

# Mentoring Matters

November 2015

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AS WE EXPRESS OUR **GRATITUDE**  
WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT  
THE HIGHEST APPRECIATION IS  
NOT TO UTTER WORDS  
BUT TO LIVE BY THEM



*John F. Kennedy*

## Readers' Book Club Guide Starting Strong: A Mentoring Fable

In a nutshell, Starting Strong invites you to [listen in on six mentoring conversations](#) as they unfold over the first 90 days of a new mentoring relationship.



Thanksgiving is not just a holiday. It is a place marker that reminds us to appreciate the goodness of our lives and the people who make a difference in them.

We are grateful to our monthly Mentoring Matters subscribers. We appreciate and honor your commitment to mentoring and all you do to promote, support and enhance mentoring in your organizations.

We are grateful to our clients around the world who are passionate about mentoring and dedicate themselves every day to promoting mentoring excellence.

We are grateful for the abundant joy of collaboration that energizes and stimulates our creative work at the Center for Mentoring Excellence.

***How do you sustain the energy and momentum you created at the start of your program for the rest of the program year?***

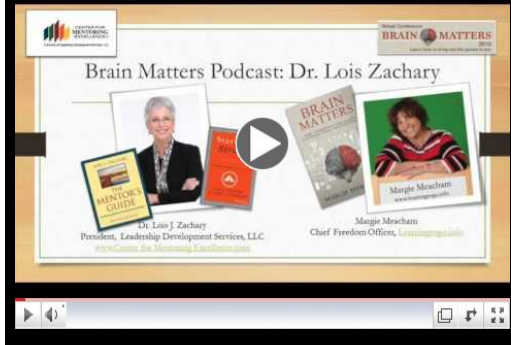
In this month's e-letter, we focus on one solution to this frequently asked question: the Mentoring Roundtable.

## Consider This Situation

You've held a kickoff mentoring training and received positive feedback on your initial efforts. Mentors and mentees have been meeting over the past few months. There are signs of progress and impact on the mentees' growth and development.

**Appreciation can change  
a day, even change a life.  
Your willingness to put it  
into words is all that  
is necessary.**  
- Margaret Cousins

### **Tune in to Dr. Lois Zachary's Brain Matters Podcast**



### **Two Conferences You Won't Want to Miss!**

Learn all about  
**Bring Out Genius Through Mentoring  
with Dr. Lois Zachary**  
4pm MST, November 11, 2015



[\*\*REGISTER HERE\*\*](#)



**International Mentoring  
Association's 2016 Conference**  
will be held at the Auburn University Dixon  
Hotel and Conference Center  
**Auburn, Alabama on April 13 - 15**  
[\*\*Register Now\*\*](#)

**Pre-Conference  
Workshop Speaker**  
Dr. Frances Kochan  
*Presenting: Cultural  
Factors that Impact*

Four months into their mentoring relationship, Marco and Bennett were still struggling to articulate a SMART mentoring goal. When Marco signed up for the mentoring program, he hoped to get more direction and clarity about his career path. Bennett, his mentor, following the guidelines and recommendations of his program, spent the early meetings asking Marco questions to probe his interests, motivations, talents and skills. He applied the tools he was most familiar with to draw out Marco, but Marco still struggled and was unable to nail down an area of interest and commit to a development goal.

Later into the mentoring program, their relationship stalled out. Bennett wondered how other mentees were progressing on their mentoring goals and if anyone else was experiencing similar frustration. Marco wondered if he was letting his mentor down by his inability to commit to a direction.

If this situation sounds familiar, a best practice, called the Mentoring Roundtable, may be just the solution that you are looking for!

### **What is a Mentoring Roundtable?**

Mentoring roundtables are learning and support sessions that promote active and timely sharing of best mentoring practices among a peer mentoring group (mentee or mentor). Participation in roundtables encourages benchmarking of progress relative to others in the group.

Mentors and mentees report that participation in mentoring roundtables creates great value for them. They find that sharing and learning what other mentor or mentees are doing validates their approaches, and sparks new ideas for them. They are surprised and relieved to find that they aren't the only ones struggling (like Bennett in setting SMART goals). In addition, they receive the support they need to stay on track and feel successful.

Here are some best practices to ensure the value and effectiveness of your sessions.

#### **1. Start with Ground Rules**

Encourage roundtable participants to generate their own ground rules. You may want to offer some of the following to help keep the session on track.

- Respect the confidentiality agreement between mentoring partners.
- What is discussed in the roundtable stays at the roundtable.
- Listen and ask questions for clarity.
- Be open to new ideas that will enhance your current relationship.
- Everyone contributes.

#### **2. Facilitate the Process**

- It is best to have the program facilitator, mentoring trainer or neutral party facilitate the session.
- Hold separate sessions, one for mentors and one for mentees.
- Sessions generally last an hour to an hour and a half.



*Mentoring*



**Pre-Conference  
Workshop Speaker**

Dr. Lois Zachary  
*Presenting: Making the  
Most of Mentoring*



**Keynote Speaker**

Dr. Brad Johnson  
*Presenting: What  
Master Mentors Do  
and Top Ten  
Ethical Quandaries for  
Mentors*

- Use a variety of techniques and formats to generate responses and engage the group.
- Record responses and distribute results after the session.
- Allow for the free exchange of ideas rather than trying to control participation.

### 3. Wrap Up

- Ask participants about their take-aways. For example, what is one thing you are taking away from today's Roundtable that will enhance your mentoring relationship?
- Summarize some of the best practices that came to the table.
- Introduce a new practice that will move relationships forward.

### In Your Back Pocket

You will want to be prepared with questions to kick start the conversation.



1. What goals are you and your mentoring partner working on right now?
2. What is the most satisfying aspect of your relationship?
3. What is the single most effective practice contributing to the success of your mentoring relationship?
4. What is the biggest challenge you are facing right now?
5. What question or issue can the group help you with?

### Roundtable Tips

- Resist the temptation to turn the Roundtable into a training session.
- Send questions for participants to think about in advance.
- Distribute an article to prime the pump for your next roundtable.
- Share or demonstrate a technique or success strategy to help address a major theme.

#### 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.

