



Facilitation FOCUS



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Is Mentoring An Essential Leadership Skill?

“It is said that a mentor acts as a role model to the other person by demonstrating traits, skills and behaviours that the person being mentored can emulate.” People Matters **So, what is Mentoring?**

Mentoring is the pairing of an experienced or skilled person (mentor) with a person who would like to improve his or her skills (mentee). The mentor acts as a role model and supports the mentee by sharing knowledge, resources and advice to help them improve their skills. Mentoring can happen in different ways. For example, it can be as simple as an employee showing another how to complete a particular task. Or, it can be more involved where a client (for example: a business owner, or company) commits to long-term mentoring relationships.

There is strong argument that **mentoring is an essential leadership skill**. In addition to managing and motivating people, it's also important that you can help others learn, grow and become more effective in their business, jobs and life. You can do this through developing a mentoring partnership, generally through a personal or professional network



[Ann Rolfe](#) of Mentoring Works who is an author, trainer and speaker with over thirty years experience in adult learning and career development also believes it depends on who you ask. *“Employees thrive when leaders take a genuine interest in each individual, providing honest feedback, opportunities for development and supporting their growth. These behaviours are synonymous with mentoring. Leaders who use mentoring skills are essential to employee engagement retaining and developing talent, and aligning and supporting employee’s goals and performance,”* said Ann.

The main difference between leaders and mentors is the authority that the person has. A leader has a well-established authority over his followers while on the other hand, mentors commonly take more of a liberal approach by providing guidance and leave it to the other person to decide if he wants to practice it or not.



[The Mind Tools](#) Editorial Team believes: *“As a leader, you need to be able to nurture and develop your staff (or your clients). This is why mentoring is a key part of leadership.”* Leadership and mentoring go hand-in-hand. In fact, a person qualifies as a true leader only if he is a successful mentor. If we look at any successful organizations, they create a culture where the acquisition, development, implementation, and transfer of skills and knowledge are highly valued implying that leaders must embrace mentoring for overall organizational growth.



[Jayme Baumgardner](#), Senior Consultant with [Corner Alliance](#) said: *“I value mentoring as an essential function of our society, but also believe it is fundamentally a priority practice of any good leader—to be both a mentor and mentee. It reminds me and reinforces the importance of leadership as a two-way street and the role of leadership in fostering the growth of our next generation of leaders and to continually grow throughout one’s career.”*

Mentoring is something that can be done successfully by anybody in a position of experience. The role of the mentor is simply to nurture the mentee, encouraging them to learn, grow and upskill. This empowers them not only to perform better in their role but progress further in their career. Mentoring is an essential leadership skill. Being a mentor is more than being an advisor or a coach You are a Facilitator of learning and growth, and you are supporting personal development, enriched with knowledge and skills, for your clients.

Why Company Culture is Essential for a Successful Business

This article from [Washington State University](#) explains just how important company culture is and the impact that it can have on employee happiness and attracting the top talent to the organisation.

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% 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. Employee motivation is the level of commitment, energy and innovation that a firm's team hold during the working day. It's as important as it is difficult to track; maintaining and improving motivation in the workplace can be a problem for many companies, as not every task will be interesting. Therefore businesses must find ways to keep their employees engaged, with motivation monitored and nurtured too.

6 Cyber Security Threats To Take Seriously

Advanced Technology explores six common cyber security threats every business needs to take seriously.



Your business's network and data represent prime targets for potential cyber threats. Consequently, understanding the nature of these IT security threats is essential for keeping your data safe.

1. Phishing Attacks

Phishing forms one of the most common and destructive IT security threats. Cybercriminals seek to trick you into revealing sensitive information by utilising ostensibly legitimate emails. They often present disguised links, encouraging you to

share valuable details such as usernames and passwords or download malicious programs. Moreover, a direct and personalised form of this fraud is spear phishing, aimed at specific users. Whaling, yet another variant focuses on targetting high-ranking individuals within an organisation.

2. Ransomware Threats

Next on our list is ransomware, a malicious software type that encodes your files, barring access without a decryption key. With increased Ransomware-as-a-Service (RaaS) business models, even computer novices can launch ransomware attacks, creating a significantly widened IT security threat landscape.

3. Human Error

Importantly, not all threats come from external actors; sometimes, we are our worst enemies. The human error element plays a significant role in causing data breaches. For instance, incorrect handling of information, connecting unauthorised devices, or even casually clicking dubious links can potentially open doors for a cyber-attack.



4. Poor Password Practices

The significance of password security in protecting your organisation's systems and data cannot be underestimated. For example, weak passwords, password reuse, improper storage, or lack of additional IT security layers like multi-factor authentication (MFA) can potentially compromise your IT systems.

