertise to make them experts. Having said that, mentoring provides ample space for a person to retain his individuality and his personal sensibilities.

Note that the goal of mentoring isn't to create clones. Instead, it is to **help people achieve their highest potential** while being in sync with the organization's vision and objectives.

Coaching is not an innate ability; you are not born with the art of coaching. The other misunderstanding that's often associated with coaching is that it's related only to sports. Coaching is about pumping people's spirits, and motivating them. Lack of motivation doesn't come only in sports. There are times when employees too feel a need for motivation to deliver good results. Coaching helps these employees in holding their own in their team and being a productive group.

Coaching is the method of making people realize the heights they can achieve if only they kept persevering and putting proper effort. Mainly, coaching calls for a change of thinking and approach to a task. It's about getting the person think positively about his chances of achieving his goal. **It includes employee orientation towards the workplace politics**, and to assist in removing the barriers to work performance.

Optimal and Optimum

There is a difference between the usages of words **optimal** and **optimum**. If a company specifies that they are interested in obtaining **optimum results**, they mean they want the best output from their employees. On the other hand, if they say they are looking for **optimal results**, that would mean that they are interested in obtaining the best work out of you in the given circumstances, or working conditions.

There are occasions when the line between optimum and optimal are blurred in coaching. Situations like these arise when an organization starts working on a new project and they need to ram up the office fast with people who are experienced in working on similar projects.

In situations like these, the job of a coach is not only to provide high levels of motivation to employees to excel in their performance, but also to ensure that the employees perform at their peak even if the requisite resources are not always available. It's about lifting their spirit and keeping it high throughout tough times.

3. How Coaching Helps

Let us take an example to understand how coaching benefits employees. Morgan was recently promoted to the post of a Team Manager, something he doesn't have a lot of experience on. He has been given the task to manage one of the teams in the company, so he sought help from a company coach to help him in understanding the requirements for the job, and to **cultivate the right approach for the job**. Morgan enrolled for a two-day per week course, and was assigned a coach named Stanley, who would be coaching him for the next few months.

Stanley started by asking Morgan to carry a workbook with him, in which Morgan will keep a record of the discussions and guiding points that Stanley will provide to him during the learning. At their first meeting, Stanley asked a couple of questions to Morgan to know more about him, just to get acquainted. Then they discussed how they are going to work together, and with other people, in realizing the goals that have been set.

In the subsequent meetings, Stanley and Morgan discussed what Morgan's strengths and weaknesses were, and what the improvements in skill-sets were that Morgan had to bring in him to excel at his job. Over the next few months, Morgan and Stanley met regularly to understand and analyze their progress.

They also spent time on discussing **game play**, **tactics**, and **team building**. Stanley constantly referred to his old coaching logs and Morgan's own workbook as evidences of improvement and encouraged Morgan to keep pushing his boundaries. **Mock grills** and **role-plays** were organized to check Morgan's improvement in team-managing under diverse and difficult scenarios.

At the end of the coaching, Morgan commented on how useful he found the coaching process and how it made him realize the potential inside him that he had no idea he possessed. **He is now a successful team-manager** and a part-time coach himself to the new employees who join the company.

4. Mentoring, Coaching, and Training

Most of the differences between mentoring, coaching and training can be credited to the over-fertile imaginations of people's minds. Indeed, experts say that there are no clearly-drawn differences between these three when it comes to the method of delivery. However, when we come to the objectives, there are subtle differences among mentoring, coaching and training.

Training

Training is completely work-related, and its objectives are determined by the job responsibility of the trainees. The goal of training is to enable trainees get expertise on a set of professional skills.

Training depends substantially on the phenomenon of social learning. Trainers generally demonstrate the right procedure of getting a task done, along with explaining the desired outcome to the trainees. The learning pedagogy is more often mimicking the actions and instructions of the trainer, and repeating them until a successful imitation has been achieved.

Coaching

Coaching has a specific, time-bound, and specific goal. There is more emphasis on achieving a tough goal through dedication, focus and constant efforts, with constant feedback, suggestions and motivation delivered by the coach. Depending on the way in which they are implemented, there are four kinds of coaching:

- **Query-based Coaching** – The coach doesn't give out answers when he gets a wrong answer but keeps asking questions to his pupil, and lets the pupil find the answer on his own.

- **Hands-on Coaching** – The coach demonstrates what he feels is the best way to tackle a situation, and then leaves it to the pupil to either try the said method, or find a new one himself.

- **Intervention Coaching** – The coach keeps himself limited to observing and allowing the pupil to try and find out a solution, and only intervening when he feels like the attempt is going to lead to a sure failure with serious consequences.

- **Guidance Coaching** – The coach lets the pupil operate mostly on auto-pilot. This mode of coaching is generally adopted by coaches who have dedicated, focused and hardworking pupils. All they have to do is to maintain the levels of ambition high by giving reminders and pep-talks when necessary.

