

CasinoPros / Mentoring

EXECUTIVE MENTORING

In today's corporate world, we are often confused by two different terms and support systems meant to help in executive development. One term is executive mentoring a support program often used inside corporations to assist young executives. It's almost like having a "big brother" or "big sister" inside the company for new or emerging managers who are trying to develop their abilities and competencies. Mentors provide advice on corporate politics, career development activities, and how to get along with bosses, peers and subordinates in general. These programs, quite popular in the last decade, are less so today for three distinct reasons:

1. Time pressures on corporate executives are at an all-time high. Most mentors feel it requires too much time and energy, especially when the young executives are not in their department or under their control.
2. Most mentors are not trained to be good coaches; therefore, the programs often fail. Advising an executive takes skills that many senior managers simply don't have. Even when mentors received training on giving feedback and offering advice to young executives, the training was evaluated as inadequate.
3. But the number one issue was that the mentor often waited for the young executive to come to him/her with any problems. Young executives quickly learned that it might not be a wise political move to talk to anyone about a problem in corporate America. In addition, the mentoring program often caused politically charged situations when mentors talked about those they mentored.

EXECUTIVE COACHING

Executive coaching has become popular in the last five years because many young, emerging executives – though exceptionally bright, talented and capable – have not received adequate training on how to become leaders. Therefore, many corporations retain outside executive coaches to work "one-on-one" with emerging executives needing training on becoming better communicators, planners, supervisors, etc.

Unfortunately, coaching has had a negative connotation, as it was usually used only if there was something wrong with a person's skills. Many times it was the last resort before a company decided whether or not to terminate an executive.

The good news is that executive coaching is now used primarily for corporations to develop and retain the talent they need for the company to grow. Rather than mentor, executive coaches usually set up feedback systems and specific training programs for the overall developmental support of the individual executive.

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

There are major differences between executive coaching and mentoring, with coaching being from the outside, and mentoring from within, the corporation. While executive coaches usually provide expert training and developmental experiences, mentors give political instruction, as well as education about the inner workings of the company. Both processes have merit, but it is important for young executives and corporations to recognize the differences.

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