



## Coaching vs. Mentoring

By Karen Frost

Do you know if you need a Coach or a Mentor?

Some of the most frequent questions I am asked by People Managers relate to the differences between coaching and mentoring. "Do I need a coach or mentor?" and "What is the difference between coaching and mentoring"? Where the mystery and confusion comes from is the interpretation in the definition of each. For example, what is generally regarded as coaching in the private sector and predominantly in the UK, is often referred to in the education sector and in North America as mentoring.

So rather than getting hung up on the definitions dependant of where you are in the world and which part of an economy you are working in, I think there is a better way of looking at it. In their widest sense, both coaching and mentoring are a series of conversations to help someone achieve their goals and maximise their potential. These conversations could use a variety of approaches from a person being managed, taught, coached, mentored, counselled, or indeed using the therapeutic professions. So I like to consider both coaching and mentoring as a continuum of approaches sat somewhere in the middle, rather than as distinct and separate from each other. To further help with our understanding, I much prefer to move towards thinking about coaching and mentoring as Directive versus Non-Directive in what's actually happening in the relationship. The more Directive approach to coaching and mentoring is about offering feedback, giving guidance and even instructing an individual of the best way forward. The more Non-Directive approach is where a coach and mentor may be mainly listening to gain understanding or asking questions to raise awareness.

A few years ago I worked with a Chief Executor of a UK based charity. This CEO had 'come through the ranks' and had quietly developed leadership and management skills throughout his career. At our first session he confessed to me that for the first time in his career he felt alone – almost as

though there was now an imaginary 'tripwire' across the door to his office and that staff from all sections of the charity had stopped talking to him, thus creating a feedback vacuum. My role was therefore, to be Non-Directive to enable the CEO to come to terms with the loneliness of leadership and to find alternative strategies to this issue, and to listen to how he was currently leading, and where required, share learning and give feedback and advice on style. I believe I was both a coach and a mentor in each of our sessions.

So when a Senior Manager is looking to employ the support of a coach mentor – there are a couple of key requirements to consider:

1. Identify what the specific needs of the Senior Manager are. Do they need a Non-Directive approach to raise their awareness and to come to decisions or do they need a sounding board, come advisor to help them? Or indeed, do they need both in the one person?
2. Do they need a short-term intervention to get them through a 'crossroads' in their career or an advisor and confidant who has the experience and skills to ask a powerful question when required or knows when to give a sound bit of advice.

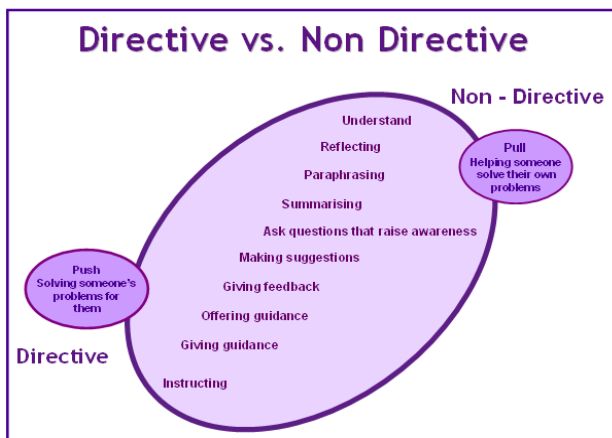
The key thing is not what the support is called; simply that it is the right person for the job. When working in the education sector I call myself a Mentor; in the private sector I refer to myself as a Business Coach. The context is different, the issues are similar. I simply use all the approaches from non-directive to directive, as and when required, to enable the person I am working with to be the best they can possibly be.

Karen presented her thoughts at a Masterclass on the Differences between Coaching and Mentoring at the HR Directors Summit on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2009 at the ICC in Birmingham. She was accompanied by Damian Pearce who was, until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008, the HR Director for McKesson Corporation and was Karen's live case example of when to use each of the techniques. Karen has been working as a coach and mentor to Damian for the past two months. After the Masterclass they received a number of compliments on their session from the HR Directors who elected to come to the Masterclass such as .....