Mentoring

Mentoring goes beyond the boundaries of professional advice or guidance, and may touch upon any aspect of the mentee's life. The mentor's job is to oversee and chart out the proper path for career path of the mentee. This includes the mentor giving coaching and

training to the mentee as and when required, and also referring him to seek professional help from other experts.

In short, coaching and training are more directed towards career development, whereas mentoring targets both career and personal development of the employees. Although all of these methods of teaching educate people on how to create a vision and how to set goals, **none of them guarantee optimum results**.

And that's because all these three activities rely heavily on the dedication and self-belief of the person who is enrolled into this. A lot of effort and motivation is needed to rise above yourself and be someone you always aspired to be.

5.   Early Influence in Learning – Worksheet

More often than not, we get influenced in our lives by the people we come in contact with. Our actions, behavior, ambitions, and dreams are motivated after coming in contact with them, or after interacting with them.

This activity is designed to make the reader understand the different influences he has had over his life. The reader is supposed to divide his age in three equal parts, and mention them left to right in the table, starting with the lowest age bracket.

Below that are mentioned three types of people. In the row that has "**Influencers**" mentioned at the left, you need to mention at least three people who have influenced you at different stages of your life.

- **1st** – the people who have influenced you in the first stage of your life.
- **2nd** – the people who have influenced you in the first stage of your life.
- **3rd –** the people who have influenced you in the first stage of your life.

In the same row, keep mentioning their good qualities and bad qualities. Mention as many people as you can who have influenced you over your early life till date.

In the row with the heading **Teachers**, state the names of at least three teachers who have taught you the skills that led to your success today. Also mention their positives and negatives.

Finally, the third row with the heading **Correctional Facilitators** refers to those people who have provided correctional guidance to you when you were struggling with some aspect in your life. Mention them, along with their positives and negatives.

The purpose behind this exercise is to **de-mystify people** and accept them as common human beings. The idea is to understand that these people whom you hold as your idols are also not god, but erring human beings who have their ups and downs as well.

In other words, you can also be someone's idol despite the shortcomings that you think are in you. All you need is to be self-motivated and inclined towards growth and learning in your life.

Your Name	First Quarter		Second Quarter		Third Quarter		Fourth Quarter	
	Good	Bad	Good	Bad	Good	Bad	Good	Bad
Influencers **1st.** ____ **2nd.** ____ **3rd.** ____	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___
Teachers **1st.** ____ **2nd.** ____ **3rd.** ____	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___
Correctional Facilitators **1st.** ____ **2nd.** ____ **3rd.** ____	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___	• ___ • ___ • ___

6.   Career Coaching – Worksheet

The following worksheet is designed to break-down the most common areas that a person needs to pay attention to develop his career. The reader is expected to think hard about the resources and methods available to him, and provide realistic answers based his self-evaluation.

Part-I: Knowing your Occupation

- Desired Job Title:
  _____
  _____

- Average Annual Salary:
  _____
  _____

- List the responsibilities of someone in this occupation:
  _____
  _____

- List the job requisites in this occupation (working outside or indoors, etc.)
  _____
  _____

- List the ways this job matches your job values, interests, and skills:
  _____
  _____

Part-II: Achieving Dream Job

- Companies that are offering this job:
  _____
  _____

- People who can give relevant advice on this:
  _____
  _____

- Salary I will be willing to negotiate to:
  _____
  _____

- Contacts that can help me get this job:
  _____
  _____

- Skills that I need to develop to get this job:
  _____
  _____

- Steps I will take to get these skills:
  _____
  _____

- Obstacles I will face while developing these skills:
  _____
  _____

- Deadlile by which I will have these skills:
  _____
  _____

Part-III: Getting Higher Education

- Specialized training or degrees needed for this job:
  _____
  _____

- License/registration/legal attestation needed for this job (if any):
  _____
  _____

- The educational qualification steps you need to get this job:
  _____
  _____

- Where to get these qualifications:
  _____
  _____

- Time it takes to get these qualifications:
  _____
  _____

- The cost of pursuing these qualifications:
  _____
  _____

- The methods in which I afford these qualifications:
  _____
  _____

Part-IV: Setting Goals

- Short Term Goal (6 months – 1 year):
  _____
  _____

- Long Term Goal (2 years-5 years):
  _____
  _____

People often set very high goals for themselves and this is the reason they often fail to achieve them. While a person's career path is one of the most structured graphs one can have in his life, it depends on how we plan things to make a smooth transition from one job responsibility to another.

In other words, a person needs to have a good goal to be able to achieve it. A good goal is the one that has five distinct features. They need to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely. These features make a goal a SMART goal.

- **Specific –** Your goal must be clearly definable, and explained.

