

THE EXCHANGE

This issue's featured subject is "Mentoring."

DEVELOPING A MENTOR-MENTEE RELATIONSHIP



Mentoring is a voluntary activity. Since it goes beyond obligation, it is a sound idea to develop some shared expectations at the very beginning of the relationship. It helps to define the type of mentoring to be accomplished:

Structured-Short Term. This may be a new employee paired with a senior person.

Structured-Long Term. This is often used in succession planning.

Informal-Short Term. This can include spontaneous or as-needed coaching.

Informal-Long Term. This is usually a friendship with access to the mentor as needed.

Here are some questions to guide you in developing the mentoring relationship:

- What is most important for you to get out of this relationship?
- What developmental needs, knowledge, skills, or insights would be of the best value to you?
- What is your preferred method of learning?
- How often should we meet and for how long?
- What are the best ways we can contact each other?
- How will we handle cancellations?

What Our Clients Are Saying

"I like getting the newsletter. The information is appropriate in everyday business. By knowing the skill of communication, it makes an effective advantage so you can be 2-3 steps ahead."

Yoel Prasetyo, Atlanta GA

As a mentor, there are some behaviors to avoid in order to allow for growth:

- **Avoid telling without asking.** This can shift responsibility for decision making and encourage dependency.
- **Avoid criticizing.** Instead of telling, ask the mentee questions that will guide him or her to the correction. Be sure to talk about the behavior, not the person.
- **Avoid favoritism.** Encourage and motivate all. Reward talent.
- **Avoid building barriers.** Behavior appropriate for the boardroom may be intimidating for someone who needs to ask questions and take risks.
- **Avoid rescuing.** Especially be aware of repetitive behavior. Sometimes a person needs to experience the consequences of their actions. The more the mentor likes the mentee, the harder it is to refrain from rescuing.

A mentor needs to give specific and objective feedback. To help with this, follow these guidelines:

- Clarify your observations and perceptions. Remove interpretations, assumptions, and labels.
- Specifically tell the mentee what s/he is doing well.
- Explain the areas in which the mentee needs improvement.
- Identify the performance factors necessary for success.

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LOOKING AHEAD:

- ♦ The April issue of The Exchange will focus on Optimism.

LOOKING BACK:

- ♦ For previous editions of The Exchange, go to our [back issues](#).
- ♦ Re-read the [10/2000 edition: Improving Listening Skills](#).

People seldom improve when they have no other model but themselves to copy after.

Goldsmith



Excellence is an art won by training and habituation.

Aristotle

Quick Tips:

- Make a list of questions before you meet with your mentor/mentee for the first time.
- Set guidelines for your relationship.
- Give mentoring a top priority.



To learn more about it, click here!

Developing a Mentor-Mentee Relationship, Continued from page 1

Sometimes corrections are needed. These steps can aid in positively correcting the behavior:

1. State your expectations and refer to agreements made between the two of you. *"We agreed to meet at 10:00. Promptness allows us to use our time wisely."*
2. Communicate exactly what you observe rather than labeling. *"It is now 10:20."*
3. Ask for information. *"What needs to be done to ensure that we meet on time?"*

Abraham Lincoln said, "You can't escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today." If you are a leader of your organization, volunteer to be a mentor. (See "Mentor Skills" to see if you qualify!) If you want to rise to leadership, become a mentee. Together, you can make the world a better place.

MENTOR SKILLS

A mentor has many skills including:

1. Sets high expectations of performance.
2. Offers challenging ideas.
3. Helps build self-confidence.
4. Encourages professional behavior.
5. Offers a friendly relationship.
6. Gives positive reinforcement.
7. Listens.
8. Teaches by example.
9. Inspires through actions and words.
10. Encourages risk-taking.
11. Shares information.
12. Invests the time for career development.
13. Is available when needed.
14. Fosters visibility.
15. Provides access to key people and information.

FORCE MULTIPLIER

By Ben Cairns, M.A.



