

## Mentoring with a Mission

Mentoring is a challenging skill that requires more than just training on communication skills. Before you send your Supervisors to leadership training, coaching training or a course in Management 101, put these processes in place first in order to truly drive change for your business and create Mentors that have a mission.

### 1. Provide A Mentoring Mission Statement.

Just like travelers need a map to know where they are going, Mentors need a mentoring mission statement to know their direction and understand whether they are approaching their destination. Implement this Mentoring Mission Statement so that all of your Mentors know their direction and have a gauge of whether they are all achieving the desired goals:

Mentoring Mission Statement:

"Inspire others to continually strive for higher levels of performance through creative and strategic methods that are always focused to achieving your goals."

### 2. Expand On The Mission.

Now that you have a mentoring mission statement, you don't want it to be just a sign on the wall. You want to make sure that everyone truly LIVES and BREATHES the mission. Put a standard in place that all of your Mentors spend five minutes at the end of every day evaluating their daily performance as a mentor. They must ask themselves 4 questions:

Was I inspiring?

Was I focused to higher levels of performance?

Was I creative and strategic in my mentoring methods?

Was I focused to achieving the goals of this company?

### 3. Focus On The Mentors' Behaviors.

What does inspiring mean? If I just tell the mentors to "be inspiring", they may all have a different opinion of what that means. Brainstorm with them on the words and phrases that are inspiring and the actions that are inspiring. Here are some examples:

INSPIRING WORDS AND PHRASES:

"I appreciate your effort on this project."

"I trust your judgment."

"Thank you for your assistance with our new employee."

"I value your feedback on the new process."

INSPIRING ACTIONS:

Model the desired behaviors that you expect.

Make eye contact when speaking.

Greet everyone at the beginning of their shift.

Post your daily results so everyone knows what they are accomplishing.

### 4. Hold Your Mentors Accountable.

Just like front-line employees are held accountable for doing their job, Mentors must also be held accountable. Once you have the list of inspiring words and actions, be sure to observe their daily communications with the employees to see if they are doing what they are supposed to do. Do you see your Supervisors in their offices all day? Are your Supervisors constantly in meetings? Are Supervisors reading and analyzing reports rather than meeting with employees? Be sure that your Supervisors are spending time with their employees in order to drive change for your business.

### 5. Spend Time Mentoring Your Mentors.

Watch and listen to your Mentors communicating with your front-line employees. Is the word choice positive and passionate? Is the tone inflected to show enthusiasm? Is the body language positive to show interest and engagement? (Smiling, nodding head, open arms instead of crossed arms, etc.) Are there probing questions being asked to show concern and involvement? These are key behaviors that must be demonstrated in order to be inspiring and help others succeed.

### 6. Meet With Each Mentor.

Once you have observed each Mentor coaching the employees, sit down with each Mentor individually and come up with a mentoring plan. Each of your Mentors has strengths and opportunities for improvement. Some of your Mentors may not be using inspiring words. Others may not be modeling the desired behaviors. Others may not feel comfortable communicating with employees regarding behaviors that need to change. Communicate with

each Mentor what the focus behavior is that you would like to change. Set a time frame for changing that behavior and hold each one accountable for making those changes.

The success of your business is hinging on the skills of your Mentors. If your front-line Supervisors are simply checking time sheets, participating in meetings or reading reports, you are not gaining the greatest return on investment from your Mentors. Your Mentors are the key to driving change in your business. Help your Mentors to learn how to mentor with the mission of driving change and producing higher performance!

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