- **Measurable –** Your goal can be expressed in empirical terms, as in days, hours, money invested, etc.

- **Achievable –** It is okay if your goal pushes you past your comfort zone but it must still be achievable.

- **Relevant –** Your goals must directly or indirectly address a need in your life. A goal that doesn't solve a problem is not worth pursuing.

- **Timely –** The goal must be time-bound; there is no point in pushing a goal into the future as that decreases the drive and need to achieve it.

Is Your Goal SMART?

- **Specific:** What exactly do you want to achieve?
  _____
  _____
  _____

- **Measurable:** How will you know that you have achieved this goal?
  _____
  _____
  _____

- **Achievable**: Can you put in the effort, resources and money into achieving this goal? If no, then how are you planning to get them?
  _____
  _____
  _____

- **Relevant:** What issues in your life will be addressed when you achieve this goal?

  _____

  _____

  _____

- **Timely:** When will you achieve this goal?

  _____

  _____

  _____

What are the problems in your path?

Potential Obstacles	Potential Solutions

Specific Action Steps

What steps need to be taken to get you to your goal?

Planned Actions	Expected Completion	Completed

Part 2 – Mentoring

8. Mentoring – Introduction

Mentoring is the process of guiding those employees who are excellent performers. The idea behind mentoring is not so much to extract the best performance out of the employees, as to **keep them focused and dedicated** to their standards of performance.

The idea behind mentoring is to engage a person with more experience in a specific job responsibility in sharing his work experience with younger and newer employees who are doing great, so that they understand the further responsibilities and expectations they will be facing in the future.

Mentoring helps employees make a smooth transition from their current working responsibilities to the ones that they earn with their good performances. They are groomed and nurtured in an organization under the guidance of another senior manager with proven credentials.

This differs from counselling, or coaching, where the objective is to provide corrective assistance to those performers who deliver average to poor output. The desired course of action in **coaching is more supportive that guidance-oriented**, as compared to mentoring in which a person with better skills, expertise and experience becomes a role model to good performers with the objective of enhancing the employees' career development and personal development.

Coaching, or counseling, is a supportive process to define and correct personal problems or skills that affect performance. The counselor rectifies behaviors and provides direction and discipline as needed for as long as necessary.

The person providing mentoring is referred to as a 'mentor', and the ones he guides are known as 'mentees'. Mentees are also referred as 'protégé's'.

9.   Mentoring in Companies

Mentoring has been widely credited with being an effective tool for human resource development. Its application can be found in many diverse sectors such as:

- Manufacturing
- Tourism and Hospitality
- Petro-chemical industries
- Public sector/government
- Financial services
- Educational institutions
- Service industries
- Charities

Mentoring is used in organizations at different stages of employee engagement. It is a constant process in which an employee is involved with, right from the time of his joining the company to every step he takes up towards progress. Right from their induction, employees are assigned role models whom they can imbibe as much expertise and experience as possible from.

Potential **candidates are groomed for higher positions** in a timely and job-related manner so that he is ready to shoulder the desired responsibilities when they are handed over to him. This is done through providing job-related training, and sharing relevant knowledge so that the desired levels of expertise in the skill-sets can be observed in these people.

Mentoring also includes providing proper integration into a new process and assistance in major transitions in their professional life to new stages, enhance job-related knowledge and skills for the present so that the employees can easily adapt to the changing environments of the workplace.

Case Study: Significance of Mentoring at Zappos.com

Many organizations define their company's working process as set of values. Their employees are expected to own these values as a part of their daily life at work. A good example of one such company will be Zappos, an online shoe and footwear apparel shopping site.

There are cases of people who used to work with Zappos.com, and were fired even when they were doing their jobs perfectly, if it was found that they were not leading their professional lives in the spirit of the company's culture.

Zappos has ten core values to clearly define the Zappos Family culture, and these core values can be observed in everything the company does:

- Deliver WOW! Service

- Create fun and a little weirdness

- Build positive team and family spirit

- Pursue growth and learning

- Be passionate and determined

- Embrace and drive change

- Be adventurous, creative, open-minded

- Build open and honest relationships

- Do more with less

- Be humble

These values at Zappos are written into their organizational strategy. Values are often written down as part of the organization's strategy. As their CEO, Tony Hsieh says, these values help them to delight the customers by providing them the right suggestion and information at the right time.

