

Coaching and Mentoring for Excellence

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ABSTRACT: *The purpose of this paper is to have a practical exposure and direction to the organizations for setting up a superior workplace developing program for sustenance. "War for talent" has become a very important concept but difficult for growing organizations to keep current employees developed to align their roles to Organizational poles and to find qualified replacement for effective survival in this modern competitive world. Managing employees and performance development has been accepted as an important and relevant theme for sustainable development of any organization. Coaching and mentoring is an effective low-cost means of making effective utilization of in-house experience and developing the potential workforce for achieving aims and objectives of the organization.*

Key words: Behavior, Human resource management, mentor, mentee, sustenance

1. INTRODUCTION:

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I may remember. Involve me and I learn." Benjamin Franklin

Human Resource Management plays a vital role and deals with the people who staff and manage organization towards betterment. HRM deals with the functions and principles applied for retaining, training, developing, and compensating the employees in organization. It is also applicable to non-business organizations, such as education, healthcare, etc. Human Resource Management addresses set of activities, programs, and functions that are designed to maximize both organizational, functional as well as employee effectiveness.

No doubt that the scope of HRM is vast but all the activities of employees right from the time of his entry into an organization till his retirement comes under the horizon of HRM. Many more divisions comes under HRM but major activities are Recruitment, Payroll, Performance Management, Competence building, Training and Development, Retention, Industrial Relation, etc. Out of all these divisions, one such important division is coaching and mentoring for development of the organization.

The reality of today's organizations involves unprecedented change in the way employees experience work. Advancements in technology and education increases in competition and diversity of the workforce, downsizing, restructuring, mergers and acquisitions are requiring organizations to rely more on human capital to adapt to these changes in the work place. This has increased demands on individuals for self-development, flexibility and change. The ability to learn, unlearn and relearn are now indispensable. Learning from training programs and books will not be sufficient to keep pace with required competencies for success in today's fast-paced work environment. Individuals often must look to others to learn new skills and keep up with the demands of their jobs and professions. Coaching and mentoring relationships can serve as a forum for such personal learning in organizations.

2. CLARITY OF OUTLINE:

Coaching is an activity through which manager's work with subordinates to foster skill development, impart knowledge and inculcate values and behaviors that will help them achieve organizational goals and prepare them for more challenging assignments. Coaching is often the by-product of performance appraisal. Most of the time, however, it takes place in the course of everyday business, whenever a perceptive manager sees a way to help subordinates do things better. The importance of coaching has grown as organizational structures have flattened and the necessity for continual learning is recognized.

Mentoring, like coaching, is a means of developing human resources in all aspects of a human race. Mentoring is about guiding others in their personal quests for growth through learning. The mentor acts as a trusted guide, offering advice when asked and opening doors to learning opportunities when possible and appropriate. Unlike coaching, the initiative in mentoring comes from the person seeking greater understanding. That person - the protégé - must take responsibility

for his or her own growth and development.

Table-1: Differences between Mentoring and Coaching

Details	Mentoring	Coaching
Focus	Performance	Individual
Role	Facilitator with no agenda	Specific agenda
Relationship	Self selecting	Comes with the job
Source of influence	Perceived value	Position
Personal returns	Affirmation/learning	Teamwork/performance
Arena	Life	Task related

Coaching and Mentoring programs help everyone, right from a fresh entrant/recruitee to the professionals to grow, develop and learn new set of skills under the direction and advice of senior identified employees or seasoned experts. Organizations implement coaching and mentoring programs to align the goals of the company with the professional development of its employees. Coaching and mentoring provides benefits for the ‘mentee’, ‘mentor’ and the organization as a whole.

Mentoring can be defined as the process of assisting someone to get an overview of their life, career aims and future prospects. It is about guiding, clarifying, offering opinions, advice and referral contacts. The concerned mentees need to be clear about their expectations from the process of mentoring and how to achieve them. Mentoring can be formal or informal but Informal mentoring takes place spontaneously between senior and more junior employees and Formal mentoring occurs through a program with an established structure.

All in all ‘Mentoring’ is the process of sharing knowledge and experiences for the excellence on development of individuals as well as development of the organization in Toto.

3. ROLE & FUNCTIONS OF MENTORS:

Mentoring is one to one relationship. Roles and relationship between mentor and mentee is very important in mentoring process and should be advising, teaching, counseling and role modeling in their career development.

Ally: Mentors should appraise behaviours of mentees and give the latter a chance to review their strengths and weaknesses by providing feedback and personal impressions that can categorized as favorable or unfavorable behaviour. Mentors should provide a risk free environment for the mentee to let out frustrations, share difficulties. They should be frank, honest and candid.

Catalyst: Mentors should inspire the mentee to take action by saying, doing or demonstrating something that can ignite the mentees initiative. They should motivate and stimulate the mentee to discuss impressions, ideas, visions and creative concepts that are inside or outside of their work context.

