

Coaching and Mentoring For Enhanced Learning of Human Resources in Organizations: (Rapid Multiplication of Workplace Learning to Improve Individual Performance)

Sherish Khakwani

*Faculty of Management Sciences, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan
Email: Khakwani_55@hotmail.com*

Hassan Danial Aslam

*Faculty of Management Sciences, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan
Email: h_danial_aslam@live.com*

Muhammad Salman Azhar

*Faculty of Management Sciences, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan
Email: salman.azhar@iub.edu.pk*

Muhammad Mohsin Mateen

*Department of Commerce, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan
Email: Mohsinmmh@yahoo.com*

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Abstract Coaching aims to enhance "self propelling force" of an individual to work effectively. Whereas, the mentor has expertise to guide and influence other individuals in a positive way, that leads to the development of an employee's career in an organization. They both have positive impact on individual performances that is the reason coaching and mentoring is considered to be an important part of new practices of management. They "inspire" and "empower" employees, to gain organizational commitment, boost up the productivity level that leads to organizational success. This research paper aims to differentiate coaching and mentoring and acknowledge the impact of its practices on organizational performance and on employees' workplace learning. The current research attempted to investigate the aim, style, goals and focus of coaching and mentoring and its mechanism for improved individual performance. Researchers have presented two major conceptual models of coaching and mentoring. First model comprehensively characterize strategic differences between two practices, whereas the second model explains the premeditated collision of said two practices with organizational performance.

Keyword: Coaching and Mentoring, Human Resource Management, Workplace Learning

1. Introduction

21st century is known for the growth of corporate sector and management that requires a shift from traditional skills developing techniques to some more advance forms of training. Organizations are flooding with the workers that strive for self fulfillment and personal development. Moreover, globalization forces employers to acquire new skills for their survival. That is the motive that organizations are striving hard to develop and retain high performing work force for uninterrupted organizational operations (Lewis, 1996). Important strides had been taken by coaching and mentoring in last decades. But as the time passed, these new HR practices had greater influence on the productivity of organization, as they both targeted at improving performance of employees within the organization (Schoessler, 2010). Coaching and mentoring enhance personal skills of employees through an effective learning process that is beyond the traditional training methods. These two

categories of training approaches develop such relationships that are solely based on trust and mutual support (Werner and Smith, 2001). Now days, every firm wants to boost up their organization performance due to increased customers' expectations and demands. These firms also recognize the importance of human capital as a main resource to improve their performance (Pfeffer, 1994). Van der Sluis and Schreiner (2001) emphasized continuous learning as an imperative source of better employee performance. Organization can only achieve competitive edges by promoting the development in organization's member. This can only be achieved through continuous learning mechanisms like organizational learning, knowledge management and coaching and mentoring. This research paper entails differences between coaching and mentoring and how these two approaches can improve individual performance and organizational performance as a whole.

Among many training practices, coaching and mentoring are the best mean of providing support to individuals to realize what one can do, how one can achieve one's goals, increase one's potential, and how one can capitalize one's strengths in order to improve performance (Edwards et al., 2003). As coaching help employees to improve their performance it is considered an important tool of management (Wright et al., 2003). In today's highly competitive environment where every organization is at war of recruiting competent candidates, they see coaching and mentoring "skepticism" and "hope" for their further development.

Coaching is viewed as individualized coaching that is used for professional development of an employee for particular skill development purpose (Flory, 1965). According to Shermen and Freas (2004) organizations are now more focused towards soft skill enhancement of their employees in which coaching plays an imperative role. Whereas mentoring is a common HR practice where mentors always help mentee in making them learned to navigate at work and improve their performance throughout their professional career. The main purpose of mentoring is to develop interpersonal relationships. Mentor provides guidance, motivate employees and counsel them. Mentoring does not involve work relationship only it also establishes personal relationships. It provides psychosocial support to the employees that are essential for their career development. On one hand, mentor plays an important role in career development of an employee by offering challenges to the them and by giving them exigent assignments. On the other hand, they offer psychosocial support which increases organization citizenship and individual competencies of an employee (Kram, 1983). Overall mentoring increases the confidence of an employee on how to deal with peoples at work, understand the purpose of being an employee of an organization, and self realization of strengths in order to solve problems (Burke, 1984). Constructive feedbacks provided by these two practices helps employees a lot in changing their working behaviors, overcoming performance barriers and hence improve performance (Sosik and Lee, 2002).