These values also help them to accept and respect people's opinions, which helps them adapt to the changing demands accordingly, and improve their customer service.
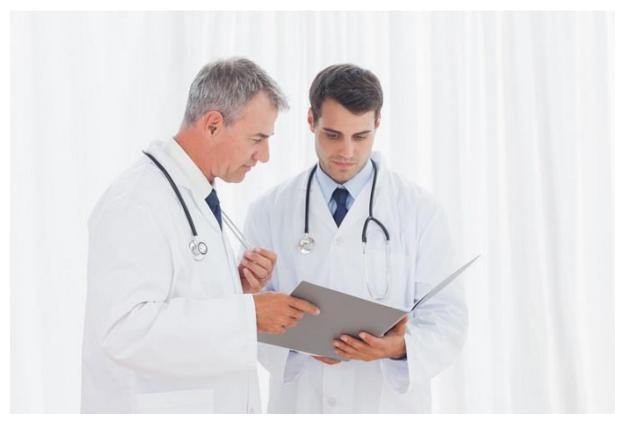
They manage this through a constant mentoring of their supporting and developing staff, who are encouraged to maintain transparency at every stage of their business proceedings so that a blame-free working environment can be created.

Zappos invests a lot of time and effort in making new inductees understand what exactly the reasons behind these ten values of their company being so important to the functioning and growth of their company are. This mentoring makes the **new employees understand the significance** of these values in contributing to the company's mission and strategy.

Approaches to mentoring varies from organization to organization, and according to individual method of working. A person can have a formal mentoring style where the mentee needs to have a scheduled appointment, or the mentoring style could be informal where the mentee can basically drop in on the mentor any time and pop in a query. Medical institutions rely on these "**drop-in-anytime**" methods of mentoring, where quick information-collecting and decision-making is crucial.

Another kind of informal mentoring is where the mentee has personally identified a role model for himself, and has requested his role-model to provide him career mentoring, to which the other person has agreed to. This type of mentor-mentee relationship is also known as **private mentoring**, as people won't know about this arrangement.

This is different from the formal mentoring where certain senior people are assigned some new employees, whom they are to guide and mentor. This kind of mentoring relationship is called **public mentoring**.

Depending on the style of mentoring, these mentors may encourage an "open discussion relationship" (where the mentees are given permission discuss any topic) or a "restricted discussion relationship" (where the mentees are restricted to discussing only specific topics).

Open discussion relationships can be observed in the fields of psychology and medicine. Restricted discussion relationships, on the other hand, can be observed in the army, and in jobs involving surveillance/espionage.

Of the numerous benefits that a mentee gets from the mentoring he receives from a successful senior employee, **the ones that directly impact his career growth** are:

- Effective learning of important working parameters.

- Developing a new perspective of the job, and understanding co-relations

- Improving ways of working, which leads to a more satisfying performance.

- Faster understanding of the work processes necessary to smooth functioning.

11.   Successful Mentoring for Employees

The following anecdote was recently shared by Rauss Stecky, one of the ex-employees of a reputed company, who accredits the effective guidance he had received from his mentor for his transformation from a clueless young boy, to someone who later went on to retire as the Head, Sales & Distribution department:

"When I joined the organization, I was handed over a list of job responsibilities and policies. Being new to the idea of working in a company, **I felt the acute need for a guide** who could walk me through the working procedures of the job I was recruited for.

Fortunately, I found able guidance in the form of an experienced employee named Drenn Roskam. He had joined our company the previous year and worked in the same department. After the initial days of hesitation, I finally asked him if he would consider guiding me with my work. He readily agreed.

I found Drenn to be **an amiable and approachable person.** He was a great listener and gave precise details. He came up with the idea of staying back in the office for an hour every Friday, during which I could come up with the issues I was facing, and he would try his best to handle them.

The discussion started with work, however after continued interactions, it would spill over to general discussions on life. Drenn would make sure that I noted down everything he told me, so that I can try and see if his advice solved my problems.

To him, he was just helping out a colleague, but it was invaluable to a rookie like me to be able to ask him things that you would hesitate to ask to your supervisor, lest he takes you for a dolt. **I wasn't assigned to Drenn**, nor it was company policy to facilitate employees in their job but he still made sure that I understood what was needed of me and deliver accordingly.

That helped me get a perspective on my job, company and career which mattered a lot in making the successful journey that I have been fortunate to make so far. It was his successful guidance that introduced me to the world of corporate relationships, and made me familiar with the way organizations run."

12. Reflective Analysis

Rirk Douglas was a shipping manager at a prominent online shopping company. His overseer Simon Cowel, along with his crew, had worked in the business for over five years. Cowel encouraged this crew-members to participate in monthly contests to see which team managed to load the delivery truck with the maximum speed, orderliness and accuracy.

The winning team would be given a crater of beer and some cash to purchase a meal of their own. This money was pooled in from all the team-mates, so it was a self-sponsored treat and didn't cost Mr. Douglas.

Over the last few months, Douglas had started receiving increased complaints from customers over improper dispatch products being placed in the wrong trucks, and customers missing the delivery of their products on the desired day due to it. Douglas called upon Cowel to have a closed-door conversation with him regarding what he was up to. Cowel stood up for his men and said emphatically that these guys were the best he had ever supervised.

