



Facilitation Focus

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CAN MENTORING PROGRAMS FAIL?



[Bill Gates](#) has been quoted as saying: “Every business owner (and their staff) needs a Mentor, and everyone needs a coach”.

And According to certified life coach and licensed professional counselor [Elizabeth Arboleda](#), “Everyone needs a life coach because there is power in someone else.”

Within a more modern context, most of us might be familiar with the concept of a business mentor or facilitator as being someone who has more experience or knowledge and is willing to share their insights with both groups and individuals.

However, it is only recently that the term “Business Facilitator or Mentor” has been recognized and the term is often freely understood to encompass a broad range of activities and services from business angels to non-executive directors.

Business Mentoring is an effective way of helping people to gain more knowledge and confidence to help them achieve success in their chosen business venture.

It is a partnership between the facilitator and the individual or group. It is a relationship based upon mutual trust, respect and understanding.

Some of the common goals of such a relationship include:

- An understanding of confidentiality
- An agreement for honesty
- An experience of listening and learning
- A commitment to a working

- partnership
- An opportunity to lead by example
- An open-mind for flexibility

The prospect of starting something new can be daunting, especially in the case of mentoring programs **where it has been proven that getting it wrong can be worse than not even trying.**

However, as with any program or project, preparation is key. And if you already know why some mentoring programs flop, you can take steps to avoid the same pitfalls.

[Mentorloop](#) believes there are 7 common reasons why mentoring programs fail:

1. The program doesn't have a clear goal
2. The program isn't customised to the individual or organisation's needs
3. The program has no buy-in or support from senior management
4. Poor matching
5. Lack of competence
6. Low engagement
7. Lack of feedback and incorrect measurement



[Dorothy Dalton](#) who is CEO of [3Plus International](#), believes that in some circles many consider mentoring to

have become a worn out cliché.

Some pundits suggest that women are over-mentored and under sponsored. It's true that women the world over lack active sponsors. But over-mentoring is a luxury mainly found in large global, multi-

nationals. 99% of European businesses are SMEs and here women struggle to find role models, let alone mentors.

I am frequently asked by companies to evaluate their female talent pipelines and their mentoring programmes.

I have observed a number of reasons why mentoring programmes fail:

- Inadequate training for mentors and mentees.
- No benchmarks for success
- Wrong structure
- Incorrect matching
- Establish benchmarks between mentor and mentee
- Failing to define and manage expectations
- Beat stereotypes

When mentoring women it's important to ensure that mentors receive unconscious bias training and are aware of the sand traps that women can commonly fall into. This applies equally to female mentors who can inadvertently endorse sexism.

A well-constructed mentoring programme in line with organizational goals can make a long-standing impact on the results and culture of a company, as well as the careers of the mentees.

A mentoring culture can also be a key component to a strong employer brand.

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Company Culture is Essential for a Successful Business



Every company has its own unique culture, made up of the working environment, the special ways that things are done and the people who make up the team.

The culture of a company can affect lots of aspects of the business, from talent attraction and the retention of existing staff, to the brand's reputation among the public and the industry.

The company culture plays a large role in your employees job satisfaction, as if the work environment doesn't match their personality and working style they could experience a clash of interests.

Therefore, for a business to build a workforce of staff who are motivated to achieve their best and are going to stay with the company long term, it's important that they hire people based on their culture fit.

A few examples of a really strong company culture:

□ **Walt Disney Corporation** are one of the most widely known brands in the world and they have built a fantastic employer brand by getting their employees involved.

The brand focuses on making dreams come true, so staff are trained to treat all of their guests like royalty.

□ **SouthWest.com** focus on providing exceptional customer service and one of their employees volunteers at Ronald McDonald housing, making balloon animals for kids.

□ **Zappos** pride themselves on the great customer service that they provide and their staff are well known for going the extra mile to help customers.

How does culture affect the hiring process?

□ **Talent attraction** – College students were willing to receive 7% less in starting pay, if they could work for a company who shares the same values as themselves.

