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Voice of Leadership

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Embrace mentoring and play your share

By Assegid Habtewold

Recently, I had a privilege to present an educational session about mentoring. I opened the session with this statement: "Had it not been for the eagles, all eaglets would have remained on the ground like chickens". Eagles are special birds in many ways, and one of their unique features is how they raise their youngs. Eaglets are mentored on how to fly high at the early stage of their infancy.

Let me briefly recount the process. When the female eagle becomes pregnant, the couple starts to build a huge nest on higher ground. It could be at the top of a cliff or a large tree. Fast forward, the eggs are hatched, and after some time, the mother will push one eaglet at a time out of the nest with the hope it will flap its wing. If it doesn't, the male eagle will catch such an eaglet before smashing to the ground. This exercise continues until all eaglets flap their wings and start to fly by themselves.

What are the most important lessons we learn from this metaphor? The eagles (mentors):

1. Accept the responsibility to empower the eaglets (mentees) from their early stage, before even the eaglets are born. Once they are born, their prime age to build the necessary physical strength and skill to survive and thrive as eagles isn't wasted.
2. Understand the importance of stretching the eaglets that they start to mentor them and push them to fly from high places.
3. Have the best interest of the eaglets in their heart. They want the eaglets to succeed. That is why the female eagle throws them out of the nest but the male eagle catches those who couldn't make it.

In this editorial, I would like to summarize what I shared with my audience, and invite you to read great articles, stories, and interviews contributed by great writers. The meat of this issue is in the coming sections. My initial points here are appetizers and for the sake of giving you some background information before you dive into the



practical and real world insights and stories that are aimed at inspiring you to embrace mentoring and make it work in your favor.

Let me start first by briefly explaining how mentoring differs from other similar concepts like coaching and counseling. Coaching predominantly involves instructions that enable you to succeed in what you do. On the other hand, mentoring is a more comprehensive relationship that goes beyond helping mentees develop certain skills. Counseling focuses on solving issues like a psychiatrist or a marriage counselor counseling their clients to fix certain issues and problems. Mentoring may involve solving certain problems but the focus is enabling them solve problems by themselves.

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Embrace mentoring Cont...



Assegid Habtewold, Founder, PRO Leadership

Just for the sake of discussion, let's say that there are, at least, three types of mentoring:

1. **Informal mentoring**, which we find in our day to day life where we seek help from parents, teachers, & colleagues whenever we have difficulties to make certain decisions and take actions for which we don't have experience.
2. **Periodic mentoring**, which is time and agenda bound. At PRO Leadership we have this type of mentoring for the first three mentoring programs. Bronze mentoring lasts for 3 months while Silver for six months, and Gold for one year.
3. **Perpetual mentoring**, which is continuous in nature. Our Diamond mentoring is perpetual but a mentee should pass through the first three programs to qualify for this program.

The next important question is what are the most significant roles of mentors? Mentors should, at least, accept the following roles if their desire is to make the mentoring relationship work:

1. **Understand the goals and aspiration of your mentee.** Even if they don't tell you up front, ask them before agreeing to mentor them. If you are the right mentor to empower them achieve their goals and fulfill their aspiration, then you may accept the responsibility.

If not, this is the right time to decline and refer them to someone else who can be helpful.

2. **Have the best interest of your mentees in your heart.** Though you may learn something from your mentees and gain some experiences as a mentor, there shouldn't be any conflict of interest. You should put the success of your mentees first by having their best interest in your heart.

3. **Listen and also open your heart to impart what you have learned.** The above two roles cannot succeed if the mentor is not listening actively. Not just listening with your ears but your heart too. You should also call them to action, stretch, and encourage them to leap out of their comfort zone.

What are some of the expectations from mentees?

This is because, in the case of the eaglets, they don't have much say because they are too young to make choices; they cannot say no; they are under age. The mentees we are talking here are grown up men & women, and thus, no one should force them do certain things even if we think doing so will benefit them. But, if Mentees would like to benefit from the mentoring relationship, they should take, at least, the following three responsibilities:

1. **Be clear of what you want.** You should know what you want, and be specific when you ask someone to mentor you. This process helps you choose the right mentor you need & also to measure your progress later on.
2. **Be teachable.** Be teachable and humble to learn new things you have never known and heard before. Take more time to listen. Rather than trying to resist those new suggestions from your mentor that may contradict with your previous knowledge, ask more questions than defending the status quo.
3. **Be a doer.** As a mentor, one of my measurement methods whether to continue to invest my time on mentees

is whether they implement, not all, but at least some of the action items we agreed up on. Without seeing progress why should I invest my scarce resources? I presume that other mentors may share this view. However, if a mentee couldn't be able to implement those things we agreed together, he/she can always come back to renegotiate and discuss with me.

