

Mentoring for Change

executive mentoring, life coaching, values management, storytelling

Welcome to this edition of the Mentoring for Change newsletter.

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If you enjoy reading this newsletter, please forward it to others who might also want to read it.

What really makes people happy?

In his book "Flow - The Psychology of Happiness" Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi answers this question by saying that happiness is not something that happens to us, nor is it the result of good fortune or random chance, nor does it depend on outside events: what it does depend on is how we interpret those outside events. What he noticed was that those experiences that people describe as being their happiest are those timeless moments when we are completely absorbed in what we are doing and when our performance is effortless and extraordinary - a state which he calls "Flow". What makes this book so exciting is its thesis that we can create the conditions of flow.

Put simply: if we can find or create situations where we feel that our skills are adequate to cope with the challenges at hand; where we have clear goals and feedback about how well we are achieving these goals; and where our concentration is so intense that there is no attention left over to think about anything else, or to worry about problems, then we are likely to experience flow. And then we will feel happy.

The 4 Stage Model - 3: Implementing

In an earlier 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 the third of these stages - **Implementing**. Implementing consists of identifying the goals which will lead towards the vision, deciding on the strategies and actions needed to achieve these goals, and then taking action. The mentor's role here is to coach the mentee and to help the mentee answer the question "How will I achieve my vision?".

Set Value-based Goals

- have goals that are aligned to your values and which help you have more of what's important to you in your life
- drop any goals you are pursuing because you think you should or ought to

Set Stretch Goals

- ordinary goals can usually be achieved by doing more of what you were doing before (eg, working harder/longer)
- to change your life, set stretch goals which you know you can't achieve by doing more of the same
- choose a breakthrough project so big or epic that you have to upgrade your whole life as a result of focusing on it - irrespective of whether you succeed in achieving/completing it

Raise Standards

- expect more of yourself and hold yourself to high standards
- set up an inner "committee" of those you admire, respect and who bring the qualities you want into your life (eg, Indiana Jones, Siddhartha, your best friend, Pooh Bear) and then ask their advice on how to be and act
- having high standards is much easier when you have reserves of time, money, love and well-being

Develop Empowering Habits

- notice what you're addicted to (relationships, adrenaline, food, alcohol, drugs, being a victim) and choose to stop
- choose supportive habits and set up the structures to support the new behaviours

Values Case Study

Values Technology – Satisfaction Guaranteed or your Money Back

The Issue

International retailer Sears Roebuck was planning to renew its values statement as part of a corporate effort to align vision, values and strategy and create values that aligned to their goal of building exceptional customer relationships.

The Approach

A preliminary analysis of the corporate values and a comparison to the leadership of one business unit suggested that the values of managers were significantly different to the corporate values as currently drafted.

Clearly a simple redrafting would be unwise and unlikely to reflect the values that would create real meaning and

motivation for employees. Commitment from employees was unlikely unless they could understand how their own values were incorporated in the corporate statement.

15,000 employees were quickly surveyed using the VMI 63-question survey to identify a valid and reliable values database to guide the redraft and implementation of a corporate beliefs and values statement. The audit results indicated a cultural alignment index of 95% consensus among employees on their top priority values. In contrast there was only a 44% overlap with the existing corporate beliefs and values statement.

This information was used to decide how to best incorporate the employee values and those of the leadership team in a redrafted approach to values. This was then used to rewrite the core beliefs concerning leadership, ethical behaviour and customer service so that these genuinely reflected the values priorities of the organisation.

Have more than enough Time

- simplify, prioritise, schedule
- say "No"
- stop doing the coulds/shoulds/oughts

Focus on what puts you into a Resourceful State

- Change the habitual questions you ask yourself. Asking different questions gives you access to different resources. Look to develop a pattern of consistent questions that empower you.
- Change the words you use to describe yourself and so change how you think, feel and act.
- Don't allow your inner Judge/Critic/Ego to beat you up. Use your inner committee to give you an empowering focus, and be inspiring models

Be Purposeful

- when you feel most alive, and your life is most meaningful, then you are being purposeful
- ask yourself "What specific action could I take today which would lead me towards the destiny of my choice".

Take Action

- Just do it!

Values Coaching Training

We will be running a second 3 day workshop leading to certification in Individual Values Coaching. At its conclusion you will be able to use the HT Values Report (Issue #4) to guide an individual to clarity on their personal value priorities. The workshop runs from September 29 to October 1 1999 in West Malvern

Worcestershire. Contact me for further information.

Previous Newsletters in pdf Format

All previous issues of the newsletter are now available in Acrobat pdf format. Copies can be downloaded from my web site or I will email them to you on request.

Events

27-30 September 1999. The 2nd Annual Coaching & Mentoring Conference, London. Linkage International, Email: conferences@linkage-international.co.uk, Tel: +44 (0)181 943 3763.

14-16 October 1999. 4th Annual ICF Conference, Orlando, Florida, USA. International Coach Federation. Email: ICFconfreg@amtec.com, Tel: +1 800-237-9549.

25-26 November 1999. 4th Annual European Mentoring Conference, Cambridge, England. EMC/ AMED. Email: amed@management.org.uk, Tel: +44(0) 171 235 3505.

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