

A short summary of selected articles on and around mentoring

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**From: "Mentoring" Audrey Collin
Industrial and Commercial Training March/April 1988**

P. 23 "Mentors are...influential people who significantly help you reach your major life goals".

"Mentoring is...a process in which one person (mentor) is responsible for overseeing the career and development of another person (protégé) outside the normal manager/subordinate relationship".

"Mentoring is...a protected relationship in which learning and experimentation can occur, potential skills can be developed, and in which results can be measured in terms of competencies gained rather than curricular territory covered".

P. 24 "Although there are similarities, it can be distinguished from other relationships with which we are familiar in organisations. It is more open-ended and less goal-directed than coaching, which aims to help raise the learner to a given skills level. It involves the mentor in a way, which would be avoided in counselling. In other words it is a *relationship rather than an activity*".

"...it is clear that mentoring originates in some powerful 'chemistry' between people, that, like any relationship, it has a course to run and that it may in time come to a natural close. The question must, therefore, be asked whether such a relationship can, in any real sense, be replicated in a formal scheme and with the express purpose of meeting organisational objectives and achieving organisational criteria".

P. 25 Because of the rate and degree of environmental changes, many organisations have found themselves without the calibre and number of managers needed. Mentoring has been used here as a response to the need for accelerated management development; or it may be used as part of regular succession planning".

P. 26 "One danger here is that of cloning: the mentor may be seeking a carbon copy of self and so may not work to release the proteges' own potential".

**From: "Mentoring - a process for growth or 'buzz word' for the 90s?" Terence Deane
Training Officer September 1997.**

P. 198 "...mentoring is generally seen as:

- v being a one-to one process between two people
- v aiming at a transfer of knowledge, experience and awareness
- v tending to be set at a long-term personal and career level rather than the short-term of task and job

- v not automatically involving people in the same working environment

- v not being fully successful where there is a direct line working relationship due to conflicting needs.

P. 199 "...David Clutterbuck, a major contributor to the subject of mentoring, has suggested that a successful mentor has:

- v an established record of developing others
- v an interest in, and an ability to relate to others
- v a wide range of current skills to pass on
- v a good understanding of organisations, how they work, and where they are going
- v patience combined with good interpersonal skills and an ability to work in an unstructured programme
- v sufficient time to devote to the relationship
- v the ability to command respect of those s/he is mentoring
- v a personal network of contacts and influence

To this can be added:

- v an ability to coach and guide, but at the same time learn
- v a knowledge of how people best accept new ideas

"Successful mentors must have a range of practical skills to support any natural capabilities. Key amongst these are:

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|---------------|---------------|
| v Listening | v Encouraging |
| v Reflecting | v Feedback |
| v Questioning | v Challenging |

"The five stages of mentoring:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| v Gaining awareness | v Making progress |
| v Building rapport | v Moving on |
| v Setting direction | |

From: "Mentoring: A boon to career development"

Caela Farren, Janet Drefus Gray and Beverly Kaye. Personnel Nov-Dec 1984

P. 20 "...not every manager is cut out to be a career coach".

"Formal mentoring programs differ from informal mentoring in many ways. Formal programs must be carefully monitored because a number of problems can arise. For one thing, the 'chemistry' is not always good, so some relationships never develop. Then, too, mentees sometimes develop very high expectations because of the programs' high visibility. And even volunteer mentors often have limited time, which can lead to disappointment".

P. 21 "The primary role of mentors is to widen the exposure of mentees (that is, helping them set up informal networks) and to give them guidance".

"Thus mentors can make things happen for their proteges that would ordinarily be beyond the proteges' scope of influence to accomplish".

"As teachers, mentors solve real problems and create learning opportunities with hypothetical problems. Some mentors hold 'what if' sessions, during which they listen to and guide mentees in dissecting a problem and generating alternatives. Others bring proteges into actual work situations and ask, 'what would you do?' Many times, mentors have re-evaluated their own approaches after listening to the proteges' ideas".

"Many employees are transformed when they find a part of an organisation that better suits their values and style".

P. 22 "Mentors need to be supportive coaches".

"The mentor creates an open, candid atmosphere in which the others can truly self-assess and discover what counts for them".

"The relationships that develop here frequently last far beyond the length of the formal program".

P. 23 "Organisations need to design their own unique approaches if they are interested in developing formal mentor relationships. The following principles will help them in designing a successful effort".

