

## **Coaching and Mentoring: How do they differ?**

They differ all right! Let's explore this. Coaches are appointed with a key focus area in mind; performance. Mentors again, concentrate their focus on something different; the individual.

These distinctive focus areas lead to other obvious differences. The coach, will easily have a contracted agenda with interval dates set, a clear path ahead, targets and specific deliverables mutually agreed upon and confirmed.

This is in contrast to the mentor who works together with a protégé in an agendaless relationship. Their pathway ahead is in the arena of life rather than output, and while the coachee will be aiming for performance, the mentor's protégé will be encountering personal learning.

Mentors facilitate individual development by skilful questions, deep listening, pointing to informational and encouraging discovery. Words that would best describe a mentor are friend, confidant, direct, questioner.

While good coaches would also include these aspects in their relationships, words that would apply more commonly would include: goals, skills, reinforcement, and improvement.

The link up between coach and coachee, and mentor and protégé, originate differently: Protégés seek out their chosen mentor and their relationship could start off quite informally, whereas a coach frequently comes with the job. Very often, coaches are recognised for their specific expertise in the field in which they operate. Mentors again, establish their influence by their personal reputation.

A coach can be pointed out to anyone. But a mentor is only really a mentor when the protégé says: "I consider him, or her, as my mentor. He, or she, never provided all the answers. My mentor never said: Let me teach you, or let me show you how. But what they did do was ask me questions and let my own thinking surface and develop. I found my own answers and my own solutions. And I'll always be proud of that."

### **For more information, contact:**

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