Colin Powell often refers to "force multiplier" factors such as positive mental attitude, high tech weapons and communications, and coordinating

with foreign powers in the deployment of troops. Organizations also look for "force multipliers." Positive "Return On Investment" (ROI) is evidence of a multiplied force. Companies have learned that knowledge and experience provide a positive ROI. That's why experienced workers are worth more than entry-level workers.

An interesting concept surfaced by Peter Senge, author of *The Fifth Discipline* (1990), is that there are recognizable patterns and cycles that recur in business, and that one of the key assets of senior managers and executives is that they have the experience to both recognize and deal with these patterns. This experience is indispensable for the performance and the survival of organizations. Knowledge and experience take years to develop, and represent a substantial portion of every organization's human capital. Even though this investment justifies itself, organizations still have reserves of untapped potential in their ranks.

Mentoring is literally a force multiplier with many strategic advantages. It can tap key resources that can be used at a higher level within an organization, it can accelerate careers, facilitate working relationships, increase job satisfaction, strengthen organizational cultural identity, and it can preserve knowledge and experience that was won the hard way.

What mentoring benefits are the most important for your organization? How can you use mentoring to be a force multiplier of your current assets? Establish a pilot mentoring program to see how well it works for you.

COMMON CURE

When you get a splinter, reach for the scotch tape before resorting to tweezers or a needle. Simply put the scotch tape over the splinter, then pull it off.



TO KNOW THE ROPES

By Vincent Ivan Phipps, B.S.

I once heard a mentor in a company say, "My job is to teach you how to avoid the mistakes I made so that you can advance your career twice as fast as I did mine."

When I heard that, I thought, "Wow! What a great way for mentors to look at their responsibilities." Also, what a wonderful way for mentees to get to "know the ropes."

Knowing the ropes is a term that originated in the Navy. Naval Officer training included many rigorous tasks, such as being able to tie a wide variety of knots for specific applications.

Surprising to some, there are over one hundred different types of knots! Finding someone with this know-how was a great benefit because it was so challenging. So, looking for someone who "knew the ropes" was a common practice.



For mentors, their responsibilities span beyond just showing someone how to do a job. Mentors ultimately are life teachers of on-the-job training. In addition to showing a person how to do something better, they also teach the mentee to eventually become a mentor for someone else.

Whether you are an experienced mentor or an up-and-coming mentor, be the best you can be by leading the way for another or by learning the ropes!

MENTOR MATCHING

There are benefits to pairing mentors and mentees who are either very similar or very different in behavior style. Let's examine some of the benefits of similar or dissimilar combinations as we consider goal setting, motivation, camaraderie, and advice.

Goal Setting:

Pro **similar** behavior styles:

- People who are similar easily develop expectations.
- Agreement regarding timelines is quickly reached.
- Methods of goal setting are naturally compatible.

Pro **different** behavior styles:

- Detail thinkers show fast-movers how to consider obstacles and risks.

- Big picture thinkers show others how to think outside of the box.
- Different approaches balance each other.

Motivation:

Pro **similar** behavior styles:

- Mentor and mentee can relate to each other.
- The mentor naturally motivates by demonstration through voice, body language, and message content.
- Each recognizes the challenges of the other.

Pro **different** behavior styles:

- Big picture thinkers inspire detail-oriented thinkers.
- Values-oriented mentors can demonstrate a more mature approach.
- Seeing things in a different way can be refreshing.

Camaraderie:

Pro **similar** behavior styles:

- Better initial rapport establishes a bond more quickly.
- Mentor & mentee can be themselves without having to heavily adapt.
- Style similarities cause less stress than style differences.

Pro **different** behavior styles:

- Shared learning experiences create a bond.
- Differences create learning that is transferable to other circumstances.
- Adapting to different people increases flexibility and tolerance.

Giving Advice:

Pro **similar** behavior styles:

- Advice is appreciated.
- Similar behavioral styles create natural understanding.
- A mentor with a similar style knows when to give advice, at what rate, and at what length.
- Both process information and meaning in a similar way, resulting in less misunderstanding.

