

GEORGIA SWIMMING

# *A Cup of Change*

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**Mentoring, Motivating, and Buy In**

# The Power of Mentoring

- Everyone is always, in some aspect, looking for mentorship no matter how experienced or old they may be.
- In order to help, you have to find the key to unlock their trust, interests, and abilities.
- Look for the person inside first, not what has been presented to you. Trust is built on caring who that person really is and what they want out of life. Then build the foundation of mentorship from there.
- Being a mentor is about suggesting NOT instructing. Supportive advice vs. Answers
- Allow them to take what you have given them and then make it their own. Some of the best ideas come from collaboration!

**LIVE BY THE FEELING  
OF A WARM CUP OF  
COFFEE**



## Questions to ask.....

- What skills would you like to improve?
- What do you admire about your coworkers or other teams?
- What are your professional goals and what do you see as your team's goals for you?
- What skills do you have you feel you could teach others?

# Format Options

- Group mentoring: One mentor, multiple mentees
- Peer mentoring: A mentor/mentee relationship between people on the same job level
- Reverse mentoring: A senior employee as the mentee, and a junior as the mentor. This can be useful for teaching senior employees about newer technologies, as well as encouraging deeper communication across generations. These kinds of mentor relationships do more than teach — they build a relationship of openness and “dissolve barriers of status.”
- Team mentoring: Multiple mentors working with a single or multiple mentees. This is similar to group mentoring, but there are more mentors contributing knowledge and ideas.
- Supervisory: The classic, one-on-one mentor/mentee relationship. The guidance could be very structured, meeting once a week or once a month, or it could be relaxed, with the supervisor contributing their guidance whenever they see fit.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF FEMALE MENTORSHIP

“Over 50 percent of USA Swimming’s nearly 20,000 coaches are female. USA Swimming provides many resources and training opportunities for all its member coaches, including several women’s leadership opportunities.”

- But how many ever make it to the elite ranks and why are they not?
  - How do we help engage women more with our sport and give them opportunities to thrive?
  - What can we do daily to support our female coaches?
1. Get your female coaches a "sponsor", someone outside of their own team, another female coach, and ask that sponsor to check in with them weekly or biweekly. This can be someone with a lot of experience, same, or different. But will allow them to have a network to bounce ideas off of and make that important connection.
  2. Introductions.... Introduce them to other coaches whenever you get the chance. Male, female, head, assistants, college, etc. and invite them to engage with those people too.
  3. Take them to an upper level meet at least once a year and involve them while there. Warm-ups, meetings, dinners, etc.
  4. Always be searching for more opportunities for them to learn and tell them about them as much as possible.

## FEEDBACK FROM OTHER FEMALE COACHES

**"Balance family life with the team."** We are struggle with this but women more so because of our mothering instinct. The guilt is real and women need to feel they can take time for their families without consequences. A women who feels their boss understands and values how much they value their family is priceless!

**"Why am I always the assistant and never the lead no matter how hard a I work to get to that upper level? Or why is there so few women at the high level meets and of those women they seem to be the only ones tough enough to handle standing toe to toe with the good ole boys."** Invite your assistants to upper level meets and engage them! Have them help run warmups, meet other coaches, go to dinners, and sit in on coaches meetings.

**"Education, we want to go to women's summits, other teams, ASCA, and keep learning! I didn't even know what zones or select camps were until another female coach told me"**

Send them to other clubs to shadow, clinics to learn, and get them involved with things like zone staff etc.

# ***A SEAT AT THE TABLE FOR EVERYONE***

- **Great leaders are the ones who are humble enough to assess a room, get their staff to engage and feel heard, all while steering the ship in the right direction.** Again, this always starts with the one on one getting to know your staff so they will open up.
- **Be thoughtful of the "groupthink" issue.** "Simply defined, groupthink occurs when a group comes collectively to the same decision - the desire for harmony and cooperation leads to everyone interpreting a situation and coming to exactly the same conclusions. No one wants to be the only individual to disagree with the group."
- **GIVE THEM THAT SEAT AT THE TABLE TO BE JUST AS EMPOWERED AS THE REST OF YOUR STAFF BECAUSE EACH BRANCH OF THE TREE MATTERS!**

"Jonathan Foggin has been a mentor for me. Of the many things he's taught me, two really stand out. First, he always emphasizes that the successes of our athletes should be credited first to the athletes themselves, and then to our program as a whole rather than one individual coach. The end product of a successful athlete is created by a team of coaches working together and taking ownership of that athlete's progress, so we celebrate their successes as a whole, from 10&under coaches to senior coaches. Second, he's taught me that being a great coach has more to do with the way we care for and mentor athletes as people, than how fast we can make them swim. Fast swimming is great, but humbly pouring into an athlete can change their life." Mike Radford, ABSC.

- **Introductions....** Introduce them to other coaches whenever you get the chance. Male, female, head, assistants, college, etc. and invite them to engage with those people too. Networking is the path to so many opportunities. Never forget where you came from and how someone introduced you to the right people.

# Napoleon's Corporal

"The French emperor, **Napoleon Bonaparte** was not just a king - he was a brilliant strategist, battlefield tactician, soldier, and military leader too. His victories (and losses) are the stuff of legend. Apparently, whenever he was planning one of his many campaigns with his war council, he would always have one of his corporals (note that a corporal is one of the lowest ranks in the army) shine his boots. Was Napoleon so vain that he had to have shiny boots before going into battle? Maybe, but that was not the corporal's primary purpose. Napoleon knew that the corporal would be listening to the conversation - who wouldn't? After all of his generals would leave the room, he would ask the corporal if the battle plans made sense. If the corporal answered "yes" (or more likely, "oui"), Napoleon would go forward with the plans. However, if the corporal told Napoleon that the plans did not make sense, he would toss out the battle plan and make a new one."

Find a person on your staff to summarize your plan and then have a devil's advocate for if it works or not. This also is major part of mentoring... can you present a message that comes across the right way to everyone?!

## How do we do this during this time?

- Email coaches and ask if they would be interested in mentoring you or one of your coaches.
- Set up weekly Zoom meetings 1 on 1 with questions you give them ahead of time so you can discuss.
- Send you coaches weekly zoom meeting requirements for thing we see on coaches exchange. Then discuss it in the next staff meeting.
- Get your swimmers sister or brother swimmers on other teams they can zoom with each week to help them learn how to mentor and engage. (Can be used for service hours also.) If interested let John know and we will start a list of teams .
- Check out the mentors we already have through Georgia swimming on our website and volunteer to be one!
- **SHARE YOUR SUCCESSES WITH OTHERS VIA A GEORGIA SWIMMING ZOOM MEETING!**