*"I just wanted to say how refreshing and pragmatic your Master Class was. It was very brave of Damian to be coached live, but it was so real and engaging."*

*"It was very brave of Damian to agree to be coached in a live session like that but how useful it was to see and hear what actually happens in coaching."*

This was the first time the World Trade Group had introduced Masterclasses and as Karen was leading on one of the first of them during the two day conference, there was a 'secret shopper' in the audience. Again, feedback was excellent and as a result next years conference will have more Masterclasses to compliment the main speakers.



Based on Myles Downey's "spectrum of coaching skills".

# What makes a team really perform?

By John Frost

What makes a team really perform? Roles, goals and functions are often the focus of attention, but the real glue that binds a team together to create great performance is the emotional strength of the team. Factors like trust, emotional resilience, communication and leadership are all critical success factors in teams that consistently deliver results.

There is no doubt that a high performing team needs a clear understanding of their goals. It is also true that each team member should have an understanding of their role, function and key deliverables as well as an understanding of what they need to do to support the deliverables of their colleagues in the team. Many teams focus on this first because, if anything, it is the easiest element of team performance to establish. And yet it is also true that teams with very clear goals at an

## Inside this edition

**COACHING VS MENTORING** – Karen Frost looks at how to decide whether to coach or mentor a senior business executive. The article explores the differences between coaching and mentoring and how do you decide which approach to use for the development of senior executives.

**WHAT MAKES A TEAM REALLY PERFORM?** – John Frost answers the question on team performance in this enlightening article.

**THE PRIVILEGE OF LEADERSHIP** – In his article, Simon Hollington describes 'leadership' as an interplay of power, accountability and responsibility. However, it is in dealing with people that responsibility transcends into privilege.

**MANAGING EXPECTATIONS** – Just how does one do this especially when 2009 is not going to be an easy year? In this article Simon Hollington makes the case for where there is difficulty, there is also opportunity.

**THOUGHT LEADERS** – In this issue of Voice Simon Hollington reviews Cam Marston's book entitled 'Motivating the 'What's in it for me' workforce'.

**ON THE COUCH** – Karen Frost answers the question posed by a HR Directors of a business going through change who wants to provide the right form of support for staff.

**FINAL THOUGHTS** – Looks at what effect bad bosses have on their staff's hearts.

early stage of their development do not always deliver. What derails a team in reality is very rarely that they don't understand what they have to do to get results. It is more often that they have not put energy into how they have to be.



In Drexler and Sibbet's *Team Performance Model* (1999) goals, roles and deliverables are only considered after the key emotional strengths that will bind the team together. Their first stage is orientation – why am I here? This covers aspects such as team purpose and how the team will add value to the business. It also covers the team's identity and values and aligns the people with those values. In reality this means developing a set of values that will guide decision making and underpin the team's performance. Does your team have a set of values or principles which act as a guide for decision making? Do you use team or company values to measure individual performance as well as bottom line contribution?

Their second stage is about trust building and creating mutual trust, respect and support for each other. Trust has a direct link to performance. Without it a team will always underperform. As Covey points out in *The Speed of Trust*, when trust is high the speed at which the team performs increases and therefore its costs reduce and it makes more bottom line contribution. What is the level of trust in your team right now? What does it feel like working in your team, is it a positive or a negative experience? Where do you spend your time and energy; on value added activities or worrying about the quality of the relationships in the team?

Communication is an important element in creating trust. Ultimately this is about being open and honest - saying it as it is. Often times we belittle those around us by suggesting that we will hurt their feelings if we are honest with them. In truth we are only protecting ourselves. And in teams, if people are not open and honest about not just what they think about a situation but also how they feel about it, then the team will underperform. By holding back we are in effect sabotaging the team's performance. Sabotage is a strong word to use but it's true. What would you say if you knew that you would get a positive outcome for yourself and the team? If there is a gap between your internal dialogue (what you are thinking and feeling) and your external dialogue (what you are saying) then you are making the choice not to be open and honest. None of this is easy but the art of tough conversations, when mastered, has a dramatic effect on a team's performance. Only by naming the elephant in the room can we have a chance of dealing with it!