People may confuse the term mentoring with coaching but in reality these both practices are different from each other as they both have different aims. Mentor's job is to counsel and advise employees on their career paths, and has a senior position with vast experiences and expertise that can also give assignments to the employees for the purpose of helping them in their development (Barbian, 2002). On the other hand Downey (1999) defines "Coaching as the art of facilitating the performance, learning and development of another". Coach is more than an instructor, who observes the employees behaviors, develop improvement plan with the employees, get feedback from them and then recommend future actions. Potential of a person can be unlock by the coaching for better job performance (Whitemore et al., 1996). One thing common in them is that the both of these practices develop a relationship between mentor and mentee or coach and coachee (Daniel, 1998).

There are countless benefits of coaching and mentoring. These benefits includes improved employee performance, increased self esteem, professional and personal development etc. They not just help learners but mentor and coach can also be benefited by these training programs.

2. Literature Review

In today's competitive global environment, coaching and mentoring is considered an important part of new practices of management, because they "inspire" and "empower" employees, gain organizational commitment, boost up the productivity level and that leads to organization successes (McLead, 2003). But unfortunately many organizations fails to implement such kinds of schemes and thus unable to capitalize on the employees experiences (Clutterbuck, 2008). As we all know people are the most important asset of the organizations, the performance of the organization depends on the performance of employees within the organization (Boyd, 2002). The success of any organization depends on increasing employee performance while keeping the morale level high and retain high performer employees. That is why it is important for a manager to "tap into the inner strength and wisdom of employees", rather than just giving reward or motivating them (Serrat, 2009).

Now a day, organizations are focusing on their employees' development. The training programs initiated by the organizations are not enough for this purpose (McLead, 2003). It requires such a program that helps the employees to work at their full potential, a program that inspires and motivates employees. This all can only be achieved through coaching and mentoring, as an effective scheme that increases "self direction", "efficiency", "self esteem" and "accomplishments" (Deans et al., 2006). Coaching and mentoring are considered a main tool for personal development that helps to cherish abilities of a person in order to improve person's job performance and his or her behavior (Hendricks, 1996).

The major focus of coaching and mentoring is on individual development (Rolfe, 2010). A number of formal programs of mentoring and coaching are being implemented by many organizations, because they wants to increase morale that definitely leads to increased level of production (Hahn, 2008). Although there are numbers of benefits of mentoring to the organization but the organizations are keeping their eyes on implementing successful coaching and mentoring programs. For this purpose organization must first calculate why the time and money should be devoted for such programs (Stewart, 2006). Then link reasons to the main purpose of organization existence and survival.

2.1 Coaching

Coaching is considered as "intern-organization practice" in which the job of coach is to improve individual performance that ultimately benefits the organization. Coach executes his job by encouraging trainee, facilitating him with skill development required for the job, and ultimately by evaluating performance and giving feedback (Cummings and Worley 2004). Organizations arrange coaching programs according to the requirements. Such coaching programs are in aligned with performance improvement needed for an individual, employee's required psychological and physical capabilities need to perform, and the feedback needed for performance improvement. It might be considered that coaching serves the single purpose but in reality, coaching also provide support to individuals to face current challenges and to become brave enough to face them in the future. Because coach first analyses the person's current position that is "self sufficiency" of a person and then tries to boost up this level and make them confident enough to face upcoming challenges (Chiaramonte and Higgings, 1993). Coach aims to enhance "self propelling force" of an individual to work well. Hay (2003) highlighted two styles of coaching "pull style" and "push style". Push style of coaching occurs when the major power recites with coach. In this coach dominates the relationship, where he or she has an authority and decision making power and demands employees to do what is said by coach. Though pull style occurs when major work is the responsibility of an employee as a learner. In this style coach empowers an employee to make his or her own decisions, finding optimal solution of problems provided with guided and constructive feedback.

