

The CHOICE Connection

Positive strategies. Practical solutions.



constructive
CHOICE
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Quotable Quotes

"Practice is the hardest part of learning, and training is the essence of transformation." ~ Ann Voskamp

"The expert in anything was once a beginner." ~ Unknown

"Selecting the right people with potential to excel and then developing those people through the coaching and mentoring process to achieve greatness is a primary responsibility of leadership. Effective leaders know precisely when to coach, when to mentor, and when to manage." ~ Dr. Rick Johnson, founder, CEO Strategist, LLC

Dear Jean,

This issue of the Choice Connection continues the discussion of employee development in the workplace. Part 2 has a special focus on the use of mentoring and coaching programs as both best practices and innovative approaches used in the workplace. It is not uncommon for many organizations to have mentoring - both formal and informal programs in place. Coaching, also, is becoming more of a common practice and unfortunately reserved for the leadership of the organizations. Besides training, mentoring and coaching programs can offer unique and innovative approaches to developing ALL of your employees. Mentoring and Coaching are different from each other in their purpose, structures and participants. They truly are different from each other - read to explore and discover the distinctions and determine which best suits yours and your organization's needs.

Developing Your Staff - Part 2

Mentoring and Coaching

Part 1 of this two-part series' discussion on developing your employees explored the phases of an employee's career and briefly discussed the employee's responsibility to manage their career. Training classes, with a focus on having an employee learn new skills, are the most common development tool an organization uses for employee development strategies. In larger organizations, these training classes are often targeted as annual offerings for all employees. Some organizations resources may allow for a pre-determined stipend for the employee to choose additional training they believe will benefit their work role.



Mentoring and coaching development opportunities are deemed as innovative development opportunities and a best practice for progressive organizations. The following characteristics are typical for each of these uniquely structured programs.

MENTORING

If an organization invests in a formal mentoring program, it has taken the time to invest in a structure that allows for and promotes the mentoring relationship to actively grow and develop within the mentor's and mentee's (also known as the protégé) work schedule. Formal mentor programs are structured to attract mentors and mentees, foster the relationship building, develop the mentor and mentee skills, offer learning activities, and celebrate the participants achievements as they grow toward their future. For mentoring programs to succeed in this formal environment best practices dictate a sponsoring organization (often HR) along with a dedicated program coordinator. An annual kick-off occurs after a matching of available mentors and registered new participants. The mentor is often a senior employee who wishes to share their career learning experiences with more junior employees. The insights offered to the mentee range from goal-setting, potential career path, advice, career management considerations, expanded networking, etc. The cost investment for an organization to support this requires a minimal budget and resource allocation to manage the program.

In some organizations, the Mentor program is less formal and while there may be a resource list of available mentors, there is no formal structure, promotion or advocacy for the long-term relationship building and learning. Without the structure, these ad hoc programs rarely sustain a momentum of engagement for either the mentor or the mentee.

COACHING

A more recent employee development program, Coaching, is finding a foothold in larger organizations. My recent experience with organizational coaching programs is that they are available to a limited population of employees. Most organizations reserve this development opportunity for the senior management and executive officer ranks. Surprisingly, I have witnessed recently an organization that offered the opportunity to its staff and with the exception of one employee nearing retirement, all signed up. What better development opportunity for staff looking to emerge as leaders and/or determine a career path and growth that may benefit them as well as their organizations. This has created some interesting insights.

Where mentoring programs rely on the experience of senior staff to share and advise on potential growth opportunities, the coaching relies on an external/internal coach and client working in partnership to support employee development beyond the good and great to 'exceptional.' The coaching is less to no 'telling or advising' and relies more on questioning to strengthen the employee's ownership and accountability for who they are and what they accomplish. More than that, the focus of effective coaching is working with the client on how they show up at work today and designing their future. The goal-setting is that with a goal planning and action-oriented focus. The investment in a coaching program can be cost prohibitive for many organizations. If internal, the coaching program would require coach trained internal staff with an office and/or a level of administrative management. The actual cost of an internal coach is absorbed in their salary/labor per hour rate. If an external coaching resource is used, then the administrative/management costs are greatly reduced. However the cost of an external coach is significantly higher than the internal coach resource.

Both of these employee development options offer a 1:1 personal enriched engagement along with an autonomy for a learning focus, design and scheduling. Participants in either of these programs require an education on how to show up as the mentor vs. mentee or the coach vs. the client. As mentoring and coaching are unique development opportunities, it is possible for an employee to be engaged in both programs and find unique value from each.

Tools and Resources

FROM THE BOOKSHELF

[Developing High Performance People: The Art of Coaching](#) by Barbara Mink and Oscar Mink (1993); "In today's economy corporations are emphasizing performance improvement over increasing head count. Self-managed work teams, empowerment of employees, and organizational learning all present different challenges for today's manager. How do managers succeed in this environment?"

