Mentorship Article Analysis

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SRM 670

What is the Value of Mentoring in a Small Business?

Abstract:

The article seeks to display the range of emotions and reactions that an employee or student encounters when engaging in a structured mentoring relationship. Rather than argue the benefits of the mentoring relationship through the use of statistics, these researchers sought to use the written narrative reactions of the mentee to evaluate the effectiveness of the experience. The held belief was that by allowing the mentee to express his internal reactions through the journaling process, a more candid range of reactions would be recorded and in turn could be analyzed. The study follows a small business manager and leads with the common thought that many small businesses are reticent to engage in these types of relationships. Small businesses tend to have fewer funds and less time to attempt a program that may not yield results which can be seen on the bottom line. Alistair, the small business manager the study followed, did not see an increase in his company bottom line due to his participation in the study. However, the researchers believe that the by analyzing the narrative reactions to the mentoring process and Alistair’s evolving participation over time, a conclusion can be drawn in strong support of the mentor relationship for small businesses.

Critical Analysis:

While the idea of the internship is in the common vernacular, the idea of mentorship has begun to gain traction in many circles of business. Larger corporations, with many departments and large budgets, have found a formal mentor relationship to be useful in grooming the up and coming employees. However, in small businesses, where budgets are generally small and time is even smaller, there has been some resistance to add a program that may not directly translate to the bottom line. This article, in its use of narrative to survey the mentorship experience, seeks to demonstrate that the program does have merit despite the lack of improve revenue. As can be seen by following Alistair’s reactions throughout the experience, he does transition from a bit cynical and standoffish to much more willing and open to partake in and gain from the experience. He goes through the normal expected forms of reactions and this give credibility to the study in the sense that the reactions are expected and not forced or out of the ordinary. Due to his “ordinary” experience and the use of narrative, the researcher is able to liken Alistair’s reaction to one the potential business owner might have when partaking in a mentoring relationship. This makes the study effective because it generalizes the mentoring, making people more comfortable with the possible outcome of their experience being similar. Due to the nature of the responses, however, a reader may challenge the conclusions of the researcher on the basis that the reactions were narrowed and directive. Unlike a numerical study, these researchers are imposing a line of thinking on the data they are collecting. There is potential that a claim could be made that the results came before the study, meaning that a conclusion had been drawn before the narrative written. In conclusion, the wide use of mentoring, and the success of those that find mentors in their field, speaks in support of the conclusions drawn by this study. Convincing small business managers to take on another relationship might be the most difficult part of the next steps for this researcher.

Reference:

Gold, Jeff, Dave Devins, and Alistar Johnson. "What is the Value of Mentoring in a Small

Business?" *British Journal of Guidance and Counseling* 31.1 (2003): 51-62. *Ohio Link*. Web. 22 July 2013.

Mentoring: A Factor for Organizational Management

Abstract:

The article seeks to set the concept of mentoring in the framework of organizational management. In order to effectively articulate the importance of mentoring for company advancement, the article explains the pitfalls within a company in which mentoring provides some much needed teaching and learning. Since organizational management focuses on the ways in which companies handle and support their personnel, the researchers believe it provides a good window into the benefits of structuring mentoring relationships. A historical preface, in which the roots of the word management are analyzed and explained is followed by the distinction between coaching, teaching, mentoring and interning. The researcher then provides an evaluation of the most effective mentoring process. This evaluation begins with the ways in which the researcher believes to be the most effective method in structuring the mentor relationship. The benefits for both mentor and mentee are discussed throughout this section, as well as the psychological benefits of relationship forming in the work place. In the concluding sections, the researcher seeks to convert relationship building and mentoring as a gateway to improved employee performance. By adding the mentoring process to the organizational framework, a company deepens its potential.

Critical Analysis:

Mentoring is a very fluid and somewhat personal concept. Many individuals would claim to have had a mentor at some point in their lives, yet when asked to define mentoring, or mentorship, those definitions are usually different. This article seeks to eliminate that disparity immediately in the beginning stages of their explanations. By opening the article with dictionary definitions of the common words associated with mentoring, such as leadership and management the article builds credibility and a stable platform in which all readers can approach the topic. The article then goes on to define other concepts related to the subject. In describing these concepts (coaching and apprenticeship) the article is able to derive how mentoring is alike these concepts, but also how it is different from them. This further establishes the working definition from which all readers should operate on when reading this article. After establishing what mentoring is, the researcher sought to explain the best ways in which to implement the concepts of mentoring in a business environment. They did this by establishing expectations for the mentor and the mentee. Some examples of those included experience levels of the mentor and ability of the mentee. These furthered the expectations established in the opening section of the article in what to expect. The article then goes on to explain the functions and benefits of these relationships. By setting up such a scientific approach to the explanation of the process, the researchers have established credibility and expectations for the reader. They also leave very little air for argument in their meticulously structured program for mentorship. Organizational management is the structuring of an organization in a way that suits the task and the best of the business. This article seeks to explain that mentorship is the best way to pass knowledge and experience between employees of any organization.

Reference:

Ojedokun, A. O., PhD. "Mentoring: A Factor for Organizational Management." *IFE*

*PhychologIA*: IFE Center for Psychological Studies, pg. 337-55. *Ohio Link*. Web. 22 July 2013.