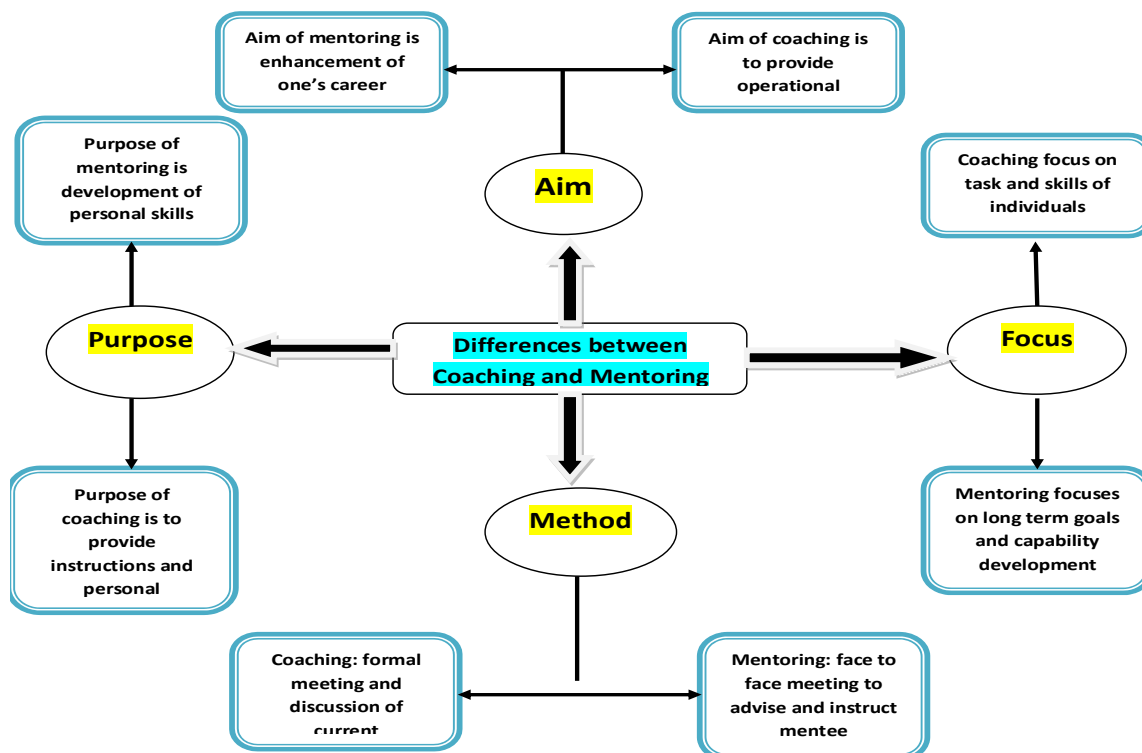
2.2 Mentoring

Weaver and Chellandurai (1999) highlighted that mentoring is a process in which an experienced professional person act as a mentor who provides support, help and guide to less experienced person as mentee and steer career progress of individual. By mentor we mean that the one who has expertise to guide and influence other individuals in a positive way that leads to development of the career (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997). Here a social relationship is developed between mentor and mentee that is longer term in nature and does not come to an end on one single skill development (Olian et al., 1993). Such mentoring relationships are important for career success of an individual (Bower et al., 2006).

2.3 Difference Between Coaching and Mentoring

In today's changing work place coaching and mentoring serves as professional development tool. Many people confuse about these practices and consider them same. But actually there are number of differences between them. The main difference between coaching and mentoring is the course of action developed by the coach and the mentor (Gilley, 1996). In case of mentoring, mentor develops the course of action while in coaching action plan is already created by the coachee, who elaborates what he needs to learn. Sometimes managers as a mentor may consider themselves as a coach and diminishes the purpose of training (Serrat, 2009). In case of coaching, person as a coach establishes goals and strive for their accomplishment, while keeping professional development in given particular skill as a main product of whole process. Whereas, mentoring does not only restricted to two elements of coaching which are "personal development" and "professional development" since mentor's job is beyond these skills development activities. Mentor is responsible for strategic working with an employee, which leads an individual to career progression. Figure 1 illustrates the coaching and mentoring difference model. It comprises of four (aim, purpose, focus and method) major dimensions on which these two practices are been differentiate

