



Peer Mentor.net
INC.

Starting A Mentor Program

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Why Do I Need A Mentor?

There is an expression, “same old, same old.” And we all know that “If you keep doing what you’ve always done, you’ll always get what you already have.”

A mentor is someone who can help you move to the next level, solve problems, think differently, view new possibilities, clear wasted steps and energies, select new habits to replace old habits, meet new people, change to a whole new way of living life and doing business.

“Mentors can both play an invaluable role in providing information, advice, an objective perspective, and also act as a sounding board,” explains David Clutterbuck, Managing Director of Clutterbuck & Associates.¹

A mentor is usually someone you admire and in whose footsteps you might wish to follow. They may be in a senior role at your firm or in another organization

¹ “Advantages of Mentoring.” David Clutterbuck. Clutterbuck & Associates. <http://www.clutterbuckassociates.co.uk/> 2009.



altogether. Mentors are willing to take you under their wing because they see potential in you and are willing to share some of their experiences with you. “Mentors will often open doors for you and introduce you to other people within their network. And they do this for the sheer satisfaction of helping you to grow and succeed,” adds David Megginson, Mentoring and Coaching Research Unit, Sheffield Hallam University, UK.²

Mentoring relationships often emerge after you have worked with someone for a period of time. You may discover that the person you admire as a role model is willing to share their knowledge and experience with you on a more regular basis. Think of a position, job or place that you might want to connect with and/or possibly work. Simply call someone within that organization and ask to meet them. Tell them that you are searching out a mentor and wondered if they might have time to speak with you and offer suggestions for personal growth. The book, “Getting To Yes,” is simply about asking the question. It is amazing how often people say yes.³

Years ago, I designed a Job Shadow Program⁴ to help people discover new job possibilities. Find someone who is doing what you’d like to do and ask them if they would mentor you. Nine times out of ten, they will say “yes”. Walk in someone else’s shoes for a half day to see what their job is like. It’s easy to do. Simply call them and do it.

Some suggestions for finding and making effective use of a coach or mentor include:

² “Advantages of Mentoring.” David Megginson. Clutterbuck & Associates. <http://www.clutterbuckassociates.co.uk/> 2009.

³ **Getting To Yes. “Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In.”** Roger Fischer and William L. Ury. Penguin Group. New York, N. Y. ISBN: 978-0140157-352. 1981.

⁴ **Job Shadowing: A Training Program For Career Search.** Townsend, W.J. Peer Mentor.net. Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, 2004.



- Look for a good fit. You should feel comfortable in communicating openly with your mentor or coach, and that your relationship provides a balance between supporting and challenging you.
- Be clear about your goals. Enter with ideas of what you want to accomplish by partnering with this person. Write down your questions ahead of time. Be, look and act prepared.
- Be committed to the process. Use your coach or mentor's time wisely and follow through on recommended "homework" activities. Set time limits to each meeting.
- Have a beginning and ending of the relationship in mind before you start.
- Acknowledge the mentor at the beginning and end of each meeting.

A mentor can help you break away from the same old concepts and help you make a change. Peer Mentor.net provides support for the development of mentor, coach and leadership training. It is a “People Helping People” business.



Advantages of Mentor, Coach and Leadership Training

Advantages For The Mentor / Coach / Leader

- Exposes staff to new challenges (creative and lateral thinking)
- Provides more senior staff with an incentive toward new learnings
- Enables staff to learn about other levels of the organization
- Provides mentor leaders with front line experiences
- Provides the mentor, coach, or leader with a different perspective on the organization
- Provides flexibility; and, given the right structure, it only requires some time and two people
- Provides a focus group of two with a mutually agreed upon agenda
- Provides unique conversations to the interests of the mentor and partner
- Increases peer camaraderie, recognition and networking
- Provides an opportunity to increase personal reputation by being surrounded by talented people—this will in turn attract other talented people to work with that mentor and within the company
- Provides opportunities to reflect on skills and practices
- Value added approach to professional development
- Yields time out to update and refresh management skills and knowledge
- Provides an opportunity to safely challenge the accepted ways of doing things in the organization
- Creates opportunities for actions alongside leading to other learning processes
- Presents a challenging learning experience
- Yields an opportunity to broaden understanding of the organization
- Results, experientially, in a stimulating, rewarding and enjoyable experience
- Helps clarify a mentor's own learning needs
- Provides self-esteem to individual volunteer
- Helps senior people avoid feeling plateaued/retiring on the job and renews spiritual vigor

Advantages of Mentor, Coach and Leadership Training cont...

Advantages For The Partner

- Provides career direction, enhancement, advancement
- Gains greater self-knowledge, technologies, new developments
- Increases awareness in interpersonal skills
- Provides accessible role models
- Increases connectivity and reduces isolation
- Increases job satisfaction, typically leading to longer tenure with the organization, thus increasing long-term benefits
- Increases self-confidence and career aspirations
- Leaves the partner with the feeling that they are valued as an employee; being part of a mentoring program says the organization values employees as a contributing member of a team
- Develops broader perspectives in newer staff
- Provides newer staff access to inside information and organizational dynamics
- Provides mechanism for regular insightful feedback, performance appraisal and assessment
- Provides professional recognition and affirmation
- Increases knowledge of connectivity: partners learn how to operate successfully within the informal culture and learn who are key decision makers in the organization and which executives have the real power
- Increases risk taking and creative, lateral thinking
- Improves accuracy of communication and communication network, leading to better management of knowledge
- Helps women and minority groups break through the challenges (barriers) of vertical mobility
- Improves cost effectiveness of human resource development; mentoring is inexpensive professional development to implement
- Reduces the fear factor; mentoring is often less intimidating for new employee
- Increases connectivity from within; mentoring assists with employee bonding
- Increases possibilities for cross-development of human resource programs (ie. 360 degree feedback, new employee programs, social networking, etc.)

Advantages of Mentor, Coach and Leadership Training cont...

Advantages For The Organization

- Strengthens the intellectual capital of the organization
- Builds on resources and expertise within
- Encourages collaboration
- Improves communication skills
- Helps overcome learning curves
- Develops underachievers
- Improves recruitment
- Adds a marketing feature
- Facilitates internal hiring and transfers
- Adds to retention strategies for employees
- Increases motivation for higher producing employees
- Decreases costly turnover and loss of intellectual capital
- Increases motivation to find creative solutions to more complex problems
- Provides support for other management initiatives
- Increases individual and team performance
- Promotes high flyers within the organization
- Adds continuity to overall human resource development plans
- Creates a closer match between vision and reality
- Improves learning curve during implementation of change
- Contributes to effective succession planning
- Reduces loss of intellectual capital through retirement by the sharing of expertise
- Converts training to results
- Provides diverse and extended opportunities for leadership
- Returns on expectations increases as well as returns on investment
- Provides a platform for the organization to be clear about vision and defined goals
- Increases the representation of minority interests (diversity training and support)
- Legitimizes "soft skills" and promotes taking more time for reflection
- Stimulates entrepreneurial behavior and creative thinking
- Provides a mechanism for immediate line-managers to refer an employee to a mentor for a difficult issue or problem solving