□ **Employee fit** – Employees who are hired based on their fit with the company culture are more likely to build stronger bonds with colleagues, contribute their ideas to the organisation and stay at the company for longer.

□ **Employee retention** – 46% of new hires quit or are fired within 18 months. Some of the reasons are a differing preference of communication style, the way feedback is given and the amount of

openness that is expected.

How does culture affect employee happiness?

□ Companies with a strong culture have less staff turnover than those

who don't.

□ Happy employees can be as much as 31% more productive.

□ Employees who are actively engaged in their company culture are more likely to receive a promotion and report high levels of job satisfaction and engagement.

How can your business create a great company culture?

□ Acknowledge good work from your staff, as employees are more likely to continue putting in a high level of effort if they feel their work has meaning and is appreciated.

□ Offering incentives to encourage employees can actually be counterproductive. Qualities that work as better motivation are autonomy, mastery and purpose.

Employee motivation can be improved by allowing employees to manage their own work, offering training opportunities and making them feel like their work matters to the business as a whole.

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Something To Say?



It never ceases to amaze, that the person credited with more Wisdom than any other man born in human history, had to be given specific instructions from his father on how to construct a building! I am referring of course to the 1st Temple in Jerusalem, which was constructed - according to historians - by King Solomon over 3,000 years ago.

It is recorded that not only did King Solomon receive from his father King David the blueprints for the building, the surrounding rooms and all the storehouses but also a clear description of the weight and types of precious stones that were to be used within its precincts. In all, historians believe the construction took around seven years, and required 30,000 workers overseen by master builders.

Such is the magnificence of this structure a modern day estimate of the silver and gold stored in its precincts has been calculated at over \$2.1 billion.

This might suggest that if the importance of having access to clear and concise records, was critically important for even the most-wisest person of all, how much more may this be the case for us lesser beings today?

In the fast-paced world in which we live, where things can change in a heartbeat and we sometimes

have difficulty remembering on Friday what we did on Monday, having access to all your “important stuff” 24/7- could turn out to be a godsend indeed.

Now, if you would like to explore any whether this narrative has any relationship to your own important stuff - be that business or personal- we welcome your enquiry, as we believe we can assist.

We would also welcome your completion of the survey we have just posted as we attempt to gain your feedback, and so better align our service offerings with our clients and prospective client`s expectations.

We would like to reward the 1st three responders with a \$20 coffee club voucher- so look forward to hearing from you.

John Cannon -MBA
Principal JC Estate Mentors
Member of AIBEF

“Focus” is an Excellent Read

Thank you for sending me this great publication. I find “Focus” informative and diverse.

Like one of your other readers (*Roy Knight*) wrote in the July edition in the *Something To Say* column, I also enjoy reading the articles from you and your members, because they cover such a wide range of topics and really offer genuine expert advice.

The various articles that your

business expert authors contribute are not only exceptionally interesting, but are very, very helpful.

I have tried a couple of their suggested methods of marketing ideas, not only for myself, but also for some of my clients.

In fact lately, I have been sending “Focus” out to my client database, with some good feedback from a number of them.

I have been a management consultant for over 20 years now, and work with both small and medium firms, and I would be happy to offer to contribute an article from time-to-time if this is appropriate.

Again, thank you to all involved for this excellent e-zine and also the time and effort taken to put this together.

Geoff Stevens
G&A Stevens
Maryborough QLD

Thanks for the Info

Just a note to thank you for the helpful information contained in your magazine. I’m a client of one of your members, who sends your magazine onto me. I find it easy to read and some of the ideas in the numerous articles are very useful and valuable.

Peter Halley
Solar For Life
Coffs Harbour, NSW





Half of all Small Business Owners Feel Chained to Their Business

By [Michael Guta](#)



A new SME survey from [Ontraport](#) reveals half of small business owners feel chained to their business.

Furthermore, they say their business would be at a standstill even if they were to leave for just a week. This is in great part due to the number of tasks they are handling on their own. And here is where automation can come in to address these tasks and free up some precious time.

Small Business Owners Can't Leave Their Business

There are many repetitive tasks small business owners can delegate to automation.

