

Mentoring for Change

executive mentoring, life coaching, and values management

Welcome to the October edition of the Mentoring for Change newsletter. In this issue:

- the Miracle Question
- the 4 Stage Mentoring Model - Freeing Up
- Values Workshops
- the Change 98 Conference
- Conversations with God.



The Miracle Question

There are two main approaches to creating change. The first and most popular the the **problem-focused** approach. This involves identifying what is wrong with the current situation (ie, identifying the problem), analysing the current situation, exploring possible solutions, and then taking action. Whilst this approach can be effective, all too often not only does it fail to solve the problem but it actually sustains it - energy and attention get focused on what isn't working and the problem has to be maintained so that the focus on solving it can continue!

The second and rarer approach to creating change is to be **solution-focused**. Instead of looking at what isn't working, we search out examples of where the change has already happened. If we can't find any, we imagine instances of the changes we want to have happen. We focus on these, encourage people to enact them, promote their occurrence, value and appreciate the behaviours we want and so on. In practical terms we shift from prohibition ("Don't do that" or, as Basil Fawlty so ineffectively said "Don't mention the war") to encouragement ("Do more of this").

One way to use this solution-focused approach in working with individuals is through the **Miracle Question**.

So say something like this to the mentee "Suppose that whilst you are asleep tonight a miracle occurs and you have all the changes you wanted to get from mentoring. Because you are asleep, you don't know that the miracle has happened. What would be the first sign for you after you wake up which will tell you that the miracle has happened?"

The key to using this successfully is to help the person you are working with to be extremely precise about the specific changes they will notice in their feelings, thoughts, internal images, sensations, and so on. Do this

by asking them questions about the details of their experience. To answer these questions they will have to create for themselves the experience of already having made the changes they are seeking - and so the "miracle" occurs!

The 4 Stage Model - Freeing Up

In the last issue I outlined the 4 stage Mentoring for Change model (the four stages being Freeing Up, Envisioning, Implementing and Attracting).

In this issue we are looking at one of these stages - **Freeing Up**. Freeing Up describes the process of developing the necessary autonomy, responsibility, and self-confidence needed to embark on whatever changes the mentee wants to make. The mentor's stance is nurturing and supportive and the focus is on helping the mentee with the following tasks:

Building a Solid Foundation

- identify your core needs, learn to recognise when they are not being satisfied, and then take responsibility for getting them met
- build the systems and structures to ensure that your needs will continue to be met

Developing Self-Worth and Self-Confidence

- bring out your best by clearly seeing your own strengths, skills, qualities and Self
- reframe negative perceptions of yourself, find the positive in what has happened, and develop positive self beliefs
- focus on what works. Appreciate, value and endorse yourself and get others to do so too.

Reconnecting with the Past

- "re-member" the past so that it no longer carries negative energy for you

Change '98 Conference

Mentoring Workshop

London 16 November 1998

I will be running the Mentoring for Change 1 day workshop at the Change 98 Organisational Transformation Conference in London on November 16. Other presenters include Rosabeth Moss Kanter, John Kotter, Richard Pascale, Charles Hampden-Turner, and Prabhu Gupta.

In the workshop you will learn a generic mentoring model which can be applied to both organisational and individual development, and to strategic and tactical change. Using this framework (which I have been outlining in these newsletters) and working in small groups, you will have the opportunity to learn how to be a mentor and will experience being mentored.

What participants have said about the "Mentoring for Change" workshop

"A sound model for all would-be mentors." Dr A. Lee

"Mike's one day workshop is a genuinely valuable experience, and provides really practical tools for mentoring and organisational change." W.H.P.

"I highly recommend it to anyone considering developing Mentoring as part of the services they offer. Very beneficial both professionally and personally." Pavlo Kenellakis

"Useful, practical, clear and interesting." Dr F. Early

"Valuable experiential day which enabled learning from working through personal issues as well as putting the model into practice." Gilly Freedman

"Extremely valuable and flexible model for mentoring which can be used in many different contexts." S.H.S.

For further information call the conference organisers Linkage International on +44 (0)181 977 9277

- reinterpret the events, patterns and habits from the past that are holding you back and find the positive in them

Undoing Dependencies and Addictions

- see who and what you give your power away to, and choose to stop (or to actively choose to continue doing so)

Developing a Large Reserve

- don't just have enough of what you need - have a stockpile!

Accepting that where you are is the right place to be

- it may not be where you want to be or where you enjoy being - but it is where you are
- only when you accept this will you create the opportunity to move on
- realise that your entire life to this moment has been the perfect preparation for the future you are about to step into

Removing Blocks to Success

- get clear about what success means to you - and then dismantle the barriers that prevent you having it

Embracing Freedom

- have the courage to choose to be free

Being Selfish, not Egotistical

- learn to distinguish between your Self and the rest of you (body, feelings, mind, sub-personalities, neuroses, ...)
- take care of and invest in your Self.

Values Workshops

The workshop held in June to launch the Managing by Values consultancy service was very successful with over 80% of attendees rating it as good or excellent. Already two values projects have resulted from it and we have a proposal in to a third organisation to help the executive team 'walk the talk' of the corporate values.

We will be running the workshop again on November 24th in the South Birmingham area. Details of the content are in the previous newsletter. Call/email me for further information or to make a booking.

I will also be presenting a half day introduction to Values Management at Warwick Business School's Strategic Thinking for Tomorrow executive refresher programme on Monday 12th October. For further information contact the Business School on +44 (0)1203 528196.

Conversations with God

Don't be put off by the title! This is a quite extraordinary book. Everyone I know who has read it has found it to be a powerful, moving and, in some cases, transformational book (mind you, this may be a rather self-selecting sample!). I've tried several times to write something to catch the flavour of it for you but without success so you'll just have to go out and browse it in a bookshop - or even buy it!

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