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**Lois J. Zachary**

**The mentor's guide: facilitating effective learning relationships**

**[Paperback]**

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“It is the leader’s responsibility to serve as a role model, to mentor the next generation of leaders, and to make sure that continuous opportunities for learning and development are provided.” – Lois J. Zachary

Lois J. Zachary’s book titled, "The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships" (second edition) contains 288 pages with 9 chapters, and is divided into two parts with part one exploring the components of support, challenge, and vision, and the second dealing with engaging in feedback and working with obstacles.

Dr. Lois J. Zachary needs no introduction. She is an internationally recognized expert on mentoring. She is passionate about mentoring, and wants to make a difference in the lives of others. Hence, you can imagine the takeaways from this book. In fact, the second edition is an even richer resource than the first with many value-added components including cross-cultural mentoring, and mentoring various generations. She also elaborates the four phases of mentoring cycle in this edition.

The book examines mentoring from a depth perspective and presents in a new perspective of critical reflection and application. Zachary unfolds that learning process has shifted from mentor directed to self-directed, and the focus of mentoring partnership has shifted from knowledge transfer and acquisition to critical reflection and application. She further adds that mentoring is most successful when it is done collaboratively.

Zachary describes that the learning-centered mentoring paradigm has seven critical elements: reciprocity, learning, relationship, partnership, collaboration, mutually defined goals, and development. She unveils that for any mentor it is important to create a learning partnership; help mentees identify goals for learning; negotiate a learning contract; help learners discover what objectives they should set; use multiple modalities and resources to achieve the objectives; manage the learning experience; help mentees stay focused on the goals, objectives, and learning strategies; and periodically revisit goals to stay on track.

Zachary demonstrates that if your mentee is a logical person who is data driven and fact oriented and you operate more intuitively, you will need to remember that your mentee approaches learning in a more structured, specific way than you are normally comfortable

with. Adjusting the learning in a way that meets your mentee's needs rather than your own is a good rule of thumb in creating an environment that facilitates learning.

Zachary writes that William Perry offers four frameworks: dualism, multiplicity, relativism, and commitment. Especially these are lenses through which individuals may view the world. Knowing which lenses your mentee is wearing is fundamental to your success in facilitating an effective learning relationship.

Zachary explains stretch goals, and rolls out blueprint as follows: for each goal, define clear-cut objectives, outline activities that will help you achieve them, identify the resources you need (and where you can find them), lay out a time frame for accomplishing the objective, and identify the first step you will take toward achieving that stretch goal.

Zachary mentions pointers for mentoring various cohorts/generations such as boomers, Gen Xers, and Gen Yers. She outlines generational dos and don'ts for them. She unfolds that today's learning has become more differentiated. She outlines a five-step work plan for achieving learning goals such as identifying the learning goals and success criteria; lay out the objectives; identify the learning tasks; list potential resources; and set a target date. She identifies ways in which to demonstrate trust-building behaviors. She outlines the following strategies as ways to promote successful time management in a mentoring relationship: schedule time in advance; monitor your time; spend quality time; pay attention to personal time zones; and take care of yourself.

Zachary says some mentees present unique obstacles and particularly challenging situations for mentors. She provides some strategies for overcoming obstacles with particularly challenging mentees: user mentees; jealous mentees; unfocused mentees; manipulative mentees; submissive mentees; apathetic mentees; and saboteur mentees. She also provides strategies for mentors such as: impostership; burnout; stress; lack of disclosure; ethical dilemmas; crossing boundaries; prejudice and bias; procrastination; jealousy; chain of command; and mentee neglect.

Zachary offers some suggestions for incorporating celebration into the closure of a mentoring relationship: collaborate on the planning, elevate and expand knowledge, leverage learning, expand your thinking, brag about accomplishments, rekindle memory, appreciate, talk about transitions and espouse the vision. She investigates that silence provides an opportunity for learning.

Zachary believes that a good mentoring negotiation process will result in: well defined goals; success criteria and measurement; delineation of mutual responsibilities; accountability assurances; a consensual mentoring agreement; and a work plan for achieving learning goals. She further adds that a thoughtful negotiating conversation firmly sets boundaries. It also anticipates pitfalls, fosters the exploration of emerging possibilities and alternate pathways, and is flexible enough to accommodate renegotiations and closure.

