

Mentoring Future Leaders

Setting The Framework For Success Within An Organization!



Part One of Four-Part Article

“The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men (women) to do what he (she) wants done, and the self restraint to keep from meddling with them while they do it.” - Theodore Roosevelt, 26th president of the United States

Where have all the leaders gone? Where can you find a real leader today? The state of leadership today within organizations is at a critical point and how senior most leaders decide to act now will dictate what we experience in our tomorrows!

To listen and observe senior leadership today, whether within the military (alarmingly, far too many senior officers are no longer cognizant of basic functional operations they are tasked with nor capable of running around the block without a needed trip to a hospital), within government (managers appear incapable of getting employees to work together and accepting an environment of disfunctionality as you can't get rid of a bad employee without a seemingly act of Congress) or within the business place (whereby a protectionist mindset to keep one's own job by mid level managers causes a guarded interaction with others), would lead an outside observer to conclude that leadership development is evaporating before one's very eyes.

It seems, far too often, great followers and future leaders are stymied by poor and ineffective organizational leadership development programs and opportunities. Recent studies by the American Business Institute and reinforced by a client survey by JMI revealed some powerful reasons that this mindset may be breeding.

Shockingly, survey data consistently revealed that the first mindset of a man when promoted in the workplace is around the theme of, ‘What must I do to get the next promotion and how fast?’ Whereby the first mindset of a women, promoted in the workplace centers around, ‘What is expected of me in this new position to succeed?’

A simple solution is to establish an environmental mindset of growing successful future leaders and placing present leaders on notice by active participation in some sort of a “Leadership Mentor Development Program.” Some effective guide posts for designing an effective Mentoring approach to cultivate and grow true leaders is to:

1. Select solid performers (not political lackeys) that are at least two direct report positions removed from the individual to be mentored. This positional space between mentor and the mentee allows for greater interaction and giving on the part of the mentor.

2. Allow the relationship to be both 'Formal' (measurement protocols and assignments) and 'Informal' (conversational and relationship driven) in contact.
3. Have predetermined objectives for both mentor and mentee and an objective means by which to measure and hold all parties accountable.

In their efforts to remain competitive in the past, most organizations have actually created their very problems of the present by expecting great leaders from within to step forward and lead teams to greatness. By creating environments of competition within, individuals have actually seen what gets rewarded is what they will do, and for most this seems to be how do I attract the spotlight directly to me and at me in a favorable manner and do so at any cost.

The costs of the past will pay heavy penalties in our future unless senior leaders remove reality blinders and institute rigorous developmental programs to ensure a prosperous future.

Part Two of Four-Part Article

*“When the student is ready, the teacher will reveal themselves.”
- Unknown, as told by Jim Stovall, CEO, Narrative Television Network*

Where have all the leaders gone? How do you cultivate a leader within? In today’s demanding work environment everyone must have a little leader within themselves and at times a real leader is needed to step forward and lead others to greatness.

To do so, takes an active and systematic approach to developing those within an organization. A model for an effective **“Leadership Mentor Development Program”** may incorporate a five-step approach.

1. **Mentor Level One** – would be an **elementary mentor**, whereby the mentor possess great basic knowledge and patience of a subject matter, which needs to be instilled into another person.
2. **Mentor Level Two** – would be the graduation of the mentee to a **secondary mentor** whom can provide opportunities to the mentee to apply this new knowledge or skill. This secondary mentor serves as a contact person for the mentee while they are being drilled in the application of this knowledge and assists them in becoming both comfortable and proficient with this knowledge base.
3. **Mentor Level Three** – would be a **post secondary mentor** that has the capacity to challenge the mentee constructively to seek new applications for this basic knowledge base and encourages them to seek greatness with it.
4. **Mentor Level Four** – would be a **master mentor**, that person whom has a well positioned network of stakeholders and decision makers across organizational lines that can serve to promote and sale the mentee to others, unbeknownst to them!
5. **Mentor Level Five** – would be that level which a mentee has been grown and developed from level one through level four and now that mentee has demonstrated a grasp and application of knowledge and experience and has therefore earned the right to become a mentor themselves and grow another person. Now the process reverses, with reverse **mentor** relationship ability!

This model may serve as a powerful template to dictate very specifically what the responsibilities may be for each level in the mentor-to-mentee development life cycle.

Another critical question lies with who has the right to serve as a mentor, now that there is an objective means of how to measure the developmental progress of a mentee. First level considerations in selecting, recruiting or accepting nominations/applications for mentors is:

1. A willingness on the part of the mentor to invest ones' time and energy into the mentee is critical for this growth relationship to develop present and future leaders for organizations today.
2. A reservoir of knowledge by the mentor, both in terms of formal and informal knowledge/training/skill attainment/certifications, that can be deposited into a willing mentee and thus enable a shorten learning curve to develop!
3. An accomplished and dedicated senior member who may be of the present mindset that because of their tenure they are no longer valued and appreciated can be an ideal candidate and this participation opportunity may be just the prescription for a renewed energy.
4. A person with genuine vested interest in the organizations success and core survival will be an exceedingly diligent mentor and take the mentee's interest to heart.

A fast track to “**Leadership Mentor Development Program**” failure is expecting or accepting any individual into participation that do not adhere to any of the above benchmark suggestions.

An Ohio State University study indicated that professional women in the work place with mentor relationships were as much as 68 times more promotable and marketable in their careers among individuals with no mentor relationships. The question for organizations and for managerial-leaders to ask now is, “can we afford not to invest in our personnel asset by not having a mentor program?”