According to the Ontraport survey they include, responding to customers and prospects, setting up appointments, reviewing and storing leads, sending and confirming payments and refunds, and tracking business statistics.

And in return, this will free up more time to focus on more important duties and of course enjoyment.

This is exactly what Landon Ray, founder, and CEO at Ontraport, points out in the release. Ray says, "With the right technology, business owners can earn back valuable time to focus on the bigger picture."

To that end, Ontraport says the answer is to systemize and scale with automation to grow and get fewer headaches.

Ray adds, "Automation does the job of multiple employees, handling tasks that entrepreneurs typically take on themselves. The burden of day-to-day tasks should not fall on their plates

when their time and energy is better served elsewhere."

Survey Insights

The data of this survey comes from a pool of more than 500 SME owners, ages 18 and over.

The survey was carried out in June 2021 by Propeller Insights on behalf of Ontraport, which offers business owners a no-code automation platform to manage their business online.

When it comes to spending time on daily tasks that can be automated, 40% said it is anywhere between one and five hours weekly. And for 13% of the respondent, it is an astounding 20+ hours.

So, with so much time, what would they rather be doing? Not surprisingly, almost two-thirds or 62% say they will put that time back into their business. But first, they must find the right solution to make this happen.

Simplifying Automation with the Right Solution

According to Ontraport, the key to simplifying automation in your business is through a single platform.

And nowhere is this more evident than in the survey as 84% said they would switch to a single platform. This is because 64% of them use between two and five software tools to manage their marketing, sales, and overall online presence.

And this has great potential for complications and added waste of time.

Improving Productivity is a Challenge for Small Business

Because they often feel overburdened, 60 percent of

business owners said they would like to have more time over less work.

When asked about the key productivity challenge they face, most business owners (39 percent) said finding paperwork is their biggest time waster. Poor time management (38 percent) is also a bane for most small business owners.

Interestingly, small business owners seem to know what exactly needs to be done to become more productive.

Sixty-four percent feel they need to delegate more responsibility while 56 percent believe communication is key to enhancing their productivity.

Small Business Owner Productivity Tips

As a small business owner, you're most likely inundated with urgent tasks every day. Getting everything done on time is a challenge, but it doesn't have to overwhelm you.

There are some simple steps you can take to ease your work pressure.

For example, you can start making lists to prioritize your tasks and plan properly. It is also a good idea for you to develop your employees' leadership skills to allocate your work to different resources.

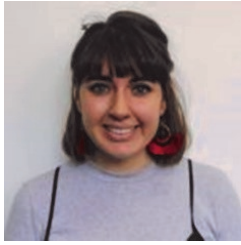
To understand whether you're doing well or not, assess your productivity from time to time. Once a month, go back to your list to see outstanding tasks that require your immediate attention.



Why Leaders Need a Mentor Too

By Maggie Coggan

is a journalist at Pro Bono News covering the social sector



[Maggie Coggan](#)

Overseeing a team of staff and keeping an organisation afloat can be tough at the best of times, but over the past 18 months (give or take), it's been especially hard.

Many leaders in the for-purpose space are feeling burnt out, overwhelmed, and exhausted, finding it difficult to stay on top of their own work, as well as support the wellbeing of their staff.

While some may see seeking outside help and guidance from a mentor as a failure of their own capabilities, many successful leaders will tell you the exact opposite.

To learn more about the benefits of finding a mentor as a leader, we sat down with Beth Weatherly from [Kilfinan](#), an organisation that matches mentors to mentees.

Hey Beth! So tell me a bit about why finding a mentor as a leader is so important?

The concept of burnout certainly isn't new to people who work in the social sector. But more and more we're hearing people talk about it. Obviously, in the COVID environment the psychological pressures on leaders right now are very high.

And it's times like this when the needs and the support systems around the CEO are ignored in favour of staff and communities, because that's what leaders do, and it's completely understandable. So this is beyond resilience, it's about being robust. Mentoring itself is a discreet, flexible, and really impactful way to lift the support system for the CEO.

And what benefits does having a mentor bring to a person's leadership?