# The Privilege of Leadership

By Simon Hollington

Just before Christmas, I spoke to a long standing colleague who had recently moved into a new role in a different organisation. His first few months had been something of a shock. Just weeks into his new role he was told by his head office to cut costs and headcount in the face of the economic downturn, and far from looking forward to developing the business and taking it to new heights, he was seen as a hatchet man brought in by head office to decimate a successful business.

"That's the privilege of being a leader" I said in response to his rather sorry tale of woe. "I'm not sure being a leader is a privilege at the moment!" was his retort, and it started me thinking. Leadership comes with three principal components: power; accountability; and responsibility and that latter component is nowhere more important than in dealing with people. It is here that the privilege of leadership really comes into play.

Perhaps the starting point is to look at a typical approach to leadership. Back in 1960, Douglas McGregor hypothesised that people were either Theory X or Theory Y. Theory X people came to work to do as little as possible and had to be controlled, measured and cajoled to work, while Theory Y people naturally sought to do the best they could and simply needed to be guided. Of course the theory is bunkum (to quote Henry Ford) as people don't fit into neat little boxes, but leaders often treat people as though they do. Some time ago I read of a business leader called Randy McGurk who led a business that had a chain of fast food restaurants in the South West of the United States. His approach was the "2% Jerk Factor". Believing that most of his team of assorted cooks, waitresses, and cleaners wanted to do a good job, he argued that he should base his approach around them, not the 2% of his team who were "jerks". His experience was that if he treated people well, they responded accordingly, thus disproving Theory X/Y. Incidentally he also found that the 2% of jerks didn't last very long as his employees quickly made it clear what was expected of them, and he didn't have to resort to complicated and prescriptive performance management policies and procedures! However if a leader treats all their employees as Theory X they will appear to be exactly that. So there's no such thing as Theory X/Y people, only Theory X/Y leaders.

So where does privilege come into this equation? Well go back to the responsibility that comes with leadership. The greatest responsibility that a leader has is for people. But what about bottom line profit I hear you cry! Yes of course that is a leader's responsibility, but he or she doesn't actually produce that. Leaders guide, direct, command, produce policies and make deals, but rarely actually produce hard cash. It is the employees who do that. So if a leader wants to increase bottom line profit, or growth, or shareholder return, they need people to do that for them. Without talented people to deliver the product, all of the leader's best endeavours will come to nought. The greatest privilege a person can be given is the care of other people. The RSPCA run a campaign that goes along the lines of "A dog is for life, not just for Christmas" and so it is with people. Employees are for the good and bad times and a leader's prime responsibility is to ensure that they are engaged, have the tools, skills and freedom to give of their best (Theory Y) and are then supported. In good times and

bad, if employees feel that they are supported they will continually surprise and delight you with their talents and efforts.

There's a simple formula in terms of performance.

$$\text{Performance} = \text{Potential} + \text{Support} - \text{Interference}$$

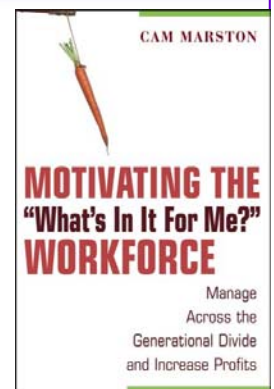
A leader's responsibility is to maximise the support and minimise the interference whether in good times or in bad. It is at times going to seem like a thankless task as my colleague found last year, but it goes with the territory. Being given the privilege of guiding, directing, liberating, and at times controlling the work destiny of others is the greatest privilege a person can be afforded. Perhaps all leaders' objectives for 2009 should be to remember that privilege!