5. Malware

Malware, a broad term, covers various malicious software that includes viruses, worms, and spyware that aim to exploit system vulnerabilities. Capable of inflicting damage on everything from basic desktops to complex IoT devices, this threat underscores the importance of regularly updating and securing all systems.

6. Inadequate Network And IT Security Strategies

Lastly, an unclear network and system security plan can render your organisation an easy target for cyber-criminals. Effective security strategies align technology usage and users, ensuring clear, secure digital practices across your business. They factor in potential risks, laying out clear policies, guidelines, and response plans in the unfortunate event of a cyber-attack.

Cyber-Crime Is On The Rise

IT security needs to be a top priority. Businesses that dismiss cybercrime threats risk having critical data compromised and, in turn, damaging their reputation. Therefore, it's necessary to develop and deploy robust, proactive security strategies to mitigate these risks and bolster the security of your organisation's digital assets.

Surviving and Growing In Difficult Times

Staying afloat as a small business can be a constant challenge for any small business at the best of times, but the last few years have presented a whole new world of chaos. While it's impossible to predict every problem that might come your way, there are a few ways to strengthen your chances of business success as we move towards 2024.



Economic Ups and Downs

Economists use the term “**business cycle**” to describe the ups and downs, or fluctuations, in an economy. However, it's always far easier to thrive in an upbeat and expanding economy. Even badly run businesses can make a healthy profit when consumer spending is buoyant. It's when the economy takes a dive that the real challenges rear their “ugly heads” and often, it boils down to your very survival.

Doom n' Gloom Hype

It is so easy to buy into negative publicity and propaganda, and if you believed all of it, you would probably stop getting out of bed in the morning. When everything seems to be doom and gloom it is amazing how there are always bright spots to be found.

A Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

When client numbers are down, some business owners decide that this must have something to do with the economic climate. They might even collaborate with other businesses and reach a group consensus that this is something they can do little about. In thinking this way they stop or reduce their marketing because they conclude "what is the point of marketing if money is tight?" They then make reduced client numbers into a self-fulfilling prophecy. Reduced marketing efforts will naturally lead to reduced client numbers.

Market More NOT Less!

If ever there was a time to increase your marketing it is during a recession, or when business activity is TIGHT ... just like it is RIGHT NOW. Increased marketing improves your chances of maintaining and even increasing your client numbers. While other businesses flounder, you can soak up the clients they miss.



More Marketing Without Increasing Expenses

Just because you increase your marketing efforts it doesn't mean your expenses have to increase too.

There are many ways of marketing your business on a shoe string and many of these methods require your time and effort and not your money. For example writing articles in local newspapers, or “Thank You” cards to loyal customers or Letters to the Editor and submitting them increases your exposure and sets you up as an authority figure.

Stay on Top - Monitor Your Business Performance During a Downturn

Monitoring your business in a downturn involves identifying potential risks to your business, analysing the likely impacts, and then developing a management plan.

As a business owner you have creativity which you use with your clients every day. If you apply that same creativity to your marketing you increase your odds of surviving and thriving during lean times. View your service as a necessity and not a luxury and you will reach those clients who need you most.

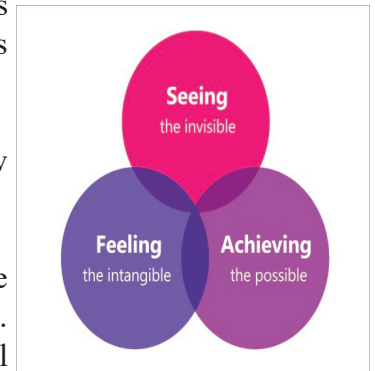
The Power of Positive Thinking

Do you have a PMA? (Positive Mental Attitude)

Attitudes “either move the needle forward or keep it still”. A positive attitude keeps everyone trying new things, feeling brave about brainstorming new ideas, and makes people feel excited to go to work with their co-workers.”

Small business is about success. How many successful business owners do you know who are always negative? ... The answer is probably None!

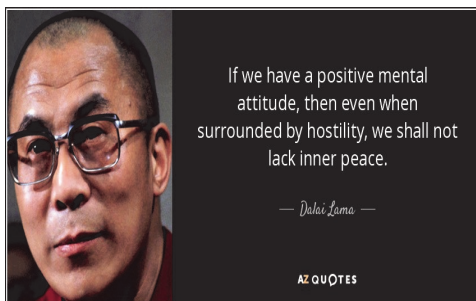
The success of many small businesses is largely dependent on the attitude of the business owner who believes he or she can make a new business idea a thriving reality. Chances are, if they run their business with an ongoing negative attitude, they will have very little chance of ultimately succeeding.