Figure 1. Difference between Coaching and Mentoring



Aim: Traditionally, mentoring deals with “soft side of development” (Hamilton and Hamilton, 2005). The whole focus of mentoring is on enhancement of one’s career. Those individuals who want advancement on their career path, may need a mentor for guidance. Whereas, coaching deals with providing operational competencies (Hahn, 2008). Organizations are now focusing and devoting their efforts and resources in coaching, and making sure that managers are coaching their employees

Purpose: Coaching is a kind of consultation involving professional development. The job of a coach is to determine powers, drawbacks, objectives and needs of an employee. Bentley (1996) identified four main parts of coaching “support”, “modeling”, “step-by-step development” and “encouragement” (Huand, 1995). An important factor in coaching is to provide instructions to the employee on how to perform a job in a better way by using learned skills and knowledge effectively (Rolfe, 2010). Another purpose of coaching is to develop and improve employee performance. The process of coaching places more emphasis on collecting and disseminating information, asking and answering questions, paying attention to details and then communicating people how and what to perform (Daniel, 1998).

While, mentors have been defined as guides (Bey & Holmes, 1992), counselors or role models (Crow & Mathews, 1998). These definitions viewed mentoring as one-way relationships. Jeruchim and Shapiro (1992), however, presented a different view of mentoring encompassing a mutual and beneficial relationship between the mentor and mentee. Mentoring is a strategy of one’s development of personal skills and abilities by which one person can help others to develop his or her own self by using existing and known special characteristics, knowledge, abilities, skills and resources (Tyler, 1998).

Focus: On one hand coaching focuses on task and skills, “directed”, and “time bounded”. On the other hand, mentoring places more emphasis on “open-ended” development of a person (Linney, 1999). But the evidences had shown that when process is concerned they both overlap each other. When we consider the style of both approaches we can see that the main focus of coaching is on performance of an individual in his or her current job, and places more emphasis on development of individuals (Rolfe, 2010). While, the main focus of mentoring is on “long-term goals” and “developing capabilities” (Hahn, 2008). Starcevich (1998) says that a mentor produces personal returns for the client around affirmation / learning versus a coach who provides returns around teamwork / performance.

Method: In many organizations, coaching and mentoring are occurring daily or unconsciously most of the time (Starcevich, 1998). They both share the principles but their process schedules differ a lot depending on aim and roles. These both approaches includes series of different meeting consists of formal and informal discussion on goals of the session mutually agreed by the both parties (Serrat, 2009). Coaches and mentors use different tools in order to develop and conduct coaching and mentoring sessions. Mentoring programs consists of face to face meeting between mentor and learner where they share knowledge, mentor advises employees how to do work, suggests how they can improve their performance and gives instructions (Nielson, 2006). While coaching occurs in more formal settings where both coach and coachee use informal tone of conversation. Coach makes a formalized plan which states activities during the whole session and measure progress (Tyler, 1998). During these sessions “new technologies”, “work methods” and styles of work are practiced by the individuals. In the next session, results of previous session then are discussed by the members. In both of these methods learner should trust their mentors and coaches and expect both kinds of feedbacks (positive and negative) (Starcevich, 1998).

Who came up with solution: The other main difference between these two approaches is “who came up with the solution”. In case of mentoring, the solution is usually provided by the mentor where as in case of coaching, providing solution is the responsibility of the employees (Lewis, 1996). The coach only provides support to the employees to uncover their objectives and align them with a strategy. Then coach, main responsibility is to provide encouragement and accountability in order to help employees to reach their