In conclusion, we have three kinds of mentoring- informal, periodic, and perpetual. The three important responsibilities of a mentor are to understand the goals of the mentee; having the best interest of the mentee in your heart; listen, open your heart and impart what you practiced and worked for you. The three important expectations from mentees side are: be clear of what you want; be teachable; and be a doer.

Finally,

- a) I encourage you to read all of the contributions. They empower you in becoming a better mentor & mentee
- b) Send us your brief feedbacks and we will publish them on our next edition
- c) Contribute for the up coming two themes- Servant Leadership, and Communication in Leadership

Assegid Habtewold is the Founder & Chairman of PRO Leadership. He is a Coach, Consultant, Trainer, and Speaker at Success Pathways. He is also the author of "Redefining Leadership: Navigating the Path from Birthright to Fulfillment in Life!" To learn more about Assegid, visit www.successpws.com

"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn."

Benjamin Franklin

Mentoring- A professional gift!



Carla D. Blue, CEO, ICARE Solutions, LLC

One of the best investments I've ever made in my career was in my mentor/mentee' relationships. The most important benefit of mentoring is that both participants are beneficiaries. I have had several great mentors throughout my twenty plus year career. What started out as a professional relationship, turned into a long-term friendship. My former supervisor, and now good friend, played a significant role in my professional coaching and career planning. This valuable mentor/mentee' relationship developed approximately eleven years prior to retirement when I received a special assignment that lasted about

six years. I learned many great lessons such as:

- Focus on the positive in any situation;
- When I believe, I can achieve;
- Create a personal vision statement, mission statement, and affirmation;
- When I help others I help myself;
- Manage two of my most valuable resources – my time and my acquaintances;
- Lead with courage and ethics;
- Volunteer for new projects to expand my experience and learn new skills;
- Learning is a lifelong journey;
- Preparation helps seize opportunities;
- Read, Lead and Succeed!!!

There are countless advantages to having or becoming a mentor. Mentoring requires a great deal of time, compassion and patience. When you are helping someone discover their gifts and talents, you are opening a new chapter in their life. A mentor can serve in many different capacities; life coach, motivational speaker, big sister or brother, great listener, etc. The mentee has the opportunity to receive and take advantage of professional guidance and knowledge from a more experienced colleague. This professional assistance can teach the mentee' how to set career

By Carla Blue

goals, build effective teams, and choose mission-specific assignments to enhance their knowledge.

In closing, I strongly encourage anyone who is interested in professional growth to seek a mentor – a professional gift. However, choosing a mentor should not be taken lightly. Both, the mentee' and mentor must:

- Be committed to the relationship;
- Be willing to listen and learn;
- Be respectful of each other;
- Be patient and compassionate;
- Be ready to grow.

Carla D. Blue, is the Founder and CEO of i.C.A.R.E. Solutions, LLC. She also serves on the Board of Advisory for PRO Leadership Global, Inc., and as an instructor for the Maryland Fire Rescue Institute and Prince George's Community College – TeamBuilders Academy. In 2009, Mrs. Blue retired as a Lieutenant Colonel from the Prince George's County Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department after 20 years of dedicated service. Mrs. Blue attended Johns Hopkins University and earned her Bachelor of Science in Business in 2002, and her Master of Science in Management in 2003.

Interview with Mona Singleton

1. Who is your mentee?

One of the most rewarding mentoring experiences I had occurred many years ago when I lived on the west coast. It involved an official, business mentoring engagement with a co-worker who worked in another part of the country. I'll call her Gail. Gail and I do not know each other until we worked together to help her with a career transition.

Gail was a long time administrative assistant who wanted to make the transition from an administrative professional to an entry level IT network

administrator. She had recently been asked to serve in this new role and wanted to work with someone who could help her navigate what seemed to her like a huge and daunting task. Gail asked her supervisor if she could get a mentor. Her supervisor readily agree, thought for a moment, and then said something to the effect "Ah yes, Mona would be great a mentor for you".

2. When and how did you begin the mentoring relationship?

We initially spoke on the phone given

we lived in different states and were separated by hundreds of miles and different time zones. We met first by phone for about an hour to get to know each other. We then began meeting regularly on the phone a few days after we agreed to work together.

3. What are the most important lessons you learned from the relationship?

The most memorable take away I got from this particular engagement, was how important it is to understand

Interview with Mona Singleton Cont...

the mentoree's world and to connect with the mentoree on a personal level. Mentoring is distinct from coaching, consulting and advising in that it often entails a much deeper relationship.

