

# Mentoring Matters

February 2011

Volume 2 | Issue 1

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**Mentoring at Work**

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## The Heart of The Matter


It's February, a month when our thoughts turn to people who hold a place in our hearts. We think about special relationships - people with whom we feel a deep sense of connection, people we care about and care about us, and those who have made a difference in our lives.

Mentors can be that "someone special" to us. At its heart, mentoring is a connection, care and sincere commitment of two people who come together to forge a reciprocal learning relationship in which they work collaboratively as partners in developing a mentee's skills, abilities, knowledge and/or thinking.

February is a perfect time to think about your mentoring relationship and what you can do to deepen your personal and organizational mentoring practice.

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## Call For Mentoring Best Practices

Do you have a mentoring best practice or know of someone who does? [If so, we'd like to hear from you.](#) We are offering an autographed copy of The Mentor's Guide [hyperlink], The Mentee's Guide [hyperlink] or Creating a Mentoring Culture [hyperlink] to our first place winners. Second place winners receive a Mentoring Excellence Toolkit of their choice. [Click here](#) to send us your best mentoring practice in one of the following five categories: mentor, mentee, mentoring partnership, organizational department, or organization. Announcements of winners will be made on or about May 15, 2011.

## Mentoring At Work: National Bank of Arizona

Interview with Dianne James  
Senior Vice President, Director of Human Resources  
National Bank of Arizona

National Bank will be hosting two public Center for Mentoring Excellence [mentoring workshops](#). We asked Dianne James to speak with us about its mentoring program and her own mentoring experience.

**MM:** How does your program work?

**DJ:** National Bank of Arizona's formal mentorship program identifies six mid-level managers for development and then pairs them with a senior manager based on the mentee's learning goals. The pairs enter into a twelve-month agreement. Every six months a new group begins with another six pairs.

**MM:** Dianne, how have you as a leader benefited from mentoring?

**DJ:** Mentoring has allowed me to share my own experiences, particularly in the area of coaching and feedback. It has also provided me the opportunity to learn more about the strengths of participants - particularly the mentors.

**MM:** Why are you personally so committed to mentoring?

**DJ:** Simply put, it's the right thing to do. Our organization was built on the strengths and talent of our employees and what better way to preserve our history and culture than to pass that along to the next generation.

**MM:** Dianne, why is your organization such a strong advocate of mentoring?

**DJ:** Mentoring is one of the primary ways National Bank of Arizona supports employee engagement. It is one way to preserve our culture and grow the next generation of leaders. We also believe that mentees will use this experience to pay it forward. Finally, it provides a wonderful opportunity for employees across the state to interact with one another when they otherwise may not have a chance to do so.

## Mentoring Questions in Search of Answers

**Question:** What are three things I can do to improve my mentoring relationship?

**Answer:**

1. Make sure you and your mentoring partner(s) are energized and excited about getting together. If your relationship has stalled out or has become stale neither partner will put the time and work into it. Address the issue at your next meeting.
2. Focus on goals. Progress and results are what keeps a mentoring relationship purposeful and meaningful. What goals are you working on now? Are they still challenging and relevant?
3. Check in with each other regularly and give each other feedback. Start by asking the question, "How are we doing?" Let your mentoring partner(s) respond and identify what is working for them and what could be better. Set some new ground rules or goals to get back on track.

**Question:** My mentor and I really don't know each other very well. Do you have any suggestions to help us get connected?

**Answer:**

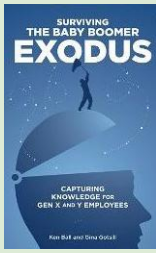
Get to know your mentoring partner better by sharing your mentoring stories with each other. Talk about people who were there to influence, guide and support you along the way. Ask your mentoring partner to do the same. A mentoring relationship is strengthened when both partners are willing to be vulnerable with each other, and to share past challenges, needs and disappointments.

**Question:** How do I deepen a mentoring relationship if it is all virtual?

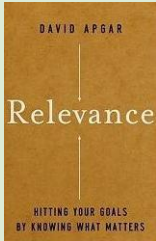
**Answer:**

Make sure you spend sufficient time getting to know each other in meaningful ways and not jump into the mentoring too soon. Try skyping or video conferencing to help move the relationship along. Don't rely solely on emailing or IM-ing to communicate. Pick up the phone on occasion, especially when important or sensitive issues need to be addressed. If there ever is an occasion where you might connect face to face (a conference, meeting, etc) try to take advantage of the opportunity.

## What We Are Reading



[Surviving the Baby Boomer Exodus: Capturing Knowledge for Gen X and Y Employees:](#) by Ken Ball and Gina Gotsill Check this book out if you are interested in learning more about the communication, motivational and learning needs of today's multigenerational workforce. Definitely worth a read!



[Hitting Your Goals By Knowing What Matters:](#) by David Apgar How can you find meaning and expand your thinking? What are some of the new ways you can gain clarity and learn what you need to learn? You'll want to check this book out to find the answers to these questions and more.

## This Month's Blog Topics

### [Keys to Facilitation](#)

Facilitation: Are you up to the task?

Are you asking the right questions?

Facilitation: How adept are you?

[Visit our blog](#)

## Two Mentoring Workshops Coming to Phoenix, AZ

There is still time to register for our Mentoring Workshops being held in February in Phoenix, AZ!

### **Mentoring: Raising the Bar on Performance Workshop**

*This one-day mentoring workshop will help you and your organization address employee development, leadership and diversity goals, and increase business effectiveness and growth potential.*

For more information [click here](#).

[Click here](#) to register

### **Creating a Mentoring Culture: What You Need to Know and Do**

*According to Dr. Lois Zachary, author of Creating a Mentoring Culture, "A mentoring culture is a vivid expression of organizational vitality. It enables an organization to enhance the learning that takes place throughout the organization, leverage its energy, and better utilize and maximize its time, effort and resources."*

For more information [click here](#).

[Click here](#) to register

### **Join us for both!**

For more information [click here](#).

[Visit here](#) to register and join us for both!

To see previous Mentoring Matters Eletters [click here](#).

**A Note to Our Readers:**

We believe that leaders cannot be effective without a strong and ongoing commitment to mentoring excellence. This belief, our passion for mentoring excellence, and our extensive experience in the field with organizations led us to create the Center for Mentoring Excellence. At our virtual center, [www.centerformentoringexcellence.com](http://www.centerformentoringexcellence.com), you will find mentoring tools and resources, expert advice and a forum for sharing best mentoring practices. We hope that you will visit us there and let us know how we can continue to help you raise the bar on mentoring in your organization.



Try it FREE today.