



Peer-to-Peer Learning and Mentoring: Your Ticket to Better Institutional Knowledge

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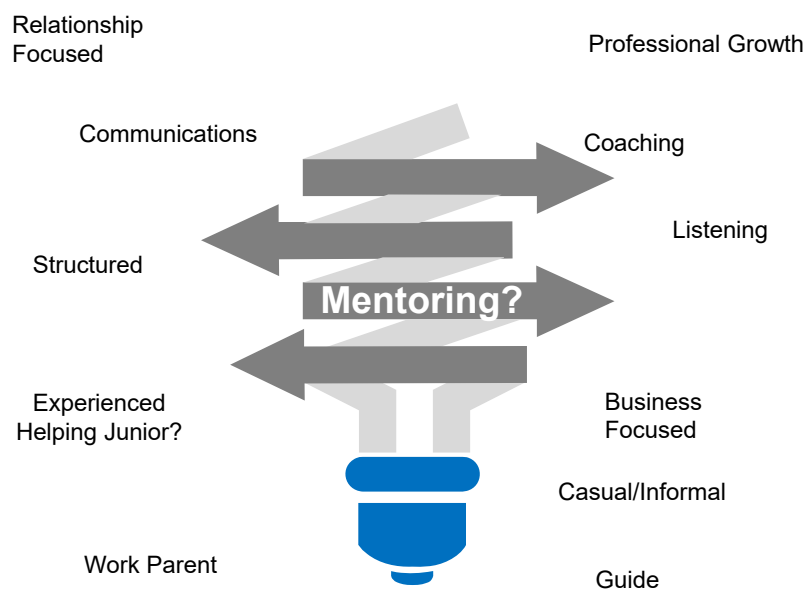
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Overview

- Mentoring vs. Coaching
- Implementing a peer-to-peer learning/mentoring program
- What major components must go into this program
- How to match employees up so they can create the perfect knowledge partnership
- What to do if it isn't working?
- Taking over for retired leaders
- Benefits

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Most Mentoring Programs Struggle or Fail Because of the **CONFUSION** Around Mentoring vs. Coaching

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Mentoring vs. Coaching

Coaching: The International Coach Federation (<https://coachfederation.org>) defines coaching as “Partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.”

Mentoring: A simple, broad definition of mentor is “an experienced and trusted advisor.” BusinessDictionary.com (<http://www.businessdictionary.com>) defines mentoring as an “Employee training system under which a senior or more experienced individual (the mentor) **is assigned** to act as an advisor, counselor, or guide to a junior or trainee. The mentor is responsible for providing support to, and feedback on, the individual in his or her charge.”

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Mentoring vs. Coaching

Topic	Coaching	Mentoring
Timeframe	Relationship is short term, usually 6-9 months, depending on specific goals	Long term relations, lasting a year or longer
Focus	Performance driven – improve something about their job performance	Development driven – holistic approach to career development
Structure	Very structured with regular, scheduled meetings	Informal, as needed basis, driven by the mentee
Expertise	Coaches are hired for their expertise in a given area	Mentors have more experience and seniority – mentee learns from mentor
Agenda	Created by the coach and the coachee to meet the specific needs	Mentee sets agenda and the mentor supports it
Questioning	Coach asks the questions to help the person make decisions, recognize behaviors, and make changes	Mentee asks the questions, tapping into the mentor's expertise
Outcome	Outcomes are specific and measurable – improvement or positive changes occur	Outcomes shift over time – the interest is in the overall development of the mentee

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Peer to Peer Learning Programs

- Often confusion around “peer to peer”
 - The “elder” thinks that they “passing down” knowledge and experience – coaching to improve
 - The “younger” thinks that they are “receiving” wisdom from above
- The best programs are mutually beneficial – both partners are gaining something – both partners bring something to the table
- NOT coaching
- NOT sage advice



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Most Mentoring Programs Struggle or Fail Because of the **CONFUSION** Around Mentoring vs. Coaching

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Implementing a Program – High Level

The best programs:

1. Have a specific program objective
2. Give it a NAME
3. Have senior leader support
4. Have a dedicated program manager
5. Are structured but flexible
6. Are designed so that both parties are mentors and mentees – true PEERS
7. Include mentoring technology
8. Track and measure
9. Broadcast success



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Implementing a Program – Kickoff