Gail did not live in the continental U.S. and had never before left her home state. She found that living in a new place was a bit challenging. We were of different races, had grown up in very different parts of the country and had not met each other until we started the mentoring arrangement.

While Gail enjoyed learning and working to achieve her goals, she was not used to living in such a different environment. The pace of life was different, the organizational structure was different, and the culture was different.

For this experience, my biggest learning was that it's important to check in early in the process with how the mentoree is doing personally, in particular if they are working in an unfamiliar setting. I also had the opportunity to consciously shift my style and role from supervisor to mentor. I learned the importance of asking the right questions at the right time and to really be in tune to how things are going. I discovered that the mentoree may not always bring this up and a good mentor may have to draw the mentoree out.

4. What are the most important advantages someone may gain from mentoring?

Success is so much easier and pleasant with a success partner. A mentoree can benefit greatly by having a good mentor who will share wisdom and insights that go beyond facts and information. Mentors can sometimes open doors for the mentoree that they may not be able to open for themselves.

Mentors also learn and grow each time they mentor someone. They gain a sense of contribution and satisfaction in

knowing they are providing a much service by preparing the next generation of leaders.

5. Do you have some advice for both mentees and mentors?

If you are a mentoree looking for a mentor, look for a suitable mentor. Who do you know that has achieved what you want to achieve? It's critical to find the right mentor. You need a mentor who is wholeheartedly interested and committed to help you reach your goals. Good mentors are like rare jewels. If you find one who is willing to invest their time and energy in you, respect and honor him or her for serving you. They are sharing their time and gifts with you. That is a valuable thing.

If you are a mentor, carefully choose mentorees. Carefully ascertain how serious, motivated and enthusiastic the mentoree is about pursuing their goals. Are they clear on what they want to achieve? Are they eager and willing to work on themselves? If not, it might be wise to refer them, at least initially, to a coach, consultant or other qualified individual who can help them discover their life purpose, goals or career direction before they work with mentor on a specific goal.

Mentors need to stay focused on mentoring. They are best suited to invest in people who know what they want and are eager to obtain it. If a potential mentoree is uncommitted and unwilling to do what it takes to succeed, it's probably not a good time to work with them. A mentor's time could be better spent working with someone is ready and willing to make the best of the mentoring arrangement. Choose wisely in the people you are best positioned to help, then believe in them and see them as the successful person they are committed and striving to become.

Setting a specific timeline for working together is also a good idea. Mentor relationships rarely are lifelong endeavors. Mentoring is not a gab fest. It involves a lot of effort on behalf of both the mentor and mentoree so I'd recommend setting reasonable expectations around how long you agree to work together and what the mentoree hopes to accomplish as an outcome.

Mona Singleton is a strategic interventionist coach and consultant. She holds the Certified Corporate Business Coach (CCBC) credential from Corporate Coach University. She has also a Project Management Professional (PMP) and is certificated through the Project Management Institute (PMI). Mona is the author of: *Lead With Your Gifts: Why Who You Are, Not a Label, Defines You As a Leader* and a contributing author of *An American Crisis: Veteran Unemployment*.

To learn more about Mona, visit www.monasingleton.com

Contribute

Toward the upcoming two VoL themes:

1. **Servant Leadership**, deadline- April 22, 2013
2. **Communication in Leadership**, deadline- June 22, 2013

You can contribute:

- Article,
- Story/quote/anecdote, &
- Interview...

For more info, visit the Magazine page from our web site.

Timeless keys for success: A USAF forty year special case

By Bob Krone, Colonel, USAF (1952 – 1975, Retired)
Joe Sobodowski, TSgt, USAF (1965 - 1977)



The Colonel & The Sarge, 2012

Introduction

It's nostalgic to reflect on how great men and women of an earlier time dared to dream and whose imagination, courage and sacrifice when called upon has enabled yesterday's visions become today's realities. In that spirit, it's a privilege to share the story of how a highly decorated Air Force Fighter Pilot, Colonel Robert Krone, touched the life of former TSgt Joseph Sobodowski, a young Air Force NCO more than 40 years ago. The influence we have on one another often extends far beyond the boundary we perceive as illustrated in this unique story. Colonel Krone was asked to be commencement speaker for a ROTC Commissioning Ceremony in 1970. The Keys to Success conveyed in the speech are timeless, but far more important are the lessons about how we influence others without our being aware and the importance of learning from those we may never meet.