- v Assure the voluntary participation of mentors
- v Minimise the 'rules' and maximise the mentors' personal freedom
- v Create networking possibilities for mentors
- v Share and negotiate expectations between mentors and mentees
- v Reward mentors and increase their visibility

"What better way to foster people development than to link high-potential employees with proven, skilled, high-level managers? What better way to pass on the culture, to increase company loyalty, to inculcate accepted organisational norms, and to teach 'the system'? What better way to keep top people motivated, turned on, and (this is crucial) appreciated - than to give them individuals to guide who will look up to them, expose them to ideas of a younger generation, and help them clarify and articulate their own thinking?"

**From: "Mentors and the successful woman" Ruth Halcomb
Source unknown February 1980**

P. 13 "Whether or not a woman needs a man, it's generally agreed that she needs a mentor".

"Most mentors, it turns out, are men".

"Men who thrive in large organisations are most likely to have had the support of bosses who took a special interest in their careers. But it may be even more essential for women to be protégés".

"Individuals seem to need mentors most at crisis periods or turning points in their careers".

"To have a mentor is to be amongst the blessed".

P. 15 "In certain fields, especially creative ones where such things as quality and merit are particularly hard to measure, the mentor helps the protégé fight inner battles and conquer inner fears, doubts, and obstacles".

P. 17 "Enthusiasm, the right image, working well with others - the characteristics needed to succeed are the same characteristics necessary to attract a mentor".

"Among the women who described having a series of mentors, some mentioned husbands and lovers...sex is a dangerous hitch in the otherwise mentor process".

"Ideally, the male mentor takes a paternal interest in his female protégé, and whatever emotional closeness develops is along father-daughter lines. In practice, an exciting but hazardous attraction may develop and romance ensue".

"Actually, some women marry their mentors and live happily *and* successfully ever after".

P. 18 "Establishing a good mentor relationship with a man can be difficult in a society that's both sexist and sexually charged".

"A man's stamp of approval makes a woman a more acceptable colleague or team member".

"Where women have attained higher, more influential positions, they can be just as effective as males, and probably more so, in guiding other, younger women".

"Women who got far when very few women were even given a chance do sometimes resent the younger women who are being given chances they themselves never had".

From: "Mentorship: A career training and development tool"

David Marshall Hunt and Carol Michael

Academy of Management Review Volume 8 Number 3 1983

P. 476 "As women enter traditionally male-dominated career fields, their choice of mentors may be affected not only by their age but by their gender as well".

P. 477 "...mentorship involves a unique, often emotionally interpersonal, type of support and advising role that can be used to train and develop talented proteges in many careers and organisations".

P. 478 "Mentors often get satisfaction and confirmation through helping less experienced individuals in their development...serving as a mentor provides a creative and rejuvenating life challenge to an adult".

"...mentorship provides an opportunity for greater utility of older managerial talent.

P. 479 Through these relationships, older professionals can rejuvenate themselves by passing on the wisdom and experience they have learned through their professional careers”.

“Research has shown that professionals are likely to become mentors of succeeding generations of professionals”.

“Negative outcomes for the protégé also can result from mentorship relationships. Relationships that are prematurely ended may result in a loss of self-esteem, frustration, blocked opportunity, and a sense of being betrayed”.

“Relationships with the wrong mentor can cost the protégé valuable career time and bring him/her negative feedback by association. On the other hand, mentors who have their own advancement in the organisation blocked may become envious and resentful as they see the protégé match or surpass their own achievement”.

“The type of organisation that would be a willing user of mentorship as an on-the-job training technique is described by Kanter as follows: an organisation with enhanced opportunity, with enthusiasm for innovation versus conservative resistance, and with structure supports for more equal treatment of women and minorities”.

P. 480 “Several studies state that the mentor must be old enough to have accumulated the experience necessary to benefit the protégé. Levinson found that mentors were usually older than their proteges by half a generation, roughly 8 to 15 years. Levinson believes that if the age difference is much greater, that is, 20 years or more, the relationship will be more that of parent-child”.

“...if mentors are 20 or 30 years older than their proteges, there may be significant communication or value problems caused by historical generational differences”.

P. 481 “Mentors often have some characteristics in common. They are generally highly placed, powerful, knowledgeable individuals who are willing to share their expertise but who are not threatened by the proteges’ potential for equalling or surpassing them”.

“Mentors also are self-confident professionals who are concerned with the needs and development of their subordinates”.