Pro **different** behavior styles:

- Advice will identify a wider range of options.
- Different opinions offer perspective.
- Adapting communication increases effectiveness with a wider range of people.

Which approach will yield the greatest benefit for your organization? How to pair mentors and mentees is a case-sensitive decision that should include personal and organizational considerations. Make the decision strategically. Be aware of the variety of benefits and outcomes that are available from mentoring!



**Minds are like parachutes
- they only function
when open.**

Lord Thomas Dewar

Remember to...

- **Ask open questions.**
- **Describe the behavior rather than label it.**

**I like to have a thing
suggested rather than
told in full. When every
detail is given, the mind
rests satisfied and the
imagination loses the
desire to use its own
wings.**

Thomas Bailey Aldrich



The journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step.

Chinese Proverb

A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.

Henry Brooks Adams

TLC, Talk Listen Communicate, LLC

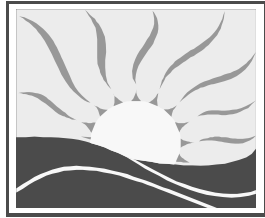
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CEO CORNER: THE MENTOR BECOMES A MENTEE

By Beverly Inman-Ebel



The first time I remember being a mentor was when I was a freshman in college. I was coaching upper classmen on forensics – how to give winning speeches for contests around the country. I loved seeing them improve and took pride in their progress.

Throughout my life, I have volunteered to be a mentor. People told me I was a natural coach and motivator. Most of all, mentoring brought me joy. It also made me confident, and sometimes, a little arrogant. I asked for help from no one. It was a challenge for me to even work in a team unless I was leading it.

There is an old saying, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks!" I disagree, because at age 47, for the first time in my life, I became a "mentee." A woman in Nashville took me under her wing and expanded my horizons and possibilities. What a marvelous teacher she has been!

Having gone through the process from the other side, I can now analyze what she did. First, she recognized my potential and told me what I could become. Then she challenged me by giving me projects that would broaden my experience and exposure. She called me frequently to ask how I was doing. I noticed she was a gifted listener. I received regular doses of encouragement and she made sure others knew what I had done. As I gained more experience, her mentoring also adjusted. She was not threatened by my success; she challenged me to do more.

Where is our relationship now? She certainly does not hold my hand. I recognize there is a new level of expectation from her. She is beginning to treat me as an equal.

There is no higher compliment. What do I call my mentor? I am honored to call her my friend.

Look around you. Who is there that might lead you to a higher plane? Regardless of your success, there is still more to learn. Having a qualified mentor can tremendously increase the speed at which you learn. Search. Find a mentor. Learn. Live your dreams.

ASK THE EXPERTS



Dear TLC,

Whenever we get a new employee, I get stuck with training the person. I wouldn't mind except my boss thinks I can still produce the same amount of work!

Permanent Trainer

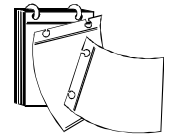
Dear Permanent,

Keep a time log so you will have concrete information to share with your manager regarding your time usage while training. Facts usually outweigh opinions.

FEATURED SERVICE:

New Mentoring One-Day Training by TLC!

TLC can bring a one-day training on Mentoring to your company to prepare managers for this vital role.



To ensure tomorrow's success, begin now to plan for mentoring future leaders. This investment can help keep key employees during this time of right-sizing and wage-freezing. Call 1-888-BECAUSE (232-2873). Why? Because you need to develop mentors!!

TLC establishes long-term relationships with our clients. If we have helped you or if you believe our approach to change would work for someone you know, please communicate with us by email [tlc@talklisten.com] or phone [1-888-232-2873]. We work with individuals and groups on the following subject areas: attitude, listening, body language, voice, leadership, compliments and corrections, behavioral style, teamwork, effective meetings, public speaking, accent reduction and much more!

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