The men and women who serve in today's US Armed Forces, like those of yesterday, face formidable challenges and in the tradition of those who've gone before, they have and continue to respond admirably and with honor. We believe that the principles referenced in this writing and as presented more than 40 years ago are timeless and that the unique story of how two US Air Force personnel separated by 40 years of time were able to meet, just possibly may equip a young Officer or NCO serving

today with one more tool to use in meeting the leadership challenges they will encounter tomorrow.

Memories of Colonel Krone

1971 was a tough year for the United States. The Vietnam War was in its seventh year. On 24 April, 500,000 people protested against the war in Washington, D.C. and 125,000 marched in San Francisco. The following month 12,000 anti-war militants were arrested in Washington, D.C. A month later The Pentagon Papers were published by The New York Times. America was troubled and divided. President Nixon was agonizing over ways to end the war honorably.

Having served my tour in Vietnam 1965-1966, followed by two years in Headquarters USAF Personnel figuring out how the Air Force could manage its pilot and navigator resources for Vietnam combat requirements, I got my commander's approval to enter an Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) PhD program at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). I picked UCLA because Dr. Bernard Brodie, a famous American Military Strategist, scholar and author was on the Political Science Department Faculty. He became my Dissertation Committee Chairman.

UCLA in 1971 had America's second most active anti-war protests after the UC Berkeley, California Campus. I was in my third year of studies. There were 105 USAF officers studying at UCLA and a large Air Force ROTC program. Military officers studying at UCLA rarely wore uniforms to avoid confrontations with radical students and some radical faculty. ROTC students in uniform were jeered by other students. A bomb was left at the ROTC Office. Fortunately it did not explode. In 1971 Dr. Brodie was 61 years old, had been on the UCLA Faculty since 1966 after being a Senior Staff Member

at the RAND Corporation in Santa Monica between 1951 and 1966. During my studies at UCLA, 1968 to 1972 I observed Professor Brodie being increasingly attacked by student publications and by face-to-face confrontations accusing him of "Loving War." The attacks damaged him psychologically. He had written nine classic defense histories and strategy books and received two Carnegie Fellow Scholarly Awards. His withdrawal from courses and public appearances crippled him professionally and personally. He died in 1978. I cite the Dr. Brodie case as an example of the viciousness of some anti-war people at UCLA during my 1968-1972 period of presence.

UCLA Graduation in 1970 happened on 22 June. Since I was the senior Air Force Officer at the time the job of addressing the ROTC graduates for their commissioning ceremony was mine. The environment on the Campus influenced my design of the address. I titled it "The Politics and Power of Lieutenantcy." I had been an Air Force officer for eighteen years and held ranks from 2nd Lieutenant to Colonel. I had never heard of lieutenants having power, but it seemed relevant at the time. Being in my own doctoral program I did serious research to build the address, which ended up as seven and one-half pages in the January 1971 Supplement to the Air Force Policy Letter for Commanders. In retrospect and upon reflection of the length of that address, today I can't help but wonder if any of those ROTC students stayed awake through it... or remember its message.

Then, on December 26, 2011 on returning home, there was a voice phone message, I listened; and one of my life's most rewarding experiences began. (The article can be accessed at: www.bobkrone.com/node/221)

Timeless keys for success Cont...



The Colonel, 1971

Memories of TSgt Sobodowski

Virtually every aspect of my twelve year United States Air Force service may accurately be characterized as amazingly fortuitous. As an Enlisted Recruit, I voluntarily transferred from my initially assigned AFSC in the Auto Pilot career field to serve as a Weather Equipment Repairman. The technical school was a month longer than the one I would have attended and additionally provided the opportunity to be trained on a broader range of electronic systems. The Weather Equipment Systems training included temperature/humidity, cloud height, visibility and three different radar systems. The APQ-13 was a World War II Bomb/Nav Radar that was adapted for use as weather radar. The TPQ-11 and FPS-77 weather radars were taught as part of the advanced seven level school. The AFSC career change appealed to me because I had learned to fly while working as an aircraft mechanic at a local FBO during my senior year of high school. I knew that understanding weather was vital to flight safety and that having a practical knowledge about

weather equipment systems would enhance my skills as a pilot. Additionally, maintaining Weather Equipment Systems required component level trouble shooting and repair skills. This was in direct contrast with the troubleshooting practices for most other electronic career fields that for sake of expediency removed and replaced either defective circuit boards or sub-assemblies. It was obvious that a greater intuitive understanding of electronics would result from being trained on the Air Force Weather Equipment systems.

