

Is A Mentor An Influencer Or An Agent Of Change?

Interesting thought! Is a mentor an agent of change? Is a mentor an influencer or perhaps not? Mentor and Coach, Doug Lawrence, discusses and examines each of these statements.

Is a mentor an agent of change?

I look at this from three perspectives. The first looks at mentoring from the aspect of changing behaviour as an action outcome. If I as the mentor take some form of action with my mentee there will be an outcome of some sort which would result in change with my mentee. Whether I am listening to what they are saying and asking the right questions to guide them to the answer or perhaps use critical thinking skills then I have initiated some form of change in how they approach various situations. It doesn't always have to be a change in behaviour. It can be something else. Perhaps by storytelling you have shared something that they may have experienced. Their self-esteem improves as well as their confidence and they leave the mentoring session stronger and better equipped to deal with the challenges that lie ahead.

The second perspective is the change that you will evoke as it relates to yourself. Mentoring is a two-way trusted relationship where the mentor and mentee will learn and grow personally and professionally. It is through the mentoring process that you will learn more about yourself as you spend time with your mentee. You will, through reflection, see learning opportunities that will result in changes in how you approach situations in the future. As a mentor you can be an agent of change as it relates to self.

The third perspective is the mentor acting as a change mediator when organizational change is taking place. You become the bridge between chaos, the employees and management as change unfolds in the organization. All too often in change management situations we do not communicate well with our employees. They do not feel part of the change and feel as though the outcomes were forced on them rather than through collaboration. The change mediator is the sounding board for all stakeholders that are part of the change management initiative.

Is a mentor an influencer? When I look back to all the people that I have spent time with in a mentoring relationship/arrangement I would have to say that a mentor does have a lot of influence. Remember we are guides. Our mentee must decide where they are going. We can then ask questions, story tell and actively listen to be able to provide the best guidance we can. We can be the influencer but ultimately we want the mentee to make the decision. We want them to leverage their critical thinking skills. If they stumble and fall, we will pick them up, dust them off and use this as a learning opportunity. If you are a mentor, you are being entrusted to provide the right type of influence to your mentee. It is an honour to be able to do so. Treat it as such!

The “Gift of Mentoring” is a powerful tool that can create life-changing moments. “Embrace the power of mentoring – can you afford not to?”

Ref: Doug Lawrence

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