Zachary cautions that despite the best of intentions, mentoring partners do cross boundaries and limits are tested or exceeded. This can harm the mentoring relationship and negatively affect the learning taking place within it.

The book equips you with exercises, examples, tables and figures to ensure mentoring takeaways quickly. It provides practical tools and techniques to become successful professionals and leaders. It offers templates and worksheets that guide and help you understand the essence quickly. It contains beautiful stories to quickly connect the reel content with real life events and experiences. It narrates interesting stories. For example, she describes Chad and Nate. Chad a mentor who is an extrovert, and Nate is a mentee who is an introvert. Initially they had several challenges to gel well but subsequently they molded

themselves and created compatibility and chemistry to ensure effective mentoring outcomes. The book is an outstanding resource for educators, managers, leaders and learners.

To author a book on mentoring requires tremendous passion. Zachary demonstrated her passion towards mentoring by authoring second edition with a lot of improvements from her heart. If the first edition is the best the second edition is better than the best covering various aspects of mentoring with new tools and techniques.

Mentor and mentee must work together to achieve specific, mutually defined goals that focus on developing the mentee's skills, abilities, knowledge, and thinking; it is in every way a learning partnership.

The mentor nurtures and develops the mentee's capacity for self-direction (from dependence to independence to interdependence) over the course of the relationship.

Today's mentoring relationships are goal focused: when the learning goals have been accomplished, the relationship comes to closure. There is nothing quite as important as having well-defined learning goals in a mentoring relationship. A clear, compelling goal inspires action, and is indispensable to the work of mentoring in enabling growth and evaluating the ongoing success of the relationship. That's why it's important for mentoring partners to pay attention to the goals they agree on and regularly revisit them throughout the mentoring relationship.

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Mentoring in a cross-cultural context requires preparation and flexibility. Cross-cultural expert, Gloria Sandvik identifies four action strategies for maintaining a flexible cultural lens: prepare, remember, observe and show. For each she offers specific recommendations.

Every relationship faces obstacles, and the mentoring relationship is no exception. The challenge is to overcome them and learn from the experience. A mentor who understands how to support, challenge, and provide vision can facilitate mentee growth and development despite obstacles that present themselves.

After closure of the relationship, mentors should take time to focus on their own learning and consider how they can apply what they have learned to their advantage in future mentoring relationships. The author concludes with final dos and don'ts for facilitating your mentees' learning and for nurturing your own growth and development. They are: heighten awareness; stay in the conversation; capture the learning and partner. At the end, she provides resources that serve as references for the readers who are keen to learn mentoring.

Dr. Zachary is an expert in adult learning and she effectively integrated her adult learning background with mentoring and added value to this book. She writes cross-cultural issues involved in mentoring. She has authored this book with global audiences in view. She substantiates the content with a lot of references which indicates the amount of efforts she has put in to authoring this book. She authored this book based on her experiences. Hence, nobody can write better than her on mentoring. She is a genius in mentoring, and she is the mother of mentoring.

The book provides A to Z of mentoring. Anyone who wants to learn about the length and breadth of mentoring this is the best book under the sun on the earth. If you care about mentoring, read this book more than once. It will change how you see the world around you.

The book is worth investing your time. It is written in an easily readable style containing pearls of wisdom. It is a book for all times. Those who are passionate about mentoring must read Zachary's book. You can gift this book to your friends and relatives and, of course, to your mentees who will remember you forever for your kind gesture.

### **Biographical information**

*Professor M.S.Rao* is recognized as one of the world's leading leadership consultants, coaches, and speakers with 31 years of experience, and is the author of 18 books including *21 Success Sutras for Leaders*. He has been listed as one of the leading achievers around the world in Marquis Who's Who in the World in 2013 (30th Pearl Anniversary Edition). He can be contacted at [msrlctr@gmail.com](mailto:msrlctr@gmail.com). His speakerwiki link <http://speakermix.com/professor-m-s-rao>.

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