It was a privilege to be asked to serve as the Weather Equipment Maintenance NCOIC at Fort Knox, Kentucky even though I was an E-4 with less than two years time-in-service. It was a privilege to be selected to attend the Weather Equipment Technician (7 Level) School with less than three years time-in-service. The average time for my class was fourteen years. It was a privilege to be assigned to Instructor duty at Chanute Air Force Base and to be in the classroom teaching Electronic Principles prior to completing Instructor Training. It was a privilege to be awarded the Enlisted Instructor of the Month and subsequently Enlisted Instructor of the Year for Chanute AFB (1970). It was a privilege, upon leaving active duty after 5 ½ years as a SSgt, to be promoted to TSgt and serve as the only person in the entire Air Force Reserves in the Weather Equipment career field.

It is a privilege to have been asked to serve on the Board of Directors for the Octave Chanute Aerospace Heritage Foundation, the Aerospace Museum on the Former Chanute AFB. Time and space preclude an adequate discussion of the reasons why I am grateful for the influence of Col. Krone and the opportunities provided me while serving in the United States Air Force.

My journey to the Kepler Space Institute-National Space Society Convention and subsequent first time meeting with Colonel Krone began a little more than 40 years ago. While serving as a young NCO and Master Instructor at Chanute AFB, we were often required to read documents and articles and then pass them on to the next person on the list. More times than will be confessed, my contemporaries and I simply initialed and

passed the required reading on to the next person on the list.

Fortunately, one document that was passed my way in early 1971 caught my attention. It was a speech by Colonel Robert Krone addressing a group of ROTC graduates on the "Politics and Power of Lieutenancy". I wasn't able to keep a copy of the speech because the document had to be passed on, but its words were indelibly written in my mind and in my spirit.

The Colonel spoke about the 'Cone of Confusion' that every individual experiences when engaging in a new venture. There were several other topics addressed as well. However, the powerful impact when Colonel Krone said that success was dependent on more than luck was life changing. He said that the three keys to success are, **1) Methodical Preparation, 2) Sustained Superior Performance, and 3) Positive Attitude Orientation.** As mentioned above, I never had a personal copy of the speech and it was not available on the Internet, but his words became part of me. Every engineering class taught throughout my thirty-three years as an educator included his "success keys" and his name. Every member of my executive staff has heard about his "success keys" and his name. More letters of reference than I can remember have incorporated his "success keys". It's easy to understand that Colonel Krone not only impacted me, but he has touched the lives of virtually everyone in my sphere of influence.

This past December 26th, I awoke at 0300 hours and Colonel Krone came to my conscious thought. Something said, "Google" him. I did and after some creative software gyrations, a likely contact was identified. Later that day, I called and left a short message detailing his speech and thanking him for the influence he's had on my life. A few hours later, Colonel Krone returned the call and we've been in constant contact

Timeless keys for success Cont...



The Sarge

ever since.

We met in person for the first time in March 2012 at the Kepler Space Institute and National Space Society Conference at Hilton Head, South Carolina. I don't know how to express the gratitude I feel as a result of meeting the man who touched my life and put a fire inside my being so many years ago. Colonel Krone asked me to address the conference attendees on the topic of Leadership in the Corporate Environment. To say the least, I have never refused to obey a directive given by a United State Air Force Colonel. Therefore, as requested, I spoke about four leadership traits, Courage, Integrity, Communication and Tenacity. The combat missions flown by Col. Krone over North Viet Nam and his military honors attest to his incredible leadership traits. He exemplifies each of the three Success Elements he so eloquently spoke about more than 40 years ago. Every aspect of his life demonstrates exemplary leadership. Speaking to the group was easy because all I had to do was to think and speak about Colonel Krone.

Prior to departure on the last day of the conference, this former Air Force Tech Sargent snapped to attention and with great respect for both the rank and the individual saluted a courageous and visionary Air Force Colonel. Life just seems more complete after finally meeting an Officer that I have

respected and admired for more than 40 years.

Robert Krone, Colonel, USAF may officially be retired but I assure you, he is very much still on active duty...

Colonel and Sarge, Conclusions and Lessons for Leadership

Since meeting personally at Hilton Head, South Carolina in March of 2012 we have been in continuous communications; and Mr. Sobodowski has joined the Board of Directors of the Kepler Space Institute, for which Dr. Krone is a Co-Founder. Having experienced personal benefits from our story, we believe there are lessons for leadership worth sharing.

The most important lessons are in leadership and education areas. The time energy and research leadership exerts to record and teach success keys has the potential of creating future benefits that cannot be measured at the time; but, as in this case, may be enlarged exponentially and continuously.

When you are asked to speak to any youth group, reflect on the success keys that have helped you in your career, Include those keys in your address, media appearance or publication and freely share your personal examples and recommendations. Don't be only descriptive. Be prescriptive – give advice to your audience on "How to" apply the keys in their lives.