Networker: Mentors should connect the mentee with people in the organization who can enhance learning and provide valuable information.

Advocate: Mentor should create opportunities for specific learning experiences by championing the ideas and interests of the mentee so that the latter gains visibility and exposure.

Adviser: As an advisor the mentor communicates the informal and formal realities of the progression in the organization, recommends appropriate strategies for career direction and advancement, reviews the mentee’s development plan on a regular basis and helps the mentee to identify obstacles to career progression and to take appropriate action.

Information source: A mentee often views the mentor as a source of information. This is an important role of the mentor, although the mentor should not always give all the information to mentees.

Listener: A good mentor is always a good listener. Sound listening skills are therefore crucial for mentors. Mentors have to listen to the mentees to find out how the mentee experiences the programme and to obtain feedback on the progress made. The Mentor must also listen to the problems and concerns of mentees.

Emotional Supporter: Any relation involves emotions. The mentoring relationship is no different. The role of the mentor is to maintain mutual feeling of respect, admiration, trust, appreciation and gratitude, to share personal values and other aspects of the relationship and they should encourage and support mentees during difficult or stressful times.

Professional and personal developer: The aim of mentoring programme is the personal and professional development of a person to meet the needs of both the mentee and the mentor. As a part of this the mentor points out the mentee's strengths, abilities, talents, and promote his/ her feeling of competence and self-esteem, encourages and coaches and the mentee and collaborate with mentees on workplace projects for professional development.

Role Model: Mentors must realise the important role they have as role models for mentees. The latter will more observant of the mentors behaviour than other staff members.

Coach: As a coach the mentor helps to clarify performance goals and development needs, teaches managerial and technical skills, suggests specific behaviour in which the mentee needs improvement. The mentor also clarifies and communicates organizational goals and objectives.

Table-2: Mutual expectations of Mentor and Mentee

Mentors can expect the mentees to:	Mentees can expect the mentors to:
Accept the relationship.	Have regular face-to-face meetings.
Meet as often as appropriate.	Provide sound advice.
Ask for suggestions and advice.	Maintain confidentiality.
Listen, apply advice, and report the results.	Follow through on any commitments made.
Keep any commitments made.	Help resolve conflicts with the mentee.
Maintain confidentiality.	Be sincere and honest
Give opinions on the relationship	Caring and diplomatic in giving feedback.
Work out any minor concerns.	Clear guidance towards achieving task

4. ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF A MENTEE:

Many mentoring programs fail when there is undue emphasis on the mentor, while the responsibilities and roles of the mentees are neglected. Mentoring is not about entitlement. It is about real workplace empowerment and skills development. The following roles of mentees are therefore of paramount importance to the success of a mentoring programme.

Learner: The mentee needs to be willing to learn from the mentor or role model. He or she must be an active learner and believe in the concept of lifelong learning. Mentees should realize that the success of the programme will to a large extent depend on the quality of their learning.

Self-developer: Mentees need to be creative in suggesting other development areas to the mentor. Here it is important to focus on the responsibility of the mentee for self-development. Whilst the mentor plays a developmental role also responsible for in his or her relationship with the mentee.

Communicator: The mentee must be a proactive and competent communicator. Mentees must be able to say what they think to communicate their ideas, problems and concerns with the mentor. Well-developed communication skills are therefore of utmost importance for mentees.

Listener: Listening skills are very important for mentees. They must listen very well to the mentors in order to implement the action plans decided upon with the mentor. It is often a good idea to make notes of key issues mentioned by the mentor to enhance the listening process.

Implementor: Mentees are implementers. This means that the relationship between the mentor and mentee is not merely based on interaction and communication. The real yardstick for the success of the mentoring programme is whether the mentee is implementing the action plans decided with the mentor. Implementation refers to specific action plans and activities that have taken place.

5. CONCLUSION;

The delicate balance of mentoring someone is not creating them in your own image, but giving them the opportunity to create themselves- Steven Spielberg

Coaching and mentoring looks like same thing but both are different and merely results driven. Coaching focuses on a specific goal, task, knowledge, skill, ability, etc. while the Mentoring focuses on development of individual, career, personal relations and growth of the Organization as a whole.

Ultimately, Productive mentoring involves more than just showing a newbie the ropes and pointing them in the right direction for success. To be truly effective, it requires the mentor to help mentee to become continuous learning and more well-heelled by spreading his wings and forging connections that secure his place within and also outside of the organizational structure. Both the practices are necessary to encourage the Mentee to grow and flourish in such a way that he will inculcate continuous learning habit and achieve their maximum potential.

So it's always better to make coaching and mentoring a priority, because when it's done in a productive and challenging way, it can provide considerable value to everyone involved for excellence and sustenance of the organization.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author declares that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this manuscript.

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