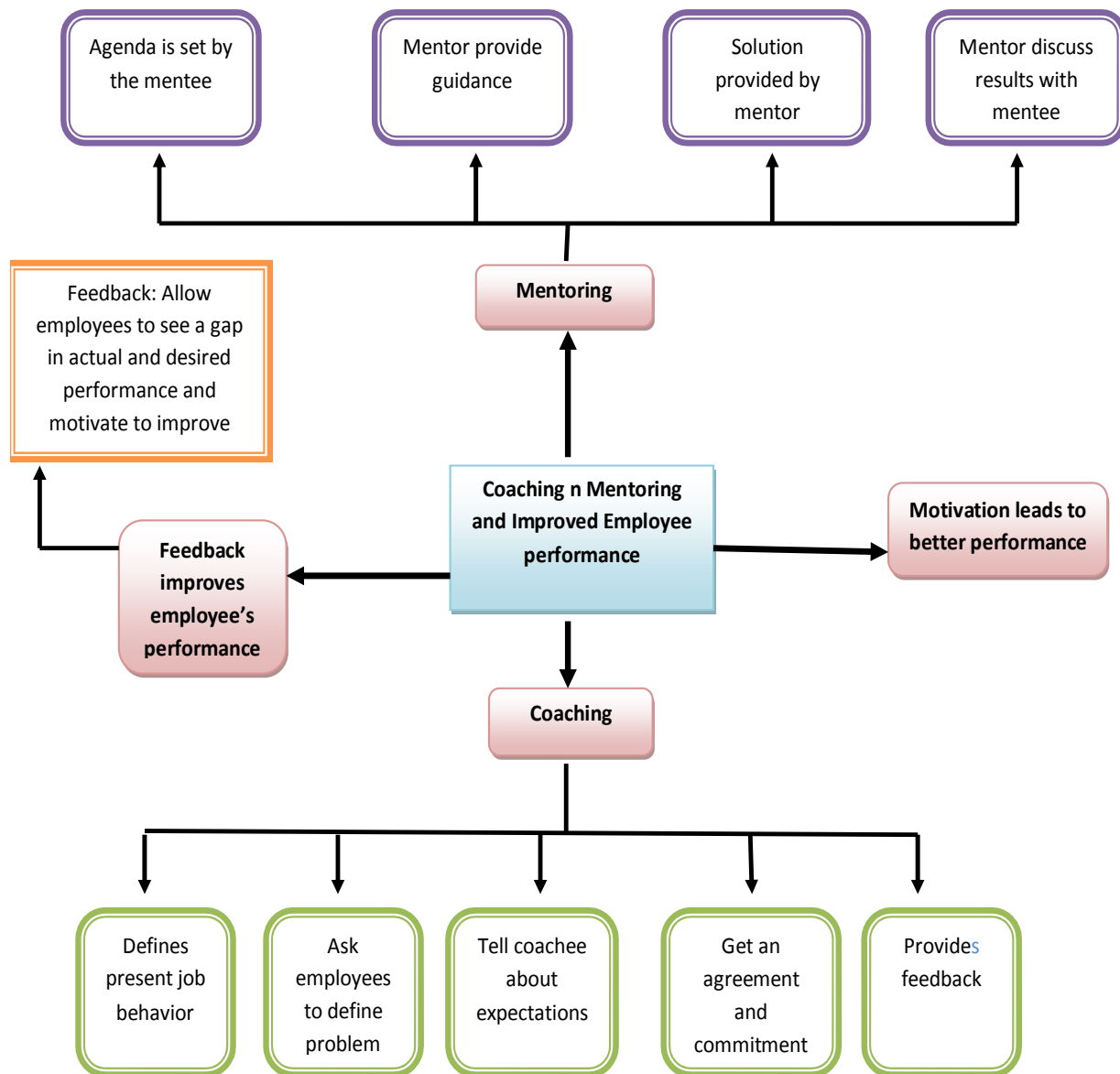
destination. The catalyst in coaching engagement is the coach (Boyd, 2002). Coach can be a mentor but the mentor cannot be a coach at the same time. When coach acts as a mentor, he or she use one's own experiences in order to remove any sort of doubts, in the relationship of coaches professional role and his personal life. Most important recommendations are provided by mentoring programs for development of employees' professional life. The whole process of mentoring is based on one's experiences. Mentoring basically discusses goals, action plans and different ways to achieve those plans (Walker, 2000). Based on such experiences, mentor crafts an action plan for future (Barbian, 2002). Then this action plan is given to the mentee to act upon.

