



JANET B. MATTS, LLC
...enhancing what matters to you

Coaching and Mentoring

Assumptions:

- Coaches mentor and Mentors coach
- These roles are not mutually exclusive, either/or, they overlap
- Each business will need to define the roles and choose titles according to local experience and culture
- The definition and title is less important than getting the needs of the person met

Similarities:

- Both are individual relationships for the purpose of growing and developing personal and organizational competence
- Ideally, in both cases, the individual seeking development chooses their own mentor or coach, often with recommendations from others
- Both coaches and mentors bring an expertise to the relationship that supports, motivates and stretches the person seeking development.
- Coaches and mentors have experience in the areas in which they build relationships that allows them to guide others along the same or similar path
- Both have high credibility and high integrity; they are authentic in their dealings with others and have a presence that creates a comfortable environment for learning
- Both coach and mentor also gain from the relationship and the satisfaction of seeing the person develop.

Distinctions:

- **Mentor** comes from Greek mythology and implies a relationship between a young adult and an older, more experienced adult who helps the younger adult learn to navigate in the world of work. The younger is a novice or apprentice to a more advanced, expert, and authoritative adult. The mentor plays the role of teacher, sponsor, host, patron, guide, exemplar, counselor, and supporter. Today, mentoring relationships have grown to include all kinds of work relationships with a focus on development, regardless of age or seniority. Peer mentoring is one example.
- **Coach** is a later but still ancient term from the 1500s when the word was first used to mean a conveyance for a valued person from where he is to where he wants to be. Coaching has been widely used since in sports and more recently adapted to organizational environments where coaching is a practical, goal-focused learning process to improve performance or behavior. Coaching is said to be the first profession to arise directly in response to the acceleration in the rate of change. So, coaches help people to cope with change so that their performance and the performance of the organization are enhanced. They play the role of questioner, challenger, facilitator, observer, planner, interpreter and supporter.



Coaching and Mentoring

- **Mentoring relationships** are often informal and often last over many years, developing into friendships that continue long after the work relationship has ended. They are primarily advising relationships based on the wisdom and experience of the mentor to assist with understanding the values, customs and culture of an organization in which the mentor has a history, stature and influence, as well as knowledge of who the key players are and how to get things done. In a peer relationship, this may be very helpful to a new hire to the organization and gives the more experienced colleague a chance to reflect and add value not only to the individual but to the team as a whole. Mentors are rarely in the “business” of mentoring, usually volunteering their time in a desire to help others. They may feel responsible for the advice they give, but are rarely measured and, unless the mentoring is in a direct report relationship, are not held accountable for the results.
- **Coaching relationships** are more formal and have a fixed duration. They usually begin with a contract for services, which includes the frequency and duration of the interaction as well as fees to be paid. These relationships can also last over an extended period of time but work tends to be re-contracted at regular intervals. They are primarily evoking relationships based on the needs of the person being coached to better understand performance issues or gaps in personal effectiveness. The coach usually brings a well-defined process, which normally includes an assessment of the person being coached in order to gather information on coaching issues that can be fed back to the individual and discussed. Often coaching results in personal insights about behavior and performance that lead to specific development plans and actions designed to build new competency. The coach uses questions and challenges to create new behavioral awareness in the individual that sheds light on development needs. Coaches do not guarantee results but they are often measured by the client and the organization on the resulting changes and feel accountable for assisting the person being coached in making visible improvements in areas needing to be addressed.

You Might Use a Mentor When:

- Seeking advice on your career options
- Learning the ropes
- Needing to tap into someone with influence
- Wanting an orientation to a new culture
- In a new role or at a new level in the company
- Needing to learn the unwritten rules or politics of a situation

You Might Use a Coach When:

- Seeking to understand your behavior and its impact on others
- Needing to improve your current performance
- Wanting straight feedback
- Looking for someone to challenge you and your thinking
- Wanting a breadth of perspective and experience
- Seeking help with creating a development plan