“If a man empties his pyres into his head, no one can take it away from him. An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest.”
- Benjamin Franklin, Inventor, Statesman, Writer



Part Three of Four-Part Article

“There is a story in Arabic which tells of a pupil asking a wise man how he could become a good conversationalist. The sage replied, ‘listen, my son.’ After waiting a while, the pupil said, ‘I am listening. Please continue your instruction.’ The sage smiled. ‘There is no more to tell.’” - as told by Ali Karakus, Turkish Exchange Student in America

Communication connection between mentor and mentee is critical for a relationship to develop and a mentee to grow into a powerful leader.

Far too often a communication exchange leaves two people with two different understandings of what was said and what is to be done. It is these miscommunications that can lead to a breakdown in communication connections.

Consider this simple five-step communication connection model that is used in executive coaching and in a therapy session between doctor and client to ensure an effective systematic communication connection in business. With your mentee and your mentor, communicate one step at a time and ensure buy-in at each level before you expect to progress onward through to the fifth step in an effective communication connection.

1. **Step One** – establish a will to **buy-in or even enroll into a conversation** on the subject matter you are putting forth. If the other party is unwilling to acknowledge and buy-into that subject matter, there will be no communication connection. In essence seek permission to connect and ensure the other party is willing to connect before expecting to proceed.
2. **Step Two** – make a connection of the subject matter being raised to the other person’s **vested interest level**. In essence, make the connection to what they say they are all about ...their *identity* and *purpose* should be connected to the subject.
3. **Step Three** – jointly discuss the varied **choices** that the mentee is willing to make to ensure that that which they are enrolling into materializes.
4. **Step Four** – from this range of choices that can be made to execute the enrolled issue, for a successful communication connection to materialize there must be at least two action items, which the mentee will **commit** to!
5. **Step Five** – in order for any communication connection to really take place, both parties need to clearly discuss and agree to precisely how to hold all parties **accountable** to this connection plan of five steps. In essence how will you know objectively if you are on track, off track, ahead of schedule or behind schedule?

Investing valuable time with another person to grow and develop them can be quickly sabotaged if the parties cannot connect communicatively. Studies reveal that one of the leading contributors to organizational disfunctionality rests at the door of ineffective communication among individuals.

*“Wise men talk because they have something to say;
fools because they would like to say something.” - Plato*



Part Four of Four-Part Article

“Strong lives are motivated by dynamic purposes; lesser ones exist on wishes and inclinations. The most glowing successes are but reflections of an inner fire.”

- *Kenneth Hildebrand, American Clergyman*

As a leader within an organization and in an attempt to grow and mentor future leaders, ask yourself these critical questions:

1. How deep is your well?
2. How many wells do you possess within yourself?
3. Are you dipping into the wrong well?
4. Or, have you gone to the well one too many times?

The magic and poetry of great management and leadership today is when one has that rare encounter with a person, that seem to over flow with greatness of giving of that which they are truly a master of.

Have you ever noticed that within an individual are wells of greatness which one possess. These wells are filled with the specific knowledge, talent, experience, self-belief and abilities that one possesses. These are the wells that one goes to when applying ones' energies toward accomplishing an activity or endeavor.

To excel as a true managerial-leader today and inspire those on your team to greatness, start by demonstrating a passion for living from the wells within you that run the deepest and greatest. Identify those wells within you, which truly flow freely and from which you go to that create a high level of energy and excitement. It is from these wells that one should live. It is from these wells that a true managerial-leader realizes he/she should serve to draw from when engaging others.

The same model can guide a manager or leader today in designing effective workflow for employees. Ask yourself, “do I know which wells run the deepest within our employees and are appropriate assignments tasked to them?”

Another critical question for organizations to ask and analyze is what wells of proficiency must individuals possess to be effective participants in an organizations success. These are the wells of experience, knowledge, training, positions, etc., that must be cultivated, grown and rewarded!

A great case for building “Leadership Development Based Mentoring” programs comes from countless surveys and studies with organizations and individuals engaged in such pursuits. Results from a survey of 300 plus organizations (by ‘Retention and Staffing Report, Manchester Inc.) revealed such findings as:

1. 73 percent of respondents saw a direct correlation to retaining good employees from involvement in aggressive mentoring program opportunities!



2. 62 percent felt a direct enhancement to their immediate career development and long term net worth!
3. 66 percent saw a direct connection to their ability to tap into future leaders!
4. 49 percent felt in placed high-potential performers into a fast track within their career!

Many Fortune 500 clients of ours (JEFF MAGEE INTERNATIONAL/JMI, Inc.) can trace their market dominance and sustained success from among other factors their people development from mentored partnerships. From developed and implemented leadership development mentored programs at Defense Finance Accounting Services nationally to Pfizer Pharmaceuticals and others, where we have first person experienced this explosive developmental concept, individuals excel. And we have conversely seen implosion within organizations that have embraced a great idea of people development via mentoring and not supported or held accountable their team!

Ohio State University has a survey of professional women in the work place that indicates that those professionals with mentored relationships become 68 times more marketable and promotable in their career over others!

Both for one's personal and professional development and that of the development of those around you, the reoccurring question is what wells within me do I go to? And, are those the wells that I should actually be dipping into or are there better wells within me to go to for lasting nourishment?

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Jeff Magee, Ph.D., PDM, CSP, CMC can be reached at www.JeffreyMagee.com for more information on keynotes, training seminars and skill development resources. For more information and ideas get your copy of, ***COACHING and Teambuilding Skills for supervisors and managers***, by SkillPath Seminars, ISBN# C11-0205 / (audio) \$19.95 ... to see other exciting resource book, audio and video titles, go to www.JeffreyMagee.com/library.asp!