3. Coaching and Mentoring and Improved Employee Performance

Managers are well aware of these two approaches coaching and mentoring, and now they have skills to master both of them. Whitney (2006) points to research indicating that large numbers of individuals and companies are planning to or have already commenced coaching programs to develop their skills and enhance their performances. Organizations need skilled workforce who is limited in number. In this technological changing world, market demands efficient work from the workers. In order to train present workforce about new skills, organizations are using coaching and mentoring (Hahn, 2008). Although, coaching and mentoring helps organizations in many ways, but the important benefit provided by them is the improved performance of the employees (Parcloe and Wray, 2000). Because the purpose of these training practices is making employee capable to face all the hurdles that comes in their ways and changes their behavior to improve performances.

In the mentoring program learner becomes able to enhance his or her knowledge and skills to step forward and accomplish career development goals (Garvey, 2004). It not just helps new learner but also facilitate an experienced one to step ahead on his career development path (Walker, 2000). All individuals involved in mentoring gain value from a mentor who already pass from all these career paths (Grossman and Rhodes, 2002). There is a great opportunity for a mentor to engage himself in those employee's, who wants what a mentor can provide. Mentoring is considered by many organizations a "three way beneficial process", as it not only helps mentor and mentee but also organizations can be benefited from it (Barbian, 2002). The benefit of mentoring to mentor is that a mentor gets a respectful responsibility to design a mentoring program and guide for employees. The mentoring goals includes "advancements of employee career", "solidification of manager and staff relationship", "Deeping of commitment to goals", and "development of personal connections" (Young and Perrewe, 2004). Moreover, coaching and mentoring provides solutions to the problems regarding performance (Daniel, 1998). Because we all know that a key to success lies in "getting out best in others". And these employees with improved performances help the organization such as they minimize the level of anxiety, become more focused to their responsibilities, and increased productivity (Starcevich, 1998).

Figure 2. Conceptual Model of How Coaching and Mentoring Increase Employee Performance



Impact of Coaching and Mentoring on Individual Performance: Organizations are greatly influenced by a good coach as coaches consider themselves responsible for employees' professional development (Deans et al., 2005). Coaching is not the one time process. It requires "real commitment" and "desire to participate". It is important for a coach and coachee to keep in mind that the ultimate goal of coaching is to enhance employee performance. Coaching can lead to improved performance of employees in the following way. First of all, the main responsibility as a coach is to define present, on job behavior of employees related to performance (David and Clutterbuck, 1995). Here the behavior may be is the reasons of poor performance that is late comings, absentees and job dissatisfaction (Daniel, 1998). Secondly, ask the employees about the problem and the questions should be open ended. In this situation same employees may give lame excuses, but it is the job of a coach to find out the real cause of poor performance. Then to develop the main reason from the answers provided by the employees. Thirdly, tell the coachee or employees your purpose and expectations. Being a coach, clearly communicate to the employees what is being demanded from them. Here the coach

should be kind and empathetic. Fourthly, after communicating expectations, now the coach has to get an agreement (Boyd, 2002). Although it is difficult for a coach to do so, because sometimes employees refuse to accept any kind of duty and may dart the coach. Here the coach may use document of job analysis containing job specifications and description which may help the coach. Fifthly, once the employees reached an agreement, coach can develop an improvement plan with collaboration of the employee (Nigro, 2003). Consent of employees is must for the implementation of plan. Here first goals are established and then the action plan is developed. In this, employees and coach, devise out ways to solve performance problems. Sixthly, after making improvement plan, now coach gets a commitment of employees to it. Here employees are required to be committed that they will willingly (Waugh, 1997) change their behaviors and will work well to improve their performance according to what they have planned. Once, employees are committed, coach asks employees to provide summary of whole discussion (Lawson, 2007). Seventhly, coaching session cannot be concluded until coach gets the progress report from the employees. Eighthly, once the employees provided the report to the coach, now it is the responsibility of the coach to comment and give recommendations. In this way coaching can improve employee's performance on the job (Hahn, 2008). Buck (2005) who says that coaching contains a fundamental teaching component and that the most people hire a coach because they believe the coach has knowledge and experience to share. The findings are also consistent with Whitmore (2004) who says that coaching helps to unlock a client's potential and is about helping them to learn rather than teaching them.