The two of us have each had decades of learning across global military, corporate, business, industry, education and government. Success in life and in business has many variables; but we believe that Leadership is the most important of all those variables; and that moral leadership is the most important variable for successful leadership.

We reflect on our personal story and conclude that our finding: **"Leaders never fully know the future benefits of their**

guidance" is true, and recommend that when you are asked to address any group, include your timeless keys to success. You just might one day be a Colonel or a Sarge.

Bob Krone is a global educator, author, and consultant in Advanced Management theory and practice. He is Provost of Kepler Space Institute and University, an Emeritus Professor at USC in Los Angeles, was a Distinguished Visiting Professor in the School of Business at La Sierra University in Riverside, California,(1992 – 2007) and an Adjunct Professor for Doctoral Programs in the International Graduate School of Business at the University of South Australia (1995 – 2007) He authored or co-authored seven books and 70 professional journal articles. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Space Philosophy (www.keplerspaceuniversity.com) To learn more about his life and publications, please visit <http://www.bobkrone.com/node103>

TSgt Sobodowski currently serves as the CEO of two privately held engineering corporations. SmartFleet, Inc. designs, manufactures and markets virtual based fleet management systems and services to the automotive fleet industry. Fleet Engineering designs biomedical equipment and systems. He has more than 35 years' experience in the corporate environment, holds multiple US and foreign patents and has provided engineering services and systems to Southern Bell (now AT&T), Pepsi Cola, Fed Ex, US Air and the Greater Pittsburgh International Airport as well as other major corporations. His corporate experience was concurrent with his educator responsibilities.

"Leaders should influence others in such a way that it builds people up, encourages and edifies them so they can duplicate this attitude in others."

Bob Goshen

Benefits of a Joint Orientation and Mentoring Program

By Dr. R. Kenny Leblanc



Dr. R. Kenny Leblanc

Mentoring Programs are one of the most powerful tools that major corporations have used in the employee orientation process, states, Blickle, Witzki and Schneider in their April, 2009 article in the Journal of Vocational Behavior. Employee orientation is vital to the organization to teach skills to new employees and to a variety of other employees including those that have been promoted within the same organization. In a recent survey conducted by Kelly Services, 80% of the 100,000 employees surveyed in 34 countries are concerned with the skills/training offered by employers during orientation. Employees feel that their skills are good for only 5 years thus they need to supplement their skills with other methods for up-training.

George Corona, EVP and COO of Kelly Services says that "people are keenly aware that their current skills must be enhanced" and some of the most effective methods in today's environment for skill enhancements are blogging, social networking and mentoring. The virtual world is an inexpensive and effective training and re-training tool for employee development thus employers looking to cut costs can include a wide range

of computer-based trainings and computer-based mentoring programs in their orientation. IBM have even gone further than other organizations by not only instituting a formal mentoring program; but like its orientation the company has taken both programs into the virtual world by conducting them simultaneously during the first few weeks of an employees' initial hiring or promotion.

Caldwell and Carter in their book *The Return of the Mentor* discuss formal and informal mentoring and the establishment of such programs in both large organizations and small family enterprises. In addition to their discussion on the history of mentoring, they also touch on the fact that organizations are increasingly recognizing that mentoring programs provides significant benefits for both the employees and the organization during the orientation stage.

While many organizations encourage mentoring, the reality is few have instituted formal programs. Sheree Butterfield, an Executive Coach with BreakThrough Consulting, states "It is a huge commitment of resources to recruit...whether they are an internal or an external candidate...[mentoring] protects your company's hiring investment... [and] reduces the time to breakeven...[when the] average time for a new hire to reach breakeven is 6.5 months". Ms. Butterfield agrees with the belief that the most compelling reason to establishing any mentoring programs during the orientation stage is the increase in engagement. Katharine Giacalone, president of KGWorks, a management consulting firm based in the Washington area on the other hand claims that the anticipated impact of a good orientation program is to improve effectiveness for the acclimation of the employees into the culture, rules, and guidelines of the organization.

Margaret Magnus, author of the aptly titled article *Training Futures* concludes that mentoring uses relationships to teach changes in attitudes and behaviors to coincide with organizational culture.

Notwithstanding the end result, the establishment of a mentor/mentee support system during orientation will serve to welcome newcomers to the organization and help to assure their successes. Linda Stromei writes that these programs help to introduce employees to the organization's culture, lessen the learning curve and increase in the advancement of their careers. Organizational mentoring programs are critical for employees' successes today and they are also effective in quickly increasing employees' performances because they facilitate the immediate transfer of business knowledge in addition to the regular training programs. Eileen Hallow, VP of Randstad, a work placement agency, recognizes that a mentoring relationship needs to be established to achieve specific goals, such as shortened learning curve, business networking, job skills, and personal and career development. While certain skills can be thought through the regular orientation training programs, formal mentoring programs play a huge role in preparing employees not only to be more productive, but also to be in leadership positions.