Rirk then shifted the attention to the monthly contests and said that these must stop with immediate effect, as the workers were more concerned with winning beer and lunch rather than delivering the right products to the right customers. Cowel once again defended his men saying that these incidents can still be taken care of by having a word with the men, instead of totally suppressing the contests, as these very contests keep the men motivated to do extremely monotonous jobs diligently.

However, Rirk had decided that these activities need to stop once and for all, and so did it happen. The monthly contests ended and so did the customer complaints on faulty delivery. For six months at a stretch, **there wasn't one complaint to be heard**.

However, Rirk had just created a Frankenstein for himself. It was found that the customers had now developed a rather pallid opinion of the company. The customers reported that the customer service levels of the company had gone down and there was "no happiness" in interacting with them anymore.

Rirk couldn't make head or tail out of it. All goods were being delivered in the right delivery vans, and all the goods were being handed over in time. What else could the customers want? Finally, he decided to have a word with the customers directly. He pulled up the records and contacted those customers who have had long-time associations with the company.

The feedback from the customers was something Rirk hadn't expected ever. The general consensus was that the employees had become extremely gloomy and moody now. They didn't enjoy the process of delivering goods and were being indifferent to customers' requests. Many left the parcel at the doorsteps after ringing the front-door bell and left even before the customers could talk to them.

Although this lack of enthusiasm wasn't hampering their basic job of delivering the goods, it was earning the company a bad name from a much unexpected angle. Rirk realized that the **joy of working had diminished** in the minds of the employees.

He called Cowell and said, "Well, I never could see that through the entire song-and-dance routine, the people had found out a way to keep mundane things look interesting. Well, anything that works, eh? All right, ask them to have their monthly contests back. This decision, also, applies with immediate effect."

Had you been in Rirk's place, what steps would you have taken to ensure a complaint-free delivery system and a happy workplace?

Joanne Crauss had led from the front in her 14 years of illustrious career as a Project Manager with Emphasis Solutions, a multi-national organization. His style of working was to motivate his team and get the best results out of them which helped him grow fast in the organization.

So it came as no surprise when he was appointed to the position of CEO of the organization. Shortly after his appointment, the board of directors conducted a performance review, where it was revealed that a lot of people in Joanne's team found her brand of leadership **a tad too competitive and pushy**.

Even if the board knew that they had a winner in Joanne, this review sent a clear message to them that the new CEO has to address this issue as soon as she possibly can. A CEO normally deals with the crème'-la-crème' of the management and reports of the heads of different departments not being compatible to their new CEO's style of working was a serious issue for them.

Addressing of Issues by Mentoring

The board asked professional assistance from Excalibur Agencies, the training strategic partner of Emphasis Solutions, who sent a team of experts to meet the newly-appointed CEO, and have a frank talk with her. During this discussion, they made an assessment of her behavior, skill-sets, working methodology and tried aligning them to the vision that the board desired for their CEO. The team also had discussions with the board members and then, conducted some intensive on-site observations.

They implemented a method of "**shadow mentoring**" where one mentor would constantly study the CEO's style of working by making observations while the CEO was in action. During this process, the Excalibur Team video-taped numerous team-meetings of Joanne while she was addressing people and communicating her action plans. After a month of gaining insight into Joanne's approach towards his work and his functioning methods, the training team submitted their report.

Identifying Areas of Improvement

It was found that even if Joanne had been handed a different job responsibility, she hadn't yet gotten rid of her old leadership methods. The approach of driving and inspiring people towards meeting their targets, which had given her the success she had achieved, **was now irritating her new team-mates** who had different approaches to getting things done, and were successful in their individual capacities.

It was also found that Joanne was wary of taking counsel from her new team-mates, as she wasn't used to implementing advice before checking its feasibility and veracity herself. During this process of checking if the advice of the team-mates held water or not, she usually pointed out what she thought were the flaws in the advice which **many felt was rather confrontational and patronizing of her**, and something which further distanced the people from her.

Joanne was made privy to these observations and how her manner of working was **creating an alternative perception towards her** in the minds of her team-mates. Through this transparent and detailed process of mentoring, Joanne was guided towards cultivating a more inclusive method leadership which was based on collaboration, rather than competition.

The Positive Results of Successful Mentoring

The training team reviewed her new behavior and practiced with her repeatedly until the inculcated method came naturally to her. This new friendlier approach to her work was soon noticed by the other team-members. Those who had withdrawn into their cocoons fearing rejection of their ideas, started opening up to her and sharing their plans once again.

In six months, Joanne was able to repair her relationships with not only her team-mates but also the board. During this period, the mentoring she received made sure that her personal development scaled the same heights as her career development, and **the new behaviors had become fully established.**

14.   Establishing Rapport

Establishing a good rapport is the first stage of mentoring. As with befriending strangers, mentoring begins with the process of exploring. At this stage of the mentor-mentee relationship, the importance is laid more on getting familiar, learning the highs and lows, pros and cons, quirks and fads of each other. At this stage, the most important things to follow for a mentor are to:

- Set the expectations.

