

Coaches & Mentors

THE COACH'S ROLE

- Tend to focus on developing people in their current role.
- Tend to coach individuals within the person's direct area; they are usually the person's manager, but they can also be peers who have a particular skill.
- May teach organizational reality to people (the organization's unwritten rules) and introduce people to their networks, usually as it relates to the job at hand.

THE MENTOR'S ROLE

- Assist people in preparing for their future; tend to be longer-term relationships, extending beyond current role.
- Tend to be outside of the person's direct area; usually more experienced, longer-term employees who are viewed as successful; may also be external to the organization.
- Mentors tend to teach organizational reality to people (the organization's unwritten rules) for the organization as a whole, and introduce people to their networks.

REQUIRED SKILL SETS - The terms "coaches" and "mentors" are sometimes used interchangeably as they have similar skill sets and they share a common focus in developing people to maximize their potential. Skill sets include the following:

- **Facilitator:** Taking the time to listen to people.
- **Assessor:** Learning to give constructive feedback regularly, not just during performance appraisals.
- **Forecaster:** Talking about ways in which staff need to prepare themselves for the future.
- **Advisor:** Discussing ways people can grow in their current jobs, not only through promotions or lateral moves.
- **Connector:** Exposing people to staff in other parts of the organization.

HOW TO FIND A COACH

- Identify individuals who can provide you with insights and assistance in the areas in which you would like to develop.
- Identify role models who excel in the areas in which you want to develop.
- Observe behaviours of role models; show an interest in obtaining guidance/feedback on an informal and regular basis.
- Actively use your manager as a coach for overall feedback on performance and guidance in areas in which they excel.

HOW TO FIND A MENTOR

- Identify role models within or outside your organization whose leadership you admire. Ask those who know them to introduce you. Show a willingness to learn from them by asking smart questions and being open to their feedback.
- Think of what you can offer them in return - research, new ideas, different perspectives on the organization.