



CORNERSTONE CONSULTING

**Mentoring Matters:
Briefings for Business Leaders**

**Topic:
How Mentoring Helps With Change**

QUESTION: HOW DOES MENTORING HELP INDIVIDUALS DEAL WITH CRISIS AND/OR CHANGE?

As cliché as the phrase may sound, “people need people”!

Many institutions and organizations offer programs, counseling and counselors to help their employees deal with issues concerning change, whether it is catastrophic, downsizing, outplacement or even sometimes, just a departmental reorganization.

Many programs that are offered are excellent choices to provide information and even specific exercises to help individuals deal with crisis and/or change. But after the program is over and the counselors are gone, what do we do? How do we take what we have learned in these programs or seminars and *personalize* it for ourselves, not the organization or group, but for “me”?

The main difference between “teaching” and “mentoring” and “coaching” and “mentoring” and sometimes, “counseling” and “mentoring” is based on a **RELATIONSHIP**.

Mentoring is a relationship between two individuals. Even if the focus of the mentoring initiative is Team Mentoring, there is still a majority of the time that participants have a one-on-one focus.

This one-on-one focus provides an opportunity for individuals to get the specific, targeted, focused attention they may need or want. In a good mentoring relationship, if I am the Mentee, I know that my Mentor is focused on my needs and me.

In addition, if I am the Mentor in this relationship, my Mentee can easily provide the same support for me. When an individual is undergoing any type of change, it can be a great supportive feeling to know that someone is focused on *me...on my needs*.

- My Mentor and I will have a specific, targeted and focused *Plan* that will assist *me* in my growth and development – whatever that growth and development needs to be.
- My Mentor can be the individual that I just *talk* to when I need someone there *just for me*.
- My Mentor can be the individual that can help *me* to focus on specific areas of growth and development – I don't feel like I am “one of the crowd” or “lost in the crowd”.
- With my Mentor, I know that *I* am not alone in the change (whatever form it may take).
- My Mentor provides *me* with direct information and experiences that are designed to meet my needs.
- My Mentor helps *me* to build a degree of confidence through his/her guidance, assistance and support.
- My Mentor helps *me* to network and gain information contacts that will assist *me* now and in the future.

When I know that there is someone there just for me – *my Mentor* – then I can face change much more easily.

BUSINESS ISSUE: MENTORING AS A SUPPORTIVE SOLUTION DURING TIMES OF CHANGE OR CRISIS!

Many individuals are still dealing with the crisis that enveloped our nation on September 11. Things are getting better, but articles are still continually being written about the sociological and psychological effects of this event.

Each individual deals with this type of crisis differently, but one common element that is vital has to do with *human contact* and communication with another *human being*. We need to “talk it out”; we need to know that others feel the way that we do; and we need to know that we are not alone.

In addition to the September 11 events, we find that we are continually dealing with events that come in a “crisis” package – individuals being killed at random, accidents occurring that we never believed could happen, events happening to friends, family or the person who lives *next door* or *down the street*. If it doesn’t affect us directly we find it’s possibly close to our own lives.

Many organizations are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars for programs, counseling and counselors to help their employees deal with these issues. But after the program is over and the counselors are gone, what do we do?

A mentoring relationship can be the answer.

The ability to have another individual to talk with and use as a sounding board – an individual that you do not report to, do not have to worry about his/her impression or judgment of you -- or just someone that provides **support** just for you can be very useful.

These are the catastrophic types of events that happen in our lives, but others, simple (but not simple) “organizational change” can have some of the same affects. It may not be “life threatening”, but it is certainly “psychologically” threatening. Many individuals are dealing day-to-day with organizational change that also leaves them in a state of crisis.

The word we hear continually on a daily basis (and it seems sometimes hourly basis) is “**change**”; the phrase of the decade is “**change management**”; and the question on everyone’s mind, is “How do we **manage change**?”.

When we initiate any type of change into an individual’s life, we create a type of crisis. It may not be as devastating as a terrorist attack to the world overall, but to the individual that it affects, the impact can sometimes seem pretty overwhelming.

Even if the “change” is good, it still takes an adjustment of some kind on the part of the individual affected.

So what can we give to individuals to help them through change, whether it’s individualized, local or global?

Again, a mentoring relationship can be the answer.

Again, the ability to have another individual to talk with and use as a sounding board – an individual that you do not report too, do not have to worry about his/her impression or judgment of you - or just someone that provides *support* just for you can be very useful.

Questions or feedback - please contact us:

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