Thesis: *Empowering Leadership and Management through Coaching and Mentoring*

Executive Summary

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The premise of this dissertation is coaching and mentoring for both professional and personal growth. It facilitates making a strategic shift in organizations to a coaching and mentoring management style. As executives and managers experience the process and master their own growth potential, they will develop a greater awareness and take more responsibility for their actions. The effects of increased awareness and responsibility can filter through the organization as executives and managers begin to coach and mentor others. The shift to a coaching and mentoring management style will have been initiated at the top of the organization with a commitment from the executives and managers.

Today's organizational structure is rather different to the old managerial hierarchy - and so too is mentoring. These days mentoring, and coaching, are more accurately, if loosely, defined as the facilitation of an individual's learning process, enabling the individual to take ownership of their own development. Organizations are increasingly adopting mentoring as an effective way of developing staff in the 'real world'. Training has its place in the acquisition of new skills but is less suited to fine tuning skills and to exploring specific individual situations or behaviours in anything close to 'real time'.

The organizational benefits coaching and mentoring manifest themselves in many and varied ways - greater productivity and profitability, improved communication, morale, two-way loyalty and reduced staff turnover. These benefits do not come without responsibilities, however. There are many factors influencing the success of a mentoring programme. The scope of this dissertation provides mentors and mentees with a clear framework for the relationship and to ensure that participants have the appropriate skills and attitude to perform the role.

The purpose of this is to measure 'executives' and 'managers' perceptions of the coaching and mentoring processes, to explore what components of the process are most effective and whether coaching sustains behavioral changes.

The aim of the above will be to achieve the following objectives:
- To understand precisely what is meant by coaching; distinct from other development interventions
- To identify the requisite skills, knowledge and personal qualities

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- To identify any improvement in personal performance that can be reasonably attributed to the coaching intervention
- To evaluate whether such benefits are worth the investment of time and financial resources
- To make recommendations for managers on how to identify, develop and manage skills to enable individuals to be more adaptable to change
- To make recommendations for future research

Literature surrounding the problem statement included an understanding of what is meant by coaching and mentoring, as well as the requisite skills, knowledge and personal qualities.

The research design used was cross-sectional survey design using a non-random sample of MBA students at Damelin International College of Postgraduate Business Sciences who have been or are currently being coached/mentored. The research was able to identify any improvement in personal performance that can be reasonably attributed to the coaching intervention and was able to evaluate whether such benefits are worth the investment of time and financial resources.

The theory states that mentoring plays a major role and is critical in the development and upward mobility of employees from designated groups. This means that business must accord importance to the process of mentoring, in order to achieve its transformation goals. The mentoring relationship is clearly an interaction between mentor and mentee, while the mentoring process focuses on the steps that must be implemented to make the overall mentoring process work.

The contribution of this study reflects that through effective mentoring programmes transformation can come about in ways that are significant for all employees, and change can be implemented in non-threatening and trust-building ways. Mentoring forms a pivotal tool in today's workplace, since it assists with organizational transformation and building global competitiveness. The research indicates that:

- 66% of staff across various sectors are *dissatisfied with training they receive*

- 75% of staff across various sectors *receive no coaching or mentoring*

- 80% of staff believe that a *coaching and mentoring programme will accelerate their career development*

Research confirms that individuals who have been mentored are more likely to be promoted.

It also indicates that those who have been mentored take more risks because they have reviewed risky situations with their mentor and because they feel a greater sense of protection from the consequences of mistakes Zey (1984).

Some recommendations for management for future research include understanding the needs of various cultures and races with regards to mentoring and coaching. Barriers to the success of coaching and mentoring across cultural and racial differences need to be identified, and understood so they can be eradicated. These barriers will no doubt have a huge impact on mentoring or coaching success in South Africa. Future research should also look at gaining a clear understanding of the current perceptions of black and white employees (whether mentors or mentees) in the marketplace.

The purpose of leadership is taking the organization from where it is to where it has the potential to be (The Leadership Academy: 2003). No leader will be able to fulfill their purpose without the organization and the leader's followers having the core competence and capability to change and journey through the transition to realize their full potential.

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