“Kram found that managers, as mentors of successful proteges, gained status and esteem in the eyes of their peers and superiors”.

P. 483 “The final phase of the complete mentor-protégé relationship is one of redefinition. After a period of separation, mentors and proteges who re-establish contact go through a period in which their relationship is significantly changed. It may become a more peer-like friendship. Lasting friendships frequently have been reported in these full-term relationships. It would seem that the complete mentor- protégé relationship is characterised by this lasting friendship stage”.

**From: "Much ado about mentors" Gerard Roche.
Harvard Business Review. January/February 1979**

P. 20 "...after about age 40 men rarely have mentors because they have outgrown the readiness to be the protégé of any older person".

"With rare exception, I have found that most executives view the first fifteen years of their career as the learning and growing period. That is the time when they seek mentors. By about age 40, those who are destined for the highest ranks are achieving positions of power themselves, and the need of a career sponsor fades".

"Many chief executives report feeling that personnel development and management succession are key responsibilities that they cannot delegate and in which they must personally participate".

P. 24 "Mentor relationships in the business world seem to develop into lengthy friendships".

"Proteges give the highest value by far to a mentor's willingness to share knowledge and understanding".

"Women tend to have more mentors than men, averaging three sponsors to the men's two".

P. 28 "As the pace of change in business continues, I think mentoring will become even more important in accelerating the learning curve of young executives".

"Over the years more executives who have had a mentor follow a career plan than those who did not".

**From: "Pygmalion in management" J Sterling Livingston.
Harvard Business Review July/August 1969**

P. 81 "The way managers treat their subordinates is subtly influenced by what they expect of them. If a manager's expectations are high, productivity is likely to be excellent. If his expectations are low, productivity is likely to be poor.

It is as if there were a law that caused a subordinate's performance to rise or fall to meet his manager's expectations".

P. 82 "Scientific research now reveals:

- ∨ What a manager expects of his subordinates and the way he treats them largely determine their performance and career progress
- ∨ A unique characteristic of superior managers is their ability to create high performance expectations that subordinates fulfill
- ∨ Less effective managers fail to develop similar expectations, and, as a consequence, the productivity of their subordinates suffers
- ∨ Subordinates, more often than not, appear to do what they believe they are expected to do"

P. 84 "Managers are more effective in communicating low expectations to their subordinates than in communicating high expectations to them, even 'though most managers believe exactly the opposite".

"Clearly, the way a manager *treats* his subordinates, not the way he organises them, is the key to high expectations and high productivity".

P. 85 "Subordinates will not be motivated to reach high levels of productivity unless they consider the boss's high expectations realistic and achievable".

"Superior managers have greater confidence than other managers in their own ability to develop the talents of their subordinates".

"What the manager believes about himself subtly influences what he believes about his subordinates, what he expects of them, and how he treats them...if he has doubts about his ability to stimulate them, he will expect less of them and will treat them with less confidence".

P. 86 "What a manager believes about his ability to train and motivate subordinates clearly is the foundation on which realistically high managerial expectations are built".

P. 87 "A young man's first manager is likely to be the most influential person in his career".

P. 88 "Less effective managers select subordinates more quickly and give up on them more easily, believing that the inadequacy is that of the subordinate, not of themselves".

"Although most top executives have not yet diagnosed the problem, industry's greatest challenge by far is the underdevelopment, underutilisation, and ineffective management and use of its most valuable resource - its young managerial and professional talent".

**From: "Getting the most from mentoring: recent developments and learning"
Andrew Gibbons. Training Journal March 2000**

P. 18 "The advantage of mentoring over other forms of development activity is that when it works well, it focuses on our real learning needs on a specific and personal level".

"Mentors worthy of the title somehow get the balance right between 'over' and 'under' helping and do this deliberately, and with skills we mere mortals will never possess".

P. 19 "It is possible to develop mentor competence, but only with those who possess a platform of existing or potential interpersonal skills that provides the basis for further development".

"An irony I see repeatedly is that those most keen to become mentors are those people I wouldn't let within a mile of the role; equally, many intuitive 'natural' mentors don't recognise their own abilities and are too rarely put in a position to show their capabilities".

"The very best mentors actually enjoy being challenged by their ever less-dependent mentee, and see it as a relationship during which, as it matures, they will concede as many times as they suggest".

"The mentor's role is essentially to accelerate the rate at which a person learns".

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