## Thought Leaders

### MOTIVATING THE "What's In It for me?" WORKFORCE by Cam Marston

Reviewed by Simon Hollington

Cam Marston has spent the last 8 years exploring the different styles, aspirations and approaches of the different generations that influence the workplace of the western world – and his book makes entertaining yet at the same time disturbing reading.



Published by: John Wiley & Sons

The world is still, by and large, the same one created by those who came back from World War II determined to create a world fit for heroes. A military attitude meant that hierarchy, loyalty and security were watchwords and success was measured by promotion. Their successors – the Baby Boomers – left the world pretty much alone though their watchwords were long working hours and teamwork with success being measured by the security that time and pensions provided. Their successors – Generation X - though have changed the rules. With a tenuous sense of loyalty to organisations, and much greater focus on lifestyle (which is how they measure success), they are much more "me-centric" than their predecessors. Their successors are the New Millenials. With technology as part of their DNA, with no loyalty to organisations only to people, they work to fund hobbies.

Unfortunately, most leaders in organisations are still Baby Boomers who despair of the laissez-faire attitude of both Generation X and New Millenial employees and view potential and capability in terms of their own work attitudes and approaches. This book examines how leaders can recognise the different motivators of the different generations and adapt their style to suit. It will make uncomfortable reading for many, but if we need to find ways to connect with and develop the younger generation, this book will point the way.

# Managing Expectations? It's all a Question of Balance

By Simon Hollington

All of the pundits agree – 2009 is not going to be an easy year. But where there is difficulty, there is also opportunity. I accept of course that those from Woolworths, parts of the construction industry, the financial sector and others that have gone into administration or closed entirely probably will not think that way at present, but looking back to other difficult times, change however painful, has also provided opportunity. Think of the technology in South Wales that has replaced coal mining.

In good times, leaders have the ability to bask in the warm reflected glow of all their employees' efforts, but when the going gets tough, leadership can suddenly become a cold and lonely place. There are no doubt many of you who are in that place at this very moment. So what can a leader do in these difficult times?

A few days ago I listened to the CEO of a South West house builder. If any sector has had a difficult time over the last year, construction (particularly house builders) must be one of them. Yet he was very upbeat. He argued that though times were tough and they were making some redundancies, he was confident that his firm was going to survive and that it would come out better placed at the end of this slump (the end of 2009 or the beginning of 2010 by his estimate) and that some of his competitors will have fallen by the wayside. His role as leader he argued was to present an upbeat and positive face to everyone – especially to his employees. This message contrasted sharply with that of another MD I spoke to in the engineering sector some 4 years ago. He had just arrived as the MD to cut the headcount by some 30% and move the slimmed down business into brand new premises. He reasoned that he shouldn't show a positive face to the employees because it would be a metaphorical slap in the face to those he was making redundant. These two very different approaches highlight the difficulties - again – that leaders have to face.

So what is the right approach? Of course the answer is that there isn't one! It is all a question of balance. There will be times and situations that demand an upbeat, positive approach, and others where a more sensitive style is required. What is important is that leaders have to manage expectations. There is no point in being totally positive when there are redundancies that have to be made, but being sombre and downbeat isn't right either. What people really need is some sense of certainty when there is a great deal of uncertainty (both

human needs which are often in conflict) and that is where leaders come in. So what certainty can you give?

- ▼ That you will do your best to avoid headcount reductions but can't guarantee that you won't have to make them.
- ▼ That you (and the leadership team) are looking at all avenues to ensure that the company doesn't just survive but thrives and is ready to take advantage of the recovery when it comes.
- ▼ That you want everyone to look at ways to make the internal processes more effective and external customer service even better.
- ▼ That you need everyone to be careful about spend but not to take it to extreme (I heard of one company recently that cut all marketing spend until sales improved!).
- ▼ That you will continue to invest in your most precious resource (people) so that they are better placed to cope with difficult times.
- ▼ That you are actively seeking the best people to come and join you so that you have even more competitive advantage.
- ▼ That you can guarantee that if you do have to make redundancies the process will be carried out effectively and sensitively and that you'll do your best to help individuals find alternative employment.