- Be in charge and lead the talk.

- Mention the goals of mentoring.

- Put forth open-ended questions.

- Ensure that the mentee needn't talk on undesirable topics.

- Listen attentively.

- Address mentee's initial apprehensions.

- Make mental notes.

- Share facts about you to build rapport.

- Smile, maintain eye-contact and a pleasant body language.

Exploring the Mentor-mentee Dynamics

It's very important for the mentor to take the lead in the first meeting with the mentee(s) and create the right rapport and comfort levels with him. This helps in not only breaking the communication barrier but also provides an opportunity to the mentor to express his dedication to the relationship and the mentoring process.

The mentor needs to be very patient with the mentee at this point of time. He needs to understand what is a mere professional obligation to him is a career-defining moment to the mentee. The mentee will be unsure, unaware to the world that lies ahead of him and will generally be curious. **Building that right rapport** that makes him feel at home talking to someone who understands him is the key.

Many mentors make the oft-repeated error trying to provide the answers to the questions they ask of the employees. There is an insuppressible urge to provide advice even before the mentee has finished sharing his story. This tricks the mentor to treat the concerns of the mentee as blanket behavior, unlike the one-one relationship it is meant to be.

The mentee also gets instantly suspicious of the mentor's sincerity and involvement in this project, and starts wondering if he is in this mentoring role just for the sake of it.

As a mentor, the first thing that a person is supposed to do is listen. Most often than not, people feel better if they just share their feelings with someone who comes across as an attentive listener, even if he is a total stranger; especially because he is a total stranger.

In such a situation, the mentor is expected to:

- Listen before counselling
- Demonstrate necessary skills
- Ask open & closed questions
- Define priorities
- Provide information or advice
- Share constructive feedback
- Listen and empathize
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Identify areas of improvements
- Share experiences and anecdotes

Providing constructive criticism is the second stage of mentoring. In this stage, the mentor needs to be flexible and resourceful. He needs to be able to realize what areas are the stumbling blocks of learning for the mentee. He needs to keep a progressive agenda in his mind, but **should also be willing to move backwards** to address a concern in the minds of the mentees if need be. There have been cases where mentees get genuinely involved in the process of mentoring if their old misinterpretations of norms have been addressed in a logical and constructive manner.

When this initial block is addressed, the mentee wants to learn things with a more positive approach. This is the time to encourage him, but not rush him. Let him learn at his own pace.

Always provide constructive criticism of the mentee's current behavior, perceptions and attitudes that are preventing him from progressing. Although, the flip side to this well-intentioned exercise is that the mentee might get defensive and retract back to his shell.

Using Stories as an Effective Tool

To point out the obvious errors of thinking and attitude in the mentees without sounding confrontational, the easiest method is using stories and anecdotes from personal experience to describe similar scenarios where people have found a way to deal with their internal demons. This helps the mentee identify with the characters in the story and feels connected, rather than getting alienated from the mentor.

The key is to be understanding and observant. A slight change in the perception of the mentor might make the mentee quit the program. The mentor needs to take care that he doesn't utter something too close to the bone**, and not misinterpret something** the mentee might have subconsciously mentioned. Reaching new understandings is key to the next stage. This stage could last for days, weeks, and in some cases, even months. However, once the mentee passes this stage and moves on, rest of the journey becomes much easier to cover.

Ownership of Problems

A mentee will practice a set of actions only when he believes that these steps will lead to the solution of his problems, and he has owned the method. At this stage, just give instructions and directions on how the mentee is implementing the advice into actions. The mentee should be handed a clear target and goal. Set meetings with the mentee periodically to trace successful implementation.

However, the mentor must be wary to not expect a successful implementation of desired action plans every time there is a meeting. He should encourage the mentee to repeat his attempts in case he faces a failure at any step.

The approach of the mentor should be to try and pick the mentees' mood towards a positive outcome, while addressing the issues and guiding them on how to deal with the tough situations. The mentor should also **celebrate the mentee's success** and make them feel like achievers.

What Mentors Must Keep in Mind

The most important point in mentoring is to avoid quick fixes; there hardly are any. A mentee approaches a mentor to address long-standing issues so the quest for a fast solution is a clear way of failing. The mentor needs to have a long-term view and should patiently check the entire progress arc of the mentee over long intervals, for the mentoring process to really work well.

To understand the mentee's psychology and give relevant suggestions, the mentors must try and implement these following points in their mentoring pedagogy:

- Meet the mentees regularly

- Avoid judging mentees for their actions

- Don't give false assurances of having all answers

- Set clear expectations and boundaries

- Keep all conversations with mentees confidential

- Maintain honesty at all cost

- Acknowledge that you need support too

- Help your mentee with references

- The initial mentoring stages will be rocky. Hang on!