I think a common misconception around mentoring for maybe the uninitiated, is that it's just about a one way exchange of skills and knowledge.

But mentoring is actually a transformative space. It's a confluence of minds, it's generative, it's collaborative, it's independent from your staff, independent from your board, your executive team.

It's a really critical space to let off steam and get the support and confidence boost that you need in order to make all of the really tough decisions that leaders are facing right now.

You just can't put a price on the value of that. It's also different from going through a standard leadership program, because mentoring is long term and really flexible and adaptable to whatever is happening in the moment, which is exactly

what leaders need right now.

Is it a problem that leaders might avoid seeking a mentor because they feel as though it's making up for something they lack in their own personal skills?

I think there is a bit of a stigma around mentoring. That people who seek mentoring maybe don't have the skills or capacity to do the job on their own. And it's really just not true.

We have leaders in our mentor and mentee pool who have been working as a CEO for a decade or more, and they still get immense value from mentoring or being a mentee because it's about collaboration.

It's about combining the strengths, skills and experience of proven leaders.

What advice do you have for a leader for seeking out the right kind of mentor?

When it comes to finding an excellent match or knowing who could best support you, it's less about what you think you want to learn and more about who the mentor is and are they invested in your success?

Do they have skills and a mindset that complements and challenges your own? ■



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When Increased Sales Is A Bad Thing...

Editor's Note:

Brett Chamberlain is an International Speaker; Author; Advisor and Consultant, and is one of Australia's leading business improvement consultants and management advisors.

During a 15 year consulting career he has been responsible for dramatically improving the profitability of literally hundreds of businesses around Australia and overseas, including many major corporations and hundreds of smaller businesses, by showing how to master fundamentals that deliver profitable growth.....Brett is also an Associate Member of the [AIBEF](http://www.aibef.org.au).

It happens all the time. The business owner looks pensively at the chart on the wall, showing sales results over a period of time. Sometimes it's an upward trending chart. Other times the chart is flat or heading 'South'.

Whatever the case, the business person tries to interpret the chart to work out what they should be doing next. Increased promotional activity? Increased production? Different pricing?

A new marketing strategy? A whole new product!?

Problem is, the LEAST valuable decision-making tool in your toolbox is the sales chart, or consideration of sales results in general. Sales results are usually the WRONG measure of performance and a horribly misleading indicator of what should be done next.

Yet sales results are, by far, the

most commonly considered data.

Don't think that's true? Try this test: ask the next dozen business people you meet, "How are your sales figures compared against last month?" Most will be able to confidently tell you sales are up, down or sideways.

Then ask, "What's your gross profitability in dollars this month, compared against last month?" In the majority of cases, you'll see the business person blink ... and then go quiet. (They might have a vague notion of the difference, but most will be nowhere as clear about their \$GP as they are about their \$Sales.)

That's a worry, because \$Sales is a measure of *activity* whereas \$GP is a basic measure of *productivity*. If you have to make a choice between 'active' or 'productive', where would you prefer to invest your time, money and effort?

\$Sales tells us how active things have been; how busy the business is. That is absolutely not the same as \$GP, which gives a basic idea of whether all the running around has been worth the effort.

Business people who 'get' this idea have a much better opportunity to make powerful decisions which produce results where it really counts.

For example, would you rather have a 10% increase in sales, or a 5% increase in GP?

The two are not necessarily directly linked. If I discount my

price, I *might* make more sales transactions and *might* even generate more \$Sales revenue.

But will that result in improved \$GP?

To find out, look at things like this...

I sell for, say: \$100 / unit

I buy for, say: - \$70 " "

So my gross profit is: \$30 " "

Reducing my price by 10% will mean a sell price of: \$90

After my cost of: - \$70

My GP is reduced to: \$20 / unit

"But the lower price will result in increased sales," say some. Possibly true. The lower price might produce more transactions.

In fact, let's say it generates a very significant 20% increase in sales. (Realistically, in the vast majority of cases, a mere 10% discount would be unlikely to generate such a positive difference.)