Whether formal or informal, organizational mentoring programs have to be personalized and must address specific needs of both the employees and the organization. Executives have to ensure that mentoring programs are well suited for the development of the career of new employees by its design and process. Wells and Johnson states in their May 2009 article in *HR Magazine* says that regardless of the type of mentoring program available be it formal or informal, organizational culture and a

Benefits of a Joint Orientation Cont...

good employee orientation program influence new employees and assure their development and successes.

In order for employees to attain maximum benefits from mentoring programs they need to have clear expectations. Both the mentor and mentee need to be on the same page: the mentee must clearly define his/her needs toward the end result of the program, and the mentor must outline the process. In addition to the process being outlined by the mentor, the assessment of progress and evaluation of effectiveness and the achievements of the mentees within the programs are essential. Assessments can be in the form of interviews, questionnaires or informal and formal feedback.

Mentees on the other hand need to be encouraged to share their views on the programs in order to institute desired changes. As a caveat, Dodgson's research on mentoring programs shows that the informal matching processes are more effective than formal matching processes. In a study done in 2008 participants indicate their preferences for organizations with mentorship programs that gives mentees a level of input into the choice of mentors concur with Dodgson's research.

Finally, effective mentoring programs such as the one instituted by Ms. Hablow in her organization consist of matching experience employees (mentors) with new hires or high potential employees (mentees). The benefits of mentoring programs to the employees are:

1. Professional networking
2. Non-judgmental listener for ideas and plans
3. Self-awareness and discipline
4. Acceleration for development and growth

5. Individualized leadership development plan for mentees that includes:

- Specific goals
- Leadership principles
- Development of current skills and expansion of new skills through various projects
- Development of innovative ideas
- Constructive feedback on professional development
- Face-to-face interactions
- Continuous and demonstrated support

Mentoring programs offers substantial incremental returns on the careers of new employees as they advance within the organization. It is extremely beneficial to have a mentor who manifests an interest in your career and in your development by explaining the facts of the business and offering precious guidance. Based on the evidence of the benefits of mentoring programs it would serve all new employees and all high potential employees to take advantage of the mentoring programs available through their company or organization during orientation or during their tenure.

Dr. R. Kenny Leblanc, a professor of Communication, Speech and Public Speaking working in the South Florida area. Dr. Leblanc has over 15 years of practice/professional experience in both academia and organizational settings. Her primary areas of research are in strategic planning/foresight and leadership development. Dr. Leblanc, is also the President and Co-founder of Institut Technique Libre, a leadership based foundation in Haiti, launched to development and train professionals and executives.

Project Proposals

1. Upgrading & Expanding VoL

We have a project proposal that aims at upgrading VoL Magazine to reach out up to 10, 000 subscribers within three years. This project requires 1 Chief editor, 1 Assistant Editor, & reasonable incentives for contributors.

2. Mentoring the Mentors

We have been mentoring leaders of small organization one-on-one but we would like to expand the service to reach out more leaders by conducting workshops. The project has both long & short term goals. For the short-term, we plan to bring around 60 leaders, 3 facilitators, & arrange a workshop in DC Metro area.

3. The nine cardinal building blocks

Recognizing & developing the fundamental leadership attributes takes years, if not decades. Because of that many leaders are delayed from achieving their goals & fall short of creating the impact they anticipate. This workshop emphasizes the importance of these building blocks, how to develop, and refine them.

For more, visit the Project Proposal page from our web site.

Interview with Eniola Olowofoyeku



Eniola Olowofoyeku

1. Are you a mentor or mentee or both?

I consider myself both. As a toastmaster I have helped to mentor new members, as a business woman I have been a mentor to others who want to do business, and as a staff at the college where I work, I have been a mentor to students.

I have also been a mentee in each of these areas at some point and time in my life. Currently, I have people who I consider mentors both in Toastmasters and in business.

2. Who is your mentor, how the relationship began, and what are the most important lessons you have learned?

One of the people who I consider a mentor is my friend "Jefferson". One of the people who I consider a mentor is my friend "Jefferson". We met each other about 25yrs ago as teenagers. At that time, I had no idea that he would grow up to be the successful business man that he is today. I lost touch with him for many years and then about 10 yrs ago I bumped into him at a business conference that was held in conjunction with the University of Maryland's Dingman Center for Entrepreneurship.

