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Focus

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Mentoring 1-2-3

1. Definition

Mentoring is a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and the psychosocial support perceived by the recipient as relevant to work, career, or professional development; mentoring entails informal communication, usually face-to-face and during a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who is perceived to have less (the protégé).

2. Mechanics

The protégé begins the process by determining his or her needs from the mentor; that guides the choice of mentor. The list of needs – more properly called development areas – should be limited. For example: improve my ability to manage and motivate my team, or learn how to earn a (specific) promotion, or improve my ability to close sales, etc. Then the mentor and protégé agree on “what success looks like,” the duration of the mentorship, and a meeting schedule. Finally, each person sets forth their specific expectations of the other; it’s best to reduce these to writing and have each person sign the agreement.

3. Success or Failure

Progress will slow significantly at some time during the mentorship, either because the program's goals have been achieved or because the relationship doesn't work out. In the latter instance, quit trying to ride a dead horse and respectfully end the program. In the former case, end the routine meetings. It's okay to schedule follow-up meetings every 6 or 12 months.

Tips for Personal Growth

1. Decide what date you want to stop being ordinary.
2. Pick a specialty area (or something) for which you will become well-known and then become extraordinary in that area.
3. Learn to see the world through multiple lenses.
4. Seek out interesting people who will lift you up.
5. Avoid negative people who bring you down.
6. Read books.

Tom



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