If we made 10 sales at full price, we made $10 \times \$30GP = \$300GP$ from \$1,000 in \$Sales revenue. After a 20% increase in sales as a result of our discount, we make $12 \times \$20GP = \$240GP$ on \$1,080 in \$Sales.

See the problem? Sales transactions and \$Sales are up – and so is your 'busy-ness'.

Yet the actual reward for your effort is way down. You're working harder and earning less.

Watching the \$Sales will never alert you to this. Watch your \$GP instead and you'll enjoy a much better grip on your business – and you'll be able to make much better decisions as a result.





AIBEF Code of Conduct

All AIBEF members are obliged to maintain professional standards and ensure the legitimate interests of their clients are paramount. They must ensure that any conflicts of interests are avoided and confidentiality maintained. Members are required to adhere to the highest standards of facilitation, advice, referral, information provision, support and client care through undertaking ongoing professional development

The Process of Becoming an AIBEF Accredited Facilitator

To be an accredited Member of AIBEF, simply submit your application to the AIBEF Secretariat.

The AIBEF Accreditation Committee then assesses your experience and qualifications and will advise you of the Institute's decision.

Often this decision is partly based on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) where the Committee takes into account the equivalent experience of the candidate. The new AIBEF Member is then provided with a certificate of Membership and is invited to have their name listed on the Institute's website, and can immediately use the post nominal *M.A.I.B.E.F.* after their name.

Whether it is a concern about business start-up or growth, a marketing issue, HR or financial issue, a member of the AIBEF can provide effective guidance and support to entrepreneurs, business owners, communities or organisations.

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About the Institute

Benefits of Membership Some benefits include:

Recognition of the professional qualifications of Member of the Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators (MAIBEF) and Fellow of the Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators (FAIBEF) in Australia and New Zealand.

The ability to use the post-nominals, MAIBEF and FAIBEF in promoting their activities and achieve:

- credibility/validation as an enterprise facilitator
- a premium for services
- client confidence and direct benefits to their business secure and regular employment/use as a business facilitator and enhanced market/business opportunities

Personal confidence and increasing business:

- through business support organisations including training providers and centres increasingly requiring counsellors/advisers to be professionally trained and experienced facilitators
- achieved through the formal recognition of practitioner skills
- by becoming preferred contractors.

The sharing of knowledge and skills and growth of new business through:

- peer networking and interchange of ideas with other Members and Fellows



- peer mentoring of other Members and potential Members
- enabling contacts (formal and informal) with peer organisations and alliances

Regular electronic Newsletters and communications that:

- disseminate news of major developments in the business support industry
- notify Members of relevant conferences and events
- keep Members up to date with current issues
- notify Members about opportunities in professional development

Development of business facilitation skills and knowledge through the provision of:

- notification of opportunities to participate in ongoing targeted and specific professional development
- access to professional development in recommended training courses
- the best and most up to date information on business and training/facilitation.

Representation to others (government and non-government) on Members behalf on issues affecting business facilitation.



A.I.B.E.F. Established 24 years

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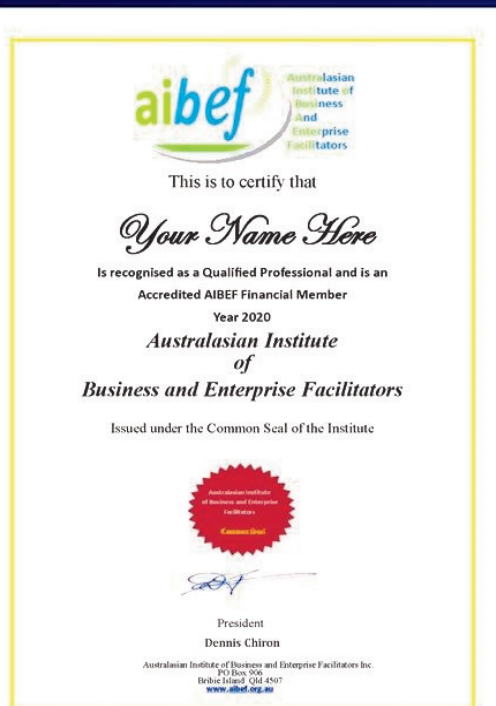