These are all promises that you can make which will provide some semblance of certainty and will help manage people's expectations. The worst possible approach I think would be to shut yourself away, take all the weight on your shoulders and keep people guessing. That's when rumour and counter rumour run riot and people both stop working and caring. So be positive about the things you can be positive about, and realistic about those aspects that are going to be difficult. People will respect you as a leader for that realism, and will gain inspiration from your positive approach. It is just a question of getting the balance right!



# On the Couch

with Karen Frost

*"I am a Senior Manager of a US owned multinational business with various sites in the UK.*

*The UK business has been through a number of 'restructures' over the past three years and is currently going through another to rationalise, once again, the staffing numbers in order to reduce costs.*

*We are now starting to make managers redundant who have strong people skills and at the same time increasing the size of teams to be managed. Now we have a group of managers who I would describe as 'specialists' in Belbin terms; people who have excellent skills in their specialist fields but who are not natural leaders and managers of people and, given the choice would stay in their 'comfort zone'. This group of new managers find themselves leading large teams often based across sites situated in the UK, US and other European countries.*

*How do I go about giving these managers the support to develop their people skills in a relatively short period of time without subjecting them to large open training and development programmes; or enrolling on an MBA where they may be even more outside their comfort zone?"*

There is a saying: 'Leaders are born, not made.' I disagree with this. I believe, given the right support, in an open and honest culture, most people can develop their leadership and management skills. How to do this is the critical question. Firstly, treat people as individuals and develop a personalised learning programme that sets out clear objectives to 'up-skill' them in both the hard and soft skills they believe they need to do the best possible job. Then, give them the support and scope to achieve their goals. Tim Gallway developed a formula for maximising potential:

$$P = P - I$$

where

Performance = Potential – Interference.



At VBL, as you will have read in Simon's earlier article on 'The Privilege of Leadership', we have developed this further into:

$$P = P + S - I$$

where S = Support. The extra dimension guarantees increased success and boosts confidence. People with specialisms – or in MBTI terms Managers who are Introverted Sensing and Introverted Thinking do have the potential to develop people skills they need specialist, personalised support to learn and develop. So give them personalised support which comes in the form of a coach and mentor; someone who is a trained coach who can also tutor and mentor the 'specialist manager' to learn people and management skills to compliment their technical competency. The coach needs the experience of leading and managing people, has skills and learning they can share with the 'specialist manager' and a coaching style of working that enables the individual to learn quickly. A six month programme, designed exclusively for the 'specialist manager' with a combination of monthly sessions and support in between by telephone and email, means the manager being coached can:

1. Learn new specific approaches and models
2. Practice these skills immediately
3. Seek guidance from a role model and mentor on hand for a six month duration
4. Seek advice and support when it is most needed such as in a crisis situation
5. Learn a coaching style of management
6. Get feedback regularly and has a sounding board
7. Is not a major distraction to their senior manager who has plenty to do anyway!

For more information on Tim Gallway's work have a look on: [www.theinnergame.com](http://www.theinnergame.com)

## Final Thoughts

### Bad Bosses Hurt the Heart

The longer you work for an inconsiderate boss, the more damage your heart may suffer. A recent study of 3,000 men found a strong link between poor leadership and the risk of heart attack and serious heart disease. Previous studies have shown that unfair bosses can drive up employees' blood pressure, increasing heart disease risk. In addition, stress can foster unhealthy behaviours like smoking and eating a poor diet, which can also lead to heart disease. Of the men surveyed, those who viewed their senior managers as least competent had a 25% higher risk of serious heart problems. Those who had worked for a bad boss for four years or more had a 64% higher risk.

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