Kick Off Meetings – Company Wide Announcements

1. Talk openly about your objectives
2. Have senior leaders talk about the “whys”
3. Have the dedicated program manager talk about the benefits of the intergenerational conversations and communications
4. STRESS “why” both people benefit
5. Continually talk about the program
 1. Bulletin boards
 2. Swag
 3. Intranet/Sharepoint sites
 4. Posters
 5. MAKE IT A BIG DEAL

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How It Should Work

- **Match** Them Up
 - No – not YOU, them!
 - The partners should find each other, not be matched or paired by HR, by the manager or supervisor
 - Optimally, same department or function, but cross department works too
 - Optimally, same job level (peers), but one up or down works too
 - Look for shared work experiences, but also unique perspectives
 - The partnership should push BOTH of you
 - Should be based on TRUST and RESPECT

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How It Should Work

- Create the **Vision**
 - The partners should define the purpose of the relationship
 - Possible purposes
 - Career journey/progression
 - Knowledge gaps
 - Experience gaps
 - Set boundaries
 - What is off limits
 - What we can and cannot talk about
 - Set parameters
 - How often do we meet?
 - For how long?

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How It Should Work

- Ask for **Guidance**
 - Meet with leadership to share **Match and Vision**
 - Ask for help, if necessary
 - Leadership stays out of the way and lets the relationship grow organically

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How It Should Work

- Use the **Data**
 - Identify a clear set of KPIs – what are you going to track?
 - Regularly report back to the business
 - Regularly check in with the peers
 - Send monthly evaluations
 - Did you meet?
 - For how long?
 - Next meeting?
 - How effecting?
 - Getting what you expected?
 - Make adjustments as necessary
 - **KEEP THE RESULTS ANONYMOUS**



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What to Do if It Isn't Working?

- Peer to Peer might not work for a variety of reasons
 - “Forced friendships”
 - “Make me talk to people I don't want to talk to”
 - “My coworkers, not my friends”
 - “I won't be needed if I share all my secrets”
 - “You are just trying to replace me”

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Switch to a 'Formal' Mentoring Program

- Structured Program
 - Select Mentors based on leadership interest
 - Train Mentors
 - Pair Mentors and Mentees based on online evaluation
 - Based on interests and career goals



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Switch to a 'Formal' Mentoring Program

- Unstructured Program
 - Job function mentoring – “come learn about ...”
 - Lunch program
 - Mentoring based on topic
 - Virtual mentoring



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Retiring Employees

- More than just mentoring ...
 - Wish it was as simple as just “put a mentoring program in place” ...
 - **EVERY** employee, regardless of title, who is soon to be retiring, must implement an action plan for a smooth exit
 - It’s not only about the “C” level “successors”, it’s about **EVERY** level – even the elevator repair man has knowledge to pass along

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Retiring Employees

- Assign “successors” at every level
- Avoid knowledge silos – have monthly meetings to share processes and procedures
- Cross train both ways
- Consider phase out – partial retirement
- Examine entire department for retirement – what if all of HR is 55+? Plan now
- Don’t single out – different work styles are real
- Ask “what do you do that’s not in your job description?”
- Start earlier than you think



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Are Successors in a Mentoring Relationship?

The research indicates that while successors **should** be in a mentoring relationship, many leaders **do not** know what a mentoring relationship looks like, therefore their own successors are **not being mentored**.

A 2016 Emerging Workforce study found that **75%** of executives report that mentoring has been critical to their career development. But that doesn't mean that they know how to be an effective mentor.



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So, while we have been talking
about
PEER TO PEER MENTORING
for succession planning, it would
benefit your organization to
consider training your executives on
how to be effective mentors

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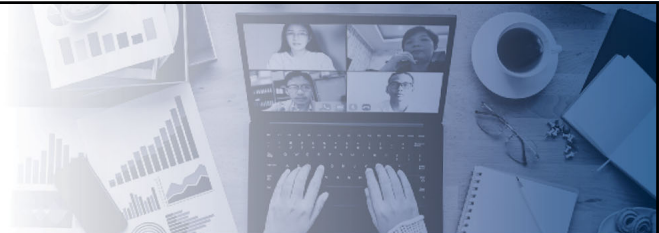
Benefits of Peer-to-Peer Mentoring

- Mentors turn to mentors for help
- Growth opportunities at low cost
- Strengthens team relationships
- Breaks down silos between departments
- Prepares teams for management roles
- Increases employee retention



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Thank you. Questions?

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