You can gain instant formal recognition of your Knowledge, Skills and Experience from the Institute

“The business advice industry in Australia and in many other countries is self-regulated, and virtually anyone can call themselves a business or enterprise facilitator, advisor, coach, mentor or consultant. Business Facilitation and Coaching has copped its fair share of flak in recent years, primarily because the industry has a reputation for attracting spruikers and touts.” Denise McNabb, Sydney Morning Herald

- Do you provide Business Advice, Coaching, Consulting, Training, Mentoring or Facilitation Services?
- Are you looking for recognition of your facilitation skills?
- Wanting to give clients the confidence and confirmation of your skills and experience?

The Australasian Institute of Business & Enterprise Facilitators Inc. has recently launched a program to enable business advisors, trainers and mentors to achieve industry-recognised accreditation without the need for lengthy study or expensive courses. If you have the experience and knowledge, and have delivered over 200 hours to clients you could be eligible for Recognised Prior Learning, and be *Fast-Tracked for AIBEF Membership*, and be entitled to use the Post Nominals MAIBEF



MORE INFORMATION?

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The Australasian Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators (AIBEF) was founded in 1997 as a result of the recommendations of the Industry Task Force on Leadership and Management Skills.

In their report, entitled *Enterprising Nation*, the taskforce recommended that: “... a comprehensive accreditation process be established for small business trainers, educators, counsellors, facilitators and advisers so as to upgrade the quality of small business advice.”

It's a fact that, at the moment, the business advice industry in Australia is self-regulated, and virtually anyone can call themselves a business or enterprise facilitator, advisor, coach, facilitator, trainer or consultant.

Check out Google for instance; there must be a dozen (or more) sites on “*How To Start Your Own Business Consulting Venture*”.

The AIBEF is the Peak Body for Business Facilitators, Coaches and Trainers, and we, the AIBEF Committee, hope to continue the association's great work to further promote the professionalism and quality of our members, and to endeavour to act as a respected voice and advocate for the wider community.

The AIBEF represents a profession that is proud of its independence and confident of the service it provides, committed to continual improvement in the skills and knowledge of our members and Business and Enterprise Facilitators in general, who ably assist in the professional guidance and support of business, enterprise and community development.



Welcome to our Newsletter

Facilitation Focus is an opportunity for Business Facilitators, Coaches, Facilitators, Trainers and Consultants to ask questions, offer answers, and become part of a group where we can all join in peer-to-peer discussions and conversations about challenges, experiences and outcomes. **It is also worth noting that ‘Focus’ can be included in your Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

Facilitation Focus is a publication for a rapidly changing world.

Almost daily, SME's are facing constant changes, and it is vital that the Business and Enterprise Facilitator is current with their expert advice and guidance.

Facilitation Focus has as its main aim to access to a professional network of peers through the AIBEF, and by gaining more insight into business and industry best practices, as well as increasing the focus on the important aspects of their own business, an AIBEF Focus member can accomplish amazing results.



Something To Say?

Thanks for the Info

Just a note to thank you for the helpful information contained in your magazine. I'm a client of one of your members, who sends your magazine onto me. I find it easy to read and some of the ideas in the numerous articles are very useful and valuable.

*Peter Halley
Solar For Life
Coffs Harbour, NSW*

WHO ARE BUSINESS OR ENTERPRISE FACILITATORS?

Virtually any professional, qualified person or organisation involved in assisting entrepreneurs, organisations, or communities to improve their Skills; Knowledge; Business; Staff; and/or Life.

The role of a Business and Enterprise Facilitator is to promote local economic growth by providing support to local entrepreneurs, groups or entire communities wishing to start or expand a small business enterprise or to assist to develop a concept where the community will benefit

The concept of Business and Enterprise Facilitation is a model of development that supports the creation of wealth from within a community by nurturing the resourcefulness of its people.

The Australasian Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators is an international not-for-profit institution that works with entrepreneurs, small groups and / or communities to establish sustainable, grassroots enterprise projects.

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