

Leadership mentoring for Managing Directors

How to make the best out of the non-exec board and motivation of staff members

There are in any leadership mentoring and mentee relationship (managing director in this case) a lot of different challenges and important issues to work on as all individuals are different and bring different talents to all roles.

In this article I will just draw out some common familiar challenges I have worked on with a number of managing directors over the past many years:

- 1) Challenges in communication with the non-exec board and the chairman
- 2) Formulation and implementation of real strategic plans
- 3) Being able to read, motivate and understand the values of key-staff members.

In the case of the first challenge this is usually related to two issues

- a) Different personalities and ways of wishes to operate
- b) The fundamental idea that board meetings are there to make decisions, when in most cases decisions are usually made before the board meeting, through individual consultations

In working as a leadership mentor with MDs it becomes very important to be a facilitator in helping the MD understand and enable them to read other non-exec directors expectations, but also understand what motivates them and makes them want to be part of the company and its future.

This is often done through various exercises and use of various methodologies on how people think and react and also how they wish to communicate and interact with you and with other people. Being able to understand how other people will react.

In the case of the board meetings it is often mistakenly assumed that all decisions are made during the board meeting but this is often never the case, individual conversations and consultations usually between the chairman/MD and individual non-exec board members, usually lead to a consensus before any meeting.

Strategic Plans and Planning

In many companies the annual strategic planning exercise just becomes another annual budget with some amended text from the previous year on any strategic aspirations.

The challenge for the leadership mentor if the MD wishes to use strategic planning as an efficient tool is to work through a number of strategic scenarios to show the benefits of using strategic planning as an integrated tool, to enable even higher profitability in an ever changing world and environment.

This is usually done by very detailed case studies of very successful and comprehensive plans from other companies that have successfully used strategy plans as an integrated part of their business process.

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Being able to Read and Motivate Staff

This is one of the more difficult parts of being a successful leader and having the ability to read, motivate and understand the drivers of your key-employees to make them even more successful and committed to their work.

This is usually done through a very comprehensive set of tools and methodologies both to understand key employees but also to know what drives them to do even better and to be able to communicate with them in a way, that fits their way of operating and makes them feel comfortable working closely with the MD. No matter whether they are introvert or extrovert or highly strung.

All important leadership capabilities that can be developed much further in a strong leadership mentor-mentee relationship.

The examples above should be considered as examples on how leadership mentoring can assist a mentee.