- Don't get involved in the mentee's issues; provide guidance only

Meeting the expectations is the third stage of mentoring. When the mentees begin to get comfortable with the idea of mentoring and learn to share their thoughts with the mentor, they tend to not draw any **line on the sand**, i.e., a psychological line that they should not step across. They get drawn into this world of uninhibited thought-sharing **and tend to lose focus** on what the objective of these sessions are.

Many mentees who seek mentoring for the first time have immature expectations from the mentors. Some of wrong expectations new and inexperienced mentees have from their mentors are listed under:

- Be controlled
- Receive orders
- Receive favors and perks
- Gossip with mentor
- Be handed ready-made solutions
- Expect things to go easy
- Quit mentoring once immediate issue resolved
- Complain about everything

While these wrong expectations are clearly due to a wrong interpretation of the mentor-mentee relationship, there are many who are familiar with the process of mentoring and expect professional help and assistance in their journey forward. The mentees of this kind will have logical, relevant and pertinent expectations such as the ones mentioned below:

- Look to be challenged
- Learning through examples
- Receive proper guidance
- Be more aware of their skills
- Be encouraged and guided
- Nurturing the mentoring tie
- Instilling greater confidence
- Encourage friendship within formal structure
- Willing to learn from mistakes
- Be listened to while speaking
- Be coached and trained on specific skills
- Learn working of the organization
- Share knowledge and experience
- Given sound career advice

Mentees are fragile, both emotionally and mentally, when they approach the mentor for guidance. At this point of time, they need to realize that even the most caring, involved and dedicated mentor will need an equal commitment from the mentees too. A few guidelines that the mentees need to follow are:

- Learn to accept challenges
- Have a positive self-esteem
- Learn to trust your mentor
- Learn to take calculated risks
- Don't expect instant miracles
- Maintain transparency with your mentor
- Be active in your own development
- Be willing to discuss issues openly
- Look beyond mentoring too for growth
- Tell the mentor when you feel confident

Organizations invest heavily in mentoring. They are interested to see if the mentees can achieve greater heights in their profession. In keeping up with the tradition of successful mentoring, organizations look to provide for mentees the following support:

- An improvement track-keeper
- A friend who keeps things confidential
- A source of knowledge
- A guide for career development
- A source of encouragement
- A source of emotional support
- A guide for time management
- A guide for personal development

17. Mentee Goals – Worksheet

The following worksheet is designed to provide a realistic deadline to the mentee, in which he can self-evaluate his goals by mentioning the time it's going to take for him to achieve them.

Description:

_____
_____
_____
_____

To be completed by:

_____
_____
_____

Steps I plan to take to reach this goal:

_____
_____
_____

Mentee Goals Check Worksheet

The following worksheets provide a reality check on how much success the mentee has achieved by the deadlines, and what the hurdles are in his path:

Goals Accomplished

_____
_____
_____

Obstacles

_____

_____

_____

Strategy to overcome obstacles (if needed):

_____

_____

_____

18. Winning Qualities in a Mentor

Mentors not only deal in professional matters of their mentees, but also handle personal issues that their mentees face. A reason behind this is their belief that personal life and personal life are closely inter-connected, and behavioral changes in a person's social life or family life will certainly bring changes in his professional life too.

To realize the dream of successfully guiding high-performing employees towards greater heights, and taking up bigger job responsibilities, the mentor needs to have these qualities in himself:

- **Clarity** – Giving and receiving accurate communication.

- **Supportiveness** – A commitment to stand with and behind team members.

- **Confidence building** – A personal commitment to build and sustain the self-image of each team member.

- **Mutuality** – A partnership orientation where everyone wins or no one wins.

- **Perspective** – A total focus on the entire business enterprise.

- **Risk** – The encouragement of innovation and effort that reduces punishment for mistakes and fosters learning by doing.

- **Patience** – Going beyond the short-term business focus to a view of time and performance that balances long-term gain and business imperatives.

- **Involvement** – A genuine interest in learning about individuals in order to know what incentives, concerns and actions will inspire them.

- **Confidentiality** – An ability to protect the information of all team interactions and cause a sense of trust and comfort with the individuals.

- **Respect** – A giving and receiving of high regard to and from the staff as individuals and members of the team. Study these values, consider the degree to which you possess them, and make plans to develop them within you.

19.   Mentee's Personality – Worksheet

A common technique that psychiatrists employ in understanding the psyche' of other people is by trying to analyze their thoughts from the choices they make. Many mentors have used the same technique to get a quicker estimate of the mentee they are going to mentor.

