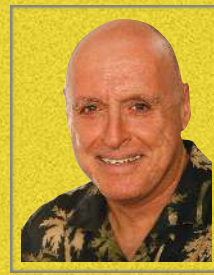


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



398 10 Guidelines for Successful Mentoring

So you think mentoring is a good idea for your organization but you don't know how. I'm Jerry Roberts and today, some guidelines on how to set it up. That's next on The Extra Point.

Whether you're involved with mentoring inside of an organization or coming from the outside, here are 10 things to think about in establishing the so called "rules of engagement."

1. Make sure both parties have the same expectations. What are the objectives tied to the mentoring? That can be as simple as guiding a frontline worker through the first month of a new job, or a more complex task of preparing a middle manager for a senior leadership position. What's the purpose of doing this? Take a meeting and talk about it.

2. List the goals and put them on a projected timeline. Without clear objectives and a projected end point, you run the risk of letting the program fall through the tracks. It's much better and the chances for success greatly increase when you view this as an important commitment.

3. Set and adhere to a definite schedule for the mentoring sessions. If you can lock up the same time every week, that's best. If this is perceived as being a high value activity, treat it that way.

4. Both parties should expect the unexpected. The mentor may encounter challenges as he/she helps someone with their career. They may need to deal with certain issues of personality and character along the way. The mentee may initially see the mentor as a perfect example of professionalism, and during the sessions information or attitudes may emerge to change that view. If this happens, try to remember why you set the mentoring up in the first place and stay focused on the goal.

5. If things go badly or get off track, each party should have the right to hit the pause button. In such a situation, perhaps it calls for a different mentor, or to pull somebody out of mentoring. There can be any number of reasons for this and the program should have this flexibility built in from the start.

6. Set milestones up along the path to the end goal. You can look at these like small checkups, an evaluation of where you are and what's needed to progress to the next milestone.

7. Establish boundaries. Maybe a certain mentee needs counseling of a different kind, not mentoring. Maybe there are topics that are off limits.

8. Be respectful of each other's time. If one party can't meet for the next session, give as much notice as possible.

9. Mentors should expose mentees to other information to help them grow. This could be books, articles, websites, podcasts, or other resources to assist with understanding.

10. When the objectives have been met, both parties should evaluate the mentoring program. Did it meet their needs? Did it fall short in any areas? What could be done differently to make improvements?

Mentoring can be a powerful tool for growth. I hope this information helps you make it happen.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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