[Creating Mentoring and Coaching Programs \(In Action\); Twelve Case Studies from the Real World of Training](#) by Linda K. Stromei (Editor) and Jack J. Phillips (Series Editor, 2006). "Are mentoring and coaching programs being effectively employed in your organization? Today, these programs are essential organizational development tools for HR managers, training and development professionals, and performance technologists. The 12 case studies illustrate best practices and earned solutions you can model in your organization."

[The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships](#) by Lois J. Zachary (2011) Kindle Edition. "Thoughtful and rich with advice, The Mentor's Guide explores the critical process of mentoring and presents practical tools for facilitating the experience from beginning to end. Managers, teachers, and leaders from any career, professional, or

educational setting can successfully navigate the learning journey by using the hands-on exercises in this unique resource."

[Coaching for Performance: GROWing Human Potential and Purpose - the Principles and Practice of Coaching and Leadership](#) by John Whitmore (2010) Kindle Edition. "Coaching for Performance is the bible of the industry and very much the definitive work that all coaches stand on. This new edition explains clearly and in-depth how to unlock people's potential to maximise their performance. Contains the eponymous GROW model (Goals, Reality, Options, Will), now established as the basis for coaching professionals. Clear, concise, hands-on and reader-friendly, this is a coaching guide written in a coaching style. This new edition digs deep into the roots of coaching, particularly transpersonal psychology, a useful model for personal development and in-depth coaching. There are new coaching questions and fresh chapters on emotional intelligence and high-performance leadership. Whitmore also considers the future of coaching and its role in the transformation of learning and workplace relationships, ..."

[Coaching and Developing Your Whole Staff](#) by Karen Otazo (2010) Kindle Edition

THE INTERNET CONNECTIONS

[5 Keys to Employee Development](#) Canadian Network - Workplace Learning (2016)

[5 Keys to Building a Great Professional Development Program at Your Company](#) (Paul Petrone, November 2015)

[How to Start a High-Impact Mentoring Program](#) (Chronus, 2016)

[All Things Workplace: Coaching](#) (Roesler, 2008)

Reflection

Consider your organization and research the development opportunities available to you. Is there a formal or informal mentoring program? Is there a formal coaching program and is it targeted for management or all? If these opportunities exist, are you or can you take advantage of them? What must you do to get started and which is the more appropriate program for you to be engaged in?

If there is no formal mentoring program, you have the opportunity to select your own mentor and arrange for an informal self-designed program. Most individuals are flattered to be asked to be a professional mentor and there is typically no cost to this type of development. Read up on the role distinctions for a mentor and mentee and create the opening conversation with your mentor to establish a strong relationship from your very first conversation.

If your organization has no formal coaching program or the program that exists is not available to your staff level, like mentoring you can secure your own personal coach. There is a personal cost typical for this path forward. If you do decide it is time for a professional coach, be sure you invest the time to find the right coach for you, offering the right style and the right path forward.

Do I choose a mentor do I choose a coach? Do I choose both?
The support I want now from an objective professional is ...
I have professional goals and they are ...
I have personal goals and they are ...
The question(s) I have for a mentor are ...
The question(s) I have for a professional coach are ...
If I worked with a mentor for a year, I want to accomplish _____ in 12 months.
If I worked with a professional coach for a year, I want to accomplish _____ in 12 months.

Choose To

Be a Mentor when asked ... learn from the mentee ... be a mentee if offered the opportunity ... spend time crafting your goals - personal and professional ... write the goal plan - not just the goal ... research the development opportunities your organization offers ... schedule the time ... invest in yourself ... invest in your future ... invest in others.



August Joyful Observances

[American Artists Appreciation Month](#)

Boomers Making a Difference Month

[Happiness Happens Month](#) (Secret Society of Happy People!)

National Read a Romance Month

[XXXI Summer Olympics](#) (August 5-21)

National Bargain Hunting Week (August 1-5)

Simplify Your Life Week (August 1-7)

National Farmers' Market Week (August 7-13)

[National Chef's Appreciation Week](#) (August 14 - 20)

[World Water Week](#) (August 29 - September 2)

[Twins Day](#) (August 5-7)

Presidential Joke Day August 11)

Best Friends Day (August 15)

Kiss and Make Up Day (August 25)

Radio Commercials Day (August 28)

Administrivia

My Constructive Choices Audience...

* Professionals wanting to be at choice in their career and daily work,

* New managers (and aspiring leaders) transitioning to establish a leadership role in their communities,

* Individuals wanting to sort through the choices, build a more fulfilling life, live their voices, and...

* Coaches who choose to step out, show up, and say - YES, it IS all about YOU!

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