

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 know of anyone else who might like to receive this newsletter, please forward a copy to them - I am always looking for new subscribers.

Storytelling

Regular readers may have noticed the addition of the word "storytelling" to the strap-line at the top of the newsletter. I was inspired to add it after attending a workshop at the School of Storytelling earlier this year because it brought home to me just how fundamental storytelling is to our work as mentors and coaches. We can't help but tell stories - a substantial part of many mentoring sessions is taken up with them - stories of who we are, what we've done and what we are intending to do. What is striking is how true these stories are - we live out the stories we tell and we are those stories. And it is this that makes storytelling so powerful because, if we change the stories we tell, we change the life we lead.

I noticed this in myself when I first started working as a mentor. When people asked me how I came to be a mentor, I told a story in which a succession of events - working as a management consultant, training as a therapist, getting my first mentoring job - just happened to me and, as a result, led me towards becoming a mentor. In effect, I portrayed myself as a 'victim' of my environment and circumstances. And then one day in response to the same question I noticed I had just told a very different story. This one contained many of the same facts but I was now telling a story of intention unfolding and emerging into the world, where my career was not the result of what had happened to me but was instead something I was building in pursuit of my vocation and sense of purpose.

I realised that a fundamental shift had taken place in how I saw myself as a mentor. Mentoring was no longer something that I just enjoyed and was good at: it had become something through which I could express who I was and what I stood for - it had become meaningful.

I now encourage clients to be more mindful of the stories they tell of themselves. I ask them whether these stories serve them in becoming the best that they can be and invite them to tell stories which lead them towards being more fully themselves. And as their stories grow and develop, so do they.

The 4 Stage Model - 4: Attracting

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 final of these stages - **Attracting**. Attracting is something we all do - and most of the time we do it unconsciously and unaware. We attract particular relationships, problems, opportunities, life situations and so forth. This is fine when what we are attracting is what we want - love, wealth, fun, or whatever. But often we find that we repeatedly attract stuff we don't want - pain, failure, disappointment and so on. The challenge is to take responsibility for what we have had a part in attracting and so create the possibility of attracting more of what we want and less of what we don't.

The mentor's primary role is to challenge the mentee to see more clearly what their reality is and how they contribute to it being that way. This involves helping them with the following tasks:

Be Irresistibly Attractive

- actually, you can't help but be so. The question is "Is what you're so successfully attracting what you want to attract?"
- be what you want to attract. (As Ghandi said "Transformation takes place when you become the change that you wish to see in the world".)

Values Case Study

The Values Statement is on the Wall - Now what do we do?

The Issue

The Workers Compensation Board of Alberta, a government agency, had identified seven corporate values to guide them to the next level of customer satisfaction and stewardship of human and financial resources. They wanted to ensure management commitment to the values, rather than passive compliance, and to achieve sustainable change.

The Approach

The corporate values were translated into a values template using the Hall-Tonna framework. A values audit of 120 supervisors and managers, and of key

business documents, was carried out to establish the existing extent of alignment to the corporate principles.

Because the various analyses were all described in terms of the Hall-Tonna values framework, the value priorities of the various groups and documents could be directly compared.

A one-day management retreat was conducted to show the leadership team of 120 managers how their values and behaviour aligned to the corporate set of beliefs and values. The group of managers established desired behaviours to live the values.

An ongoing values alignment effort was approved incorporating values into leadership development and corporate people practices, including performance management, recognition and reward, corporate communication and leadership development.

Extend Boundaries

- part of attracting what we want involves setting up boundaries to protect us from what we don't want
- extend your boundaries to protect your Self, body, feelings and mind from the unhealthy or damaging behaviour of others

Tolerate Nothing

- notice everything you are tolerating about work, home, your family, how you treat yourself, your car, your relationships, yourself, ...
- ... and stop tolerating it - either by choosing it or by changing it

See Reality more Objectively

- continually develop your ability to see more clearly, measure, get feedback, and draw finer distinctions
- discern what the universe is telling you
- see whether you are moving towards your vision and know how to recognise when you are getting what you (really, really) want

Create Space

- create space for new things to be attracted into your life (feng shui your life)
- simplify your life

Learn

- notice what you repeatedly create and what repeatedly happens to you and fully learn the lessons being offered
- If you don't learn the lesson this time round, there will be another chance! (and another, and another, ...)

Sustain New Habits

- commit to sustaining the changes you are making
- reward yourself for maintaining your new habits

- learn to notice how the new habits are intrinsically rewarding - it makes them easier to sustain!

Take Responsibility

- notice what is happening to you and how you are (co)creating it
- take full responsibility for everything – good and bad – in your life, regardless

Be Solution-focused

- catch yourself demonstrating the change you want to have happen
- notice how you did it, and then do more of it!

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

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

April 5 2000. The School of Coaching's next public Coach Training Programme starts. Tel: +44(0) 141 352 5000. Email: LBeaton@indsoc.co.uk

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