There is power in positive thinking. Don't discount it. Whether a sole trader or a small business owner with a staff of 30, your attitude toward business (and life) will affect the success of your business. The moment you become a business owner, you represent yourself, the business and expectations for success. Your attitude and manner convey your confidence and commitment to small business.

You know, there's nothing wrong with being positive. Sure, lots of people are afraid to be positive, afraid to hope. But please allow me to let you in on a secret (*that we all know anyway*). All the greatest things are created by those who were positive enough to have a vision, positive enough to care for others. Positive thinking leads to a better quality of life, a better quality of person.

I genuinely believe that Positive *thoughts* generate Positive *feelings* and attract Positive *experiences*. Do you agree?



Do you think you're a positive person? A positive mental attitude can improve your health, enhance your relationships, increase your chances of success, and add years to your life.

The fact is most people are bombarded by negativity each day. Sure, it's easy to cast blame by saying you're surrounded by negative people. The reality is: A lot of the negativity is self-inflicted..... influenced by the company you keep and your personal perspective on life's realities.

For many, many years science has supported the theory that there's a direct correlation between a positive attitude and better relationships, superior health, and greater success.

A positive attitude can boost your energy, heighten your inner strength, inspire others, and give you the fortitude to meet difficult challenges. According to research from the [Mayo Clinic](http://www.mayoclinic.org), positive thinking can increase your life span, decrease depression, reduce levels of distress, provide greater resistance to the common cold, offer better psychological and physical well-being, reduce the risk of death from cardiovascular disease, and enable you to cope better during hardships and times of stress.

“Regardless of what you are or what you have been, you can still become what you may want to be” [William Clement Stone](http://www.williamclementstone.com)



Business Mentoring

Connect with an expert through our network of Certified small business mentors.

Whether you are thinking about starting a business or need help growing your existing business, AIBEF Certified Business Facilitators offer valuable counseling, training and mentoring services to help you achieve your goals. AIBEF Certified Business Facilitators are located throughout Australia (and beyond). Connect with one near you.

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Become a Member Join us Today

Are you a Business Mentor, Coach or Facilitator? Are you a professional, and an expert in your field? The Australian Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators Inc (AIBEF) is in the process of updating and modernising our web site, and we are placing a lot more emphasis on promoting our professional, accredited members to the world.

If you are experienced and skilled in your field, and you are not a member of the AIBEF, you might consider that now would be a good time to become a member and profile yourself/your business amongst highly respected and accredited Business Consultants under the banner of the AIBEF.

Provided you meet our requirements, an annual Membership fee of \$49.00 entitles you to a Certificate of Membership; our monthly publication “**FOCUS**”; and approval to use the post nominals of the Institute **MAIBEF**.

Download an Application Form www.aibef.org.au



Australasian Institute of
Business and Enterprise Facilitators

WHO ARE BUSINESS OR ENTERPRISE FACILITATORS?

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

- Accountant
- Advisor
- Bookkeeper
- Coach
- Commercial Property Advisor
- Consultant
- Counsellor
- Dispute Resolution
- Financial Advisor
- H. R. Professional
- Industrial Psychologist
- Insurance Advisor
- Investment Advisor
- IT Consultant
- Lawyer
- Mentor
- Trainer
- Web Designer
- WHS Specialist

..... These are just a few of the qualified professionals and industries who, either directly or indirectly provide advice, facilitation and support to Australian Small and Medium business, organisations and communities.

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Is Your Business Advisor Qualified, Accredited, Experienced and Officially Recognised as an Expert in their Field?



"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

The business advice industry in Australia is self-regulated, and virtually anyone can call themselves a business or enterprise facilitator, advisor, coach, mentor or consultant.

The Australasian Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators (AIBEF) is the Peak Body for Business and Enterprise Facilitation and Facilitators in Australia and New Zealand, and was founded in 1997 as a result of the recommendations of the National 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, mentors and advisers so as to upgrade the quality of small business advice."*

- All AIBEF members have **formally recognised credentials** (accreditation) that recognise their professional reputation and credibility as suitably accredited, skilled and ethical business and enterprise facilitator practitioners.
- AIBEF members are recognised through the use of the respected AIBEF **post-nominals** that convey member status as a professional to be trusted – someone to build a relationship with.
- AIBEF **membership includes many of the best respected enterprise facilitator professionals** involved with business and enterprise facilitation and related support services.
- The AIBEF represents the business and enterprise facilitator profession at **all levels of enterprise** – including private commercial businesses; not-for-profit organisations; government corporate entities and departments of state.

Look for the AIBEF Accreditation with your Advisor, and you know that you have an experienced Professional who is a qualified and recognised expert in their industry.

JOIN US *Become a Member today AIBEF*



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.

Ph: +61 0410 082 201

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 and business 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

Web: www.aibef.org.au

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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 Haley
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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