



EXECUTIVE MENTORING – AN OVERVIEW

A lot of organizations and executives jump into mentoring programs seeing them as a “quick fix”, and something quite inexpensive to implement. Many jump into it but don’t provide the necessary planning to their programming, nor the necessary support and resources to make it really work. So a lot of organizations may have mentoring programs in theory rather than in practice.

Mentoring programs vary, and depending on the organization the mentoring initiative, can be as short as a one-hour briefing before the “mentoring journey” occurs.

There are many different interpretations of mentoring. Some people see it more like a coach, or an adviser, or even a counsellor. In our opinion, it’s like those things, but it isn’t those things at all. You really need someone who can help someone think through their issues and their problems and their concerns, and come up with a good decision – rather than someone who is going to tell you what to do.

It is vital therefore that mentees have a good understanding of the agreed process and structure to ensure successful outcomes – to become fully engaged and aware of the skills, attributes and techniques for successful mentoring. So what qualities does it take to be a good mentor and how does mentoring benefit the mentor and the mentee? There are many qualities required for someone to be a good mentor, which can include significant professional expertise and competence in a particular field – or indeed in overall senior business leadership and management. There are also some key qualities that are necessary.

It’s important to be able to respect the “story” of the person you are mentoring and realise that this person is placing a good deal of trust and faith in you by sharing their career and professional development. Being a mentor is a privilege – and it carries with it a responsibility of confidentiality, trust and respect.

A mentor must listen with intent to understand rather than respond. By this we mean that as a mentor you often undertake the role of a “sounding board”. You can’t be a sounding board if you are doing all the talking! Taking time to listen and then determine how you can assist a mentee is a vital quality and skill.

So therefore the mentor should always be “there” for mentees – one-one, phone and email. Mentees are therefore guided towards things without necessarily being given the answers – people should work through the issues themselves and find out what suits them. Mentors actually guide, encourage and understand where you are at. It’s all about ownership and empowerment for the outcome as much as the added value in the partnership.

Significantly these days it also assists in terms of understanding people. You get a lot of talk about Generations X and Y versus the Baby Boomers. Sometimes it’s a very difficult proposition to understand someone who appears so different to you, so by being in a mentoring situation that requires you to withhold any judgement and really hear another point of view, it can increase your own skills of relating to people, so that’s another advantage as well.

However like any other program or initiative, mentoring programs need milestones, goals and some form of measurement – including that all important human feeling of well being. So when beginning the journey and developing the strategies always include those all important targeted outcomes – and review/monitor progress regularly.

We contend that mentoring for successful transition and to get people to where they really want to be has application in all walks of life – but in particular in organizations – and as much for business owners, the career minded and families in business – if not more so.

Executive Coaching does differ from Mentoring

Coaching is focused on addressing specific development needs. Often these are oriented around skill-sets. Coaching can also include the development of coaching as a leadership style.

Mentoring, on the other hand, provides guidance and direction in how to think about business issues, and competitiveness by using an exchange of experiences and scenarios that look at issues strategically.

However, mentoring and coaching are also frequently referred to interchangeably and appropriately overlap in the following areas to achieve the desired outcome sought by you and the needs of the business:

- both require trust and commitment in the process and substantial interpersonal skills from coach and mentor
- both aim for the individual to increase his or her effectiveness and apply it to the tasks at hand in a positive manner
- both encourage stretch and provide support and challenge in pursuit of this
- both assume some understanding of the director context – the issues and concerns of directors and the purpose and responsibility of directorship
- both focus on learning and development – sometimes defined as nominating coaching from a skill-base and mentoring from an experience-base
- both can include career guidance to review career goals and capabilities or a focus on the future of the business being driven by you
- both involve an exchange of life and career experiences
- both are collaborative alliances between client and mentor or coach

Although there is overlap, there are some distinct differences in the process and required outcomes. Given this, we offer you these definitions for your information.

Think of Executive Coaching as:

Working with Executives to enhance their leadership effectiveness, performance and career progression within a **specific organizational context**. This may include development and integration of specific mindsets and behaviours as well as a focus on identified requirements needed for the application of capability. Ideally, the coach brings not only an enhanced range of skill-sets that can be tapped but more importantly aims to transform the mindset with new issue-specific perspectives. It is more instructional in focus.

Think of Mentoring for Executives as:

Guidance and direction from an experienced person such that the individual is challenged to explore and integrate new perspectives. Mentoring is aimed at the individual achieving their full potential in their career and includes guidance and advice on specific business challenges, including strategy and policy. Ideally, your mentor should have broad useful experience and the ability to share that with you at a practical and pragmatic level that is goal - directed and which you can adapt and apply to your own strategic business success. It is more “shared experience” in focus.

Now let's read on to see how you may be able to assess what's right for you.

Therefore let's identify what type of Service People and Organisations may need

Mentoring	Coaching	Training	Consulting
Experimental & Experiential Comparisons	Transforming Issue-specific Mindsets	Subject Specific	Task
Strategic & Conceptual – People focused	Other Perspectives – Organization focused	Personal/Organization Development	Project Orientation
Goal directed	Problem, Issue or Tactical directed	Knowledge Directed	Process Directed
Client-driven	Coach-driven	Content-driven	Externally-driven
Outside the Box	Controlled & Structured	Framed by Content	Recommendations
Guide, Facilitate, Share & Question	Instructional & Tell	Teach	Advise
Immediate & progressive Application & Review of Knowledge & Outcomes	Immediate Application of Process	Application when needed	Prompt Self Application

Some of the Key Attributes one should seek in their Mentor

Main client base	Business Experience / understanding of business context	Distinctive mentoring competency & qualities	Past Contributions to Clients
<p>Career & Transition Management, Families in Business, Business Owners & Senior Executives</p> <p>in</p> <p>Accounting Agriculture Architecture, Building Banking, Investment Consultant Education Energy Engineering Government Health Service Human Resources Import/Export Information Technology Insurance Legal Marketing, media, PR Manufacturing Mining & resources Pharmaceuticals Printing, publishing Professional associations Property, real estate Science, research Sport & recreation Telecommunications Textiles, clothing Tourism, hospitality Transport, storage Utilities</p>	<p>Senior level of mentoring experience</p> <p>Masters of Commerce</p> <p>Founder of successful business</p> <p>10 years experience as an effective CEO or corporate leader</p> <p>Career as senior executive</p> <p>MBA</p> <p>Experience in mentoring senior executives</p> <p>Experience in mentoring senior executives in large companies</p>	<p>Integration of different models/approaches into practical applications</p> <p>Integration of humanistic and business perspectives</p> <p>Coaching orientation of linking personal change with own executive experience and business generally</p> <p>Deep understanding of human dynamics coached in business context/language</p> <p>Speed and creativity at defining and working with underlying dynamics of situations</p> <p><i>& perhaps most importantly of all – the “chemistry” feels right</i></p>	<p>Wide mentoring experience including large companies</p> <p>Experienced team player</p> <p>Thinks broadly</p> <p>Creative thinking</p> <p>Senior executive experience</p> <p>Research/thought leadership, psychology experience and qualifications</p> <p>Mentoring experience with top teams</p>

OUR LOCATIONS AND CONTACT DETAILS

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