I found out that he and his family had just re-located back to the DC area.

He was interested in doing a food- related business at that time instead of what he was currently involved in (security). I told him what type of business that I had been involved in for the past 10years(food). After exchanging info we lost touch briefly but then bumped into each other again this time at a real estate meeting. I was looking to get into the business and he told me he'd been in it for a little over a year and had done extremely well. From that point on as I tried to do my own real estate business I asked him to mentor me and learned as much as I could from him about the business. Even until today, when I have questions or may have a business deal that is a bit confusing to me, I will still go to him for guidance on how to best handle the situation. I also will partner with him on a business deal to bring in his expertise and skills if that's what I need to get the job done.

4. Do you have some advices for both mentees and mentors?

My advice for mentees is that if you are trying to reach a certain goal in life it always helps to study those who have already done it. No need to "re-invent the wheel" so to speak. Find someone who already has the experience and learn as much from them as you can to help you in your own journey.

My advice for mentors is that since someone helped you to get where you are today, you must give back to those who are trying to climb up the ladder to reach their goals.

Also both the mentee and mentor must have a clear understanding of what each expects from the relationship so that they are both on the same page as to what will be a part of the learning process.

Eniola Olowofoyeku is a multicultural program/event producer, speaker, and trainer. She is also an advanced Toastmaster with training in public speaking and leadership.

Blogger?

You may find VoL limiting because it focuses on one theme at a time. No problem. If you would like to write any topic you are interested, you can send us your blogs, and we will post them on our Blog which provides inspirational, insightful, and informative blogs for leaders.

However, the themes of your blogs should be leadership related. The messages should aim at empowering, inspiring, informing, encouraging, and calling leaders to action.

The following are some of the guidelines you should consider:

1. Your blog shouldn't be more than 1000 words.
2. Your blog should be free from grammatical and syntactical errors
3. It should be your original work for which you have the copyright.

Please note that PRO Leadership is a small nonprofit organization, and at this stage we do not pay for your contribution. In the future and when our financial status allows us, we may consider paying a reasonable amount of incentives for our contributors. When the time comes, we will make that announcement. Until then, PRO Leadership will copyright your blog with no legal or financial obligation to you.

Leader and Follower Relationships: The Role of Mentor and Disciple

By Angelia Arrington Ward



Angelia Arrington Ward

"Lead, follow...or get out of the way!" This familiar adage actually points out that a relationship is significant to the success of leaders and followers alike. In this article, I distinguish the relationship between the leader and follower and the role of the mentor or disciple, citing differences and similarities between the mentor and the disciple. In this article, I share how to become more effective as a mentor or disciple whether you are the leader, the follower, or the partner in the relationship.

Relationships should evolve around a purpose and a partnership. The mentor or disciple who is leading and guiding the relationship can enhance the purpose. A mentor is someone who guides, directs or advises another or a group on how to become who they wish to be; often coaching the individual on how to develop his or her strengths, knowledge and talents. A disciple is someone who also guides, directs or advises another or a group on how to develop her or his strengths, knowledge and talents but often it is specific to becoming

more like themselves teaching more specifically or replicating a particular desired outcome.¹

"Mentoring is a relational experience through which one person empowers another by sharing God-given resources."² Mentoring and discipling are closely related, but not always the same. In the New Testament, a teacher, who called followers to disciple involving his teaching and life, instigated discipling. Mentoring seems historically to be less about instruction than relationships—the protection and encouragement of another person, of the same or different sex, for his or her maturing. If instruction is included, with accountability, then it becomes "discipleship-mentorship."³

In any leader and follower relationship to ask whether you are a mentor or a disciple may be a rhetorical question. The question to be answered is what is your purpose in serving in either role? Are you mentoring or discipling to make a success or significance? Are you serving in the aforementioned role(s) for a self serving purpose or for a selfless purpose? You might ask why such rhetorical questions? The answer is simply stated in two words; success and significance.

Do you wish to focus on helping someone develop his or her skills, knowledge, and abilities for the benefit of others or do you wish for them to become more like you? To develop a person to become like you may help them to become an apprentice; but if you help a person develop her or his [authentic] self; you may assist them with abilities to develop others with unlimited potential. In closing, yes, there is a difference in the relationship of the leader and the follower in the role of the mentor or disciple. It should be a purposeful, learning and sharing experience. So, whether you choose to

mentor or disciple or if you choose a combination of the two; be reminded of the well-known Chinese Proverb, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach him how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."⁴

Your decision to lead, follow, mentor, or disciple is up to you. The challenge is will you do so with an emphasis on making a success or significance. The choice is yours.

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