On the other hand, mentoring also helps employees to acquire new knowledge and skills for better job performance (Hamilton and Hamilton, 2005). Here the agenda is set by the mentee which depends on developing needs of mentee while guidance is provided by the mentor to achieve goals set by the mentee (Barbian, 2002). In this way it leads to high performance. It is helpful in increasing employees' performance because mentee lack essential skills to work out demanded task, so mentor enrich mentee with all required skills and make them experts (Young and Perrew, 2004). Different types of human styles have been introduced by mentoring that manages improvement in performance of employees. Mentoring is considered as "learning adventure" that focuses on the connection of mentor and mentee (Hamilton and Hamilton, 2005). Mentoring improves employee's performance in a following ways, that is widen business insights of employees, and make employees more responsible that encourages information exchange between work force of a company.

Importance of Feedback: One important factor in performance improvement is the feedback that is provided by the coach. Because the coach provides descriptive feed back to the employees that is far apart from evaluated feedback (Daniel, 1998). It involves description of observable employees' behavior that is based on actual work place situation and condition. Only changeable are discussed in the feedback. While providing feedback, coach should keep in mind needs of both employer and employee (Hahn, 2008). Feedback provided by the coach and mentor has long term impact on the individuals. When employees have received feedback they can better analyze their current state and exert efforts to work better next time (Tannenbaum, 1997).

Importance of Motivation: Another boosting factor in employee's improved performance is the reinforcement through rewarding positive employee behavior. Coach should then relate positive behavior of employees to the recognitions programs of a company. Rewards may be monetary or non monetary, but it always increase employee commitment, job satisfaction and job performance (Heathfield, 2010). Noe et al. (2003) emphasized that motivation has direct impact on performance of an individual at work. Motivation is defined as person's internal psychological state that is consistent with person's "intentions", "direction", "persistence" and "behavioral change" (Landy and Beeker, 1987). Motivation plays an important role as it causes individuals to exert higher level of effort (Luancevich et al., 1997). Further improvements can come from the list provided by the coach including how well an employee is doing, gap in actual and standard

performance, how an employee can improve his or her performance, feedback, suggestions etc (Heathfield, 2010).

Studies have shown that mentoring and coaching have positive impact on employees and organization. It provides the employees with a communication network that helps the employees to share information, helps each other and fulfills social need (Daniel, 1998). By these two approaches, strategies set by managers and employees can transform into better productive outcome. They allows employees to be aware of their potential to do work and guide them how can they utilize their hidden potential (Starcevich, 1998). Employees can get additional skills and knowledge that helps them in their career and they win promotions. Coaching can help employees by engaging them in effective communication and encouraging them to mention openly their problems (Hahn, 2008). Another main benefit of coaching and mentoring in improving employees performance is that these approaches reduces interference, that detract employees from their main focuses. So these approaches help employees to keep their focus on what and how they supposed to do.

4. Conclusion

This changing global environment challenges organizations to obtain appropriate expertise and assistance that promote its growth and take it to the next level. Coaching and mentoring are very important as they both used as a training tools in many companies and academic sectors. Both of these tools are designed to improve employee's performance, confusion is created that whether these two approaches coaching and mentoring are different or same because different researchers attempted to separate coaching from mentoring. Starcevich (1998) emphasized that mentoring produces results for mentee while coaching gives returns around performances. Coach's main job is to motivate individuals to change their behaviors. Coach has a belief that learner has an ability to self direct himself or herself for own benefits (Starcevich, 1998). Egan (2002) emphasized that helping employees forces coach to understand their current problems and then have a discussion with employee in order to improve their performance that is problem centric. While mentor advises employee what is better for them but does not force them to do what is said by him, instead let them free to choose what they like to do and then provide instructions to execute their choice in a better way. Kram (1985) highlighted the importance of mentoring in improving employee's performance as it allows mentee to set their agenda and then mentor provides guidance for how to accomplish those agendas.

Coaching and mentoring differ in their aims and styles. Coaching aims at providing instructions while mentoring aims at development of skills and abilities. Coaching and mentoring have positive impact on employee's performance. They both play an important role in strategies related to professional and personal development and learning of new skills. Feedback and reinforcement by the mentor and coach are also very important as they both encourage employees to exert more effort in order to improve their performance. Useful opportunities are offered to the employees by these two practices. Employees may not perform well their required tasks due to lack of essential skills. Mentoring and coaching introduced by the organizations helps their employees in their professional and personal development.

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