

Mentor's magic

Urmimala Banerjee discusses the various aspects of mentoring with VK Madhav Mohan

Real wealth is measured in terms of relationships, and not by bank balances or share values," says VK Madhav Mohan. The management mentor is known for his experiential workshops that stress on both professional and personal growth. With mentoring becoming an integral part of the corporate scenario, Mohan's ideas have found newer avenues. He feels that leaders need mentoring the most, as they operate under a great deal of stress.

He travels around the world to give discourses on economics, management, leadership and personal development.

Big Break spoke to Mohan about the various aspects of mentoring:

Need for mentoring

Globalisation has increased the demand for better performance at the workplace, which has resulted in higher stress levels. Similarly, burnouts are commonplace, and employees hop from one job to another in search of better salaries. This makes it tough to retain employees on a long term basis.

Mentoring guides and motivates youngsters, while reducing their stress levels. Personally, I don't think it's a good idea to provide incentives for mentoring, as it's a part of leadership.

A mentor needs

A mentor should have in-depth knowledge and experience in many fields. S/he should preferably have a background in sports, as it creates a better understanding of teamwork, performance and failure. The individual should be non-judgemental, compassionate, unselfish and understanding.

S/he needs to have the patience to

hear out others problems and empathise with them. Moreover, s/he should have the capacity to give without expecting something in return.

Barriers to mentoring

Mentoring is not a superficial exercise; it flows and develops from a genuine concern for others. A mentor can't have a rigid mindset, s/he continuously needs to evolve and grow. Plus, s/he should be a role model for others to follow.

Relationship building

My concept and approach to mentoring is an amalgamation of the

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responsibility of the top management to find a mentor for themselves and their organisation.

Ironically, the top management has the maximum need for mentoring, as they don't often receive guidance, feedback, decision support or ideas from anyone within the organisation.

A mentor can help them identify their flaws in leadership, strategic thinking and decision making. Also, a mentor who can help in resolving interpersonal conflict and disagreement at the top of the pyramid.

Getting it right

The crux lies in selecting the right mentor. Constructing a mentoring programme is quite easy. Mentors shouldn't consider themselves as bosses, but rather as force multipliers. The focus of the programme should be on building relationships that deliver results. The mentor should derive satisfaction from contributing to the success of people, and from his/her personal growth during the process.

Leaders need it!

Leaders need mentoring the most, as they operate in a strategic vacuum without direct access to personal and leadership guidance. Hence, they feel lonely and stressed out and therefore feel the need for encouragement and nurturing. Most of the time people are not looking for solutions but for people to hear them out. Stress is more all-pervasive than you think!

Benefits of mentoring

The mentor derives satisfaction from contributing to the success of others. Plus, s/he has an increase in the depth and range of personal experiences that result in personal growth.

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