The mentee is asked to fill up the following form, and by going through the answers, the mentor can get a clear outline of the mentee's personality, likes and dislikes. The list includes his favorites and his dislikes:

Items	Likes	Dislikes
Book		
Song		
Movie		
TV Show		
Friend		
Color		
Season		
Movie Star		
Holiday		
Place to be		
Fun Things		
Car		
Toy		
Game		
Sport to Play		
Sport to Watch		
Food		
Music		

This following worksheet is a good method of encouraging mentees to express themselves in a positive manner. The mentors should take notice that the mentees don't take too much time in answering these questions, or else their honest opinion won't reflect in the answers.

Through this worksheet, the mentor will be able to get an insight into the mentee's personal values, personal history, and experiences. This information should be used as a basis for future talks.

- If I had a week to myself...

  _____

  _____

- If I won a big lottery...

  _____

  _____

- The thing I am most afraid of...

  _____

  _____

- People I like are...

  _____

  _____

- I am hurt when...

  _____

  _____

- I feel happy when...

  _____

  _____

- I am proud that...

_____

_____

- When I was growing up, I wanted to be...

_____

_____

- The funniest thing to me...

_____

_____

- A family's most important core value...

_____

_____

- Ten years from now, I would like to...

_____

_____

- If I saw wrongdoing in front of me...

_____

_____

- When I become a parent...

_____

_____

- I am best at...

_____

_____

- I get angry when...

_____

_____

- I feel lonely when...

_____

_____

- I feel loved when...

_____

_____

- The biggest lesson I learnt is...

_____

_____

- My best friends know me as...

_____

_____

- The qualities I admire the most...

_____

_____

- My favorite relative is...

_____

_____

- My ideal job would be...

_____

_____

- I was wrongly accused of...

_____

_____

- The person I would like to meet is...

_____

_____

- The place I would like to live is...

_____

_____

21.   Sharing Corrective Feedback

When you are coaching a person, the pupil tends to develop a sense of comfort, security and familiarity with the coach. In this situation, many pupils tend to get hurt emotionally when they take the feedback of the coach personally.

In these situations, **the coach needs to be well-versed** on how to share corrective feedback with the pupils so that it doesn't make them feel bad, while also passing the desired message through.

The following worksheet features some of the most common observations coaches all over the world make when they lose the control over their tongue while sharing feedback with their pupils. A few have been answered to give a better idea on how to handle these situations. The reader is supposed to attempt the rest:

Critical Remark	Positive Remark
Did I not tell you to do that!	Was there something unclear about my instructions?
How could you do something so stupid!	Let's figure out what went wrong.
Why do these things happen only to you!	
Nobody else has those problems!	
Why can't you understand something so simple!	
You better stop this act, or else you will start facing serious problems!	
Don't expect raise in these situations.	
I am done with you.	
If you can't do this, we will get someone else.	
Why can't you be like <another person>? He can do it so easily!	

Coaching and Mentoring both depend on a reflective style of guiding people, hence many breakthroughs and solutions are achieved during the process of discussions and interactions. It has been reported by coaches that while the sessions might have gone wonderfully well, participants often say that they don't find the same drive when they sit down to work at their homes or offices.

That's because many of them don't take notes of their achievements in the coaching rooms. This is the reason behind many coaches and mentors asking their mentees to carry a workbook that will keep a track of their progress and all the improvement-oriented inputs that were shared with them.

The following tips will help the mentees to take quick notes while their coaching sessions are on, so that they can reflect back on what the coach had told them and how he had motivated them during the session so that they can have the same drive at a different time and space.

- **Jot Pointers** – Don't attempt to write everything. Our rate of speech is about five times our rate of writing. Only jot down pointers.

- **Use Shorthand** – Represent common words with symbols ('&' for 'and')

- **Reduce words to short-forms** – ('Approp'. for 'appropriate')

- **Use code** – avoid writing words like "therefore", "nevertheless", etc.

- **Use "formula" for calculative statements** – "4X>= than him", instead of "four times bigger than him".

- **Jot Main Ideas** – Write only those statements that identify main concepts.

- **Recognize and repeat** – Jot only relevant things and repeat them.

- **Write down Questions** – In case of any confusion, write questions on these areas.

- **Review Notes after Class** – Check the details and corroborate with others.

23. Conclusion

In many instances, all your mentee/pupil needs is a person in front of whom he can frankly speak out his mind, completely convinced that the other person is going to keep the entire conversation confidential.

However, there will be cases, where the mentors would be called upon to handle certain sensitive and serious areas too. It is therefore, very important to know your mentee and know how to start the mentoring process. It's important to remember that the mentee has taken a step forward in opting for mentoring as he wants to improve. In selecting you as his mentor, he has reposed a great amount of confidence and faith in you.

It's up to you to guide the person on a pragmatic and logical way to his destination using your sources, experience, expertise and contacts. We hope that this tutorial helped you in understanding the complexities of these growth-oriented initiatives and made you aware of the approaches that will surely help you in getting success in your job.