

Cross-Cultural Mentoring

Mentoring CoP
6th January 2020

Dr. John Ommani
SIL Global Scripture Access Services Director

Introduction

1. Mentoring cross-culturally:
ethnicity, age, gender, organizational culture
2. I see mentorship as leadership so I draw from books that talk about leadership as well
3. In mentoring much of what we achieve is in terms of attitude change and not just passing on skills and knowledge
4. Mentoring is about succession, sustainability, growth and impact.

What do you notice?



1. Perspective matters!
My thoughts are meant to **help** us **think through** the issues **together**.
2. Let us all contribute to the discussion.
3. These slides are based on my own experiences as I have been mentored and as I mentor others in my own small way.

General Observations

1. Aim of mentoring cross-culturally: equipping the mentee for better results
2. In any mentoring relationship, there are always challenges
Power vs lack of it (knowledge, skill, experience, etc.)
3. Good mentoring is based on good/growing relationships
4. It is a delicate balancing game
5. Mentoring requires a lot of trust and honesty from each party

Key questions

1. What result(s) do we expect in a mentoring program?
2. What factors would hinder the results?
3. What can we do differently to ensure results?

Essential elements

1. Trust
2. Respect without prejudice
3. Flexibility
4. Non-judgemental attitude
5. Appreciating differences
6. Openness
7. Vulnerability
8. Do with and not for

Benefits of CC Mentorship

1. Learning opportunity for both mentor and mentee
 - a. Set goals together
 - b. Fuel performance and challenge negativity
 - c. Facilitate thinking patterns that drive results
2. Time for self-reflection
3. Growing self-esteem
4. Increase in skills and competencies
5. Contextualized training/learning

How can it be done?

1. Set clear expectations
2. Focus on positive elements
 - Destructive elements are not allowed or handled sooner.
3. Talk openly but respectfully about the differences
4. Equip the person, add value, let them love working with you
5. Let them be who they are without compromising quality

How can it be done?

1. Drive what you desire to see
2. Manage emotions on both sides positively and in a timely manner
 - Do not fight, flee nor freeze but discern
3. Set boundaries in a loving tone
4. Enhance empathy: Hard on work issues, soft on the person.

How can it be done?

1. Apply right kind of pressure
2. Allow for right kind of fear
 - Fear can be a positive motivator
3. Present positive consequences
4. STRENGTHEN and PRESERVE relationships and get results.
5. Allow room for growth

Downside

1. Bias and assumptions
2. Differences in beliefs, values, and expectations
3. Blame game: our cultures blamed for our failures
4. Generalizations
5. Remember: “I am NOT the supervisor.”
Stop behaving as one.
6. Set clear expectations and notice signs of a dysfunctional mentor-mentee relationship early on.
7. Avoid over-dependency.



Reading list

1. Bryant L. Mayers, 2011: Walking with the Poor.
2. Cloud Henry, 2013: Boundaries for Leaders.
3. Lingenfelter, S. 2008: Leading Cross-Culturally: Covenant Relationships for Effective Christian Leadership.
4. W.Brad Johnson and Charles R. Ridley, 2004: The Elements of Mentoring.