Mentoring Early Career Hires In Quality

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Agenda

1. Mentoring The Two Types of Early Career Hires
   - New to Quality & the Workforce.
   - New to Quality With Years of Experience.

2. Mentoring Regardless of Experience.
About Saft

SAFT COCKEYSVILLE PROFILE

- 270 employees
- One of two R&D centers in Saft
- Produces the world’s highest power density electrochemical cells
- Saft Cockeysville focuses on large-format Lithium-ion technology

INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE

- 35% North America
- 32% Europe
- 33% Asia, MEA, LatAm

4,100+ people
3,000+ customers
ABOUT THIS PRESENTATION
What You Will Not Get From This Presentation!

- A Set-By-Step Mentoring Playbook.
- A Mentoring Style That Will Work for Everyone or Fit Every Mentor-Mentee Relationship.
- Anything New or Ground-Breaking, as it Has All Been Said Before!

If You are Looking For This Type of Information There are Plenty of Books and Online Resources That Contain This Information, Supposedly.
What You **Will** Get From This Presentation!

- A Dry Sense of Humor.
- A General Description of the 2 Different Type of Early Career Hires.
- Specific Issues and Pit-Falls for Each of the Types of Early Career Hires and Ways to Address Them.
- What I have Found That Has Worked for Me, as Both a Mentor and a Mentee.

Every Mentor-Mentee **Relationship** is Different. I Emphasize Relationship and Will Reiterate This Multiple Times Throughout the Presentation.
DEFINING THE TWO TYPES OF EARLY CAREER HIRES
What are the Two Types of Early Career Hires

1. New to Quality, New to the Workforce.
   • We Will Refer to These Individuals as “No Experience” for Simplicity.

2. New to Quality, Years in the Workforce.
   • We Will Refer to These Individuals as “Experienced” for Simplicity
New to Quality, New to the Workforce (No Experience)

General Attributes of a No Experience Hire

• Recently Graduated College, Tech-School or High School.

• Younger in Age.

• Limited Expectations or Preconceived Ideas of the Work and Work Environment.

• Impressionable.

• Either Overly Confident or Very Timid.

• Out to Prove Themselves.
New to Quality, Years in the Workforce (Experienced)

General Attributes of an Experienced New Hire

- May Have Recently Graduated College.
- Older in Age.
- Set in Their Ways and Biased.
- Easily Upset by Negative Feedback/Criticism.
- May be Easily Overwhelmed Initially.
New to Quality, Years in the Workforce (Experienced)

Keep in Mind There are Multiple Types of Experienced Hires, and Mentoring Will Need to be Tailored Accordingly.

- An Electrical/Mechanical/Process Engineer Who Moves to Quality.
- An Inspector/Technician Who Graduates College and Moves into A Quality Engineering Role.
- A Manufacturing Employee Who Moves into an Inspector or Quality Technician Role.
MENTORING THE NO EXPERIENCE EARLY CAREER HIRE
5 Mentoring Topics for the No Experience Hires

1. Impressionable and Unbiased…Make it Count
2. Quality: A Thankless Job
3. The Rigidness of Quality
4. Harnessing and Focusing the Enthusiasm of Youth
5. Continual Learning and Emersion in Quality
Impressionable and Unbiased…Make it Count

1. Your Mentee is Impressionable.
   - It is Very Possible That This is the First Professional Environment Your Mentee Has Seen. Make it Count!

2. Your Mentee Has no Biases or Preconceived Notions About Their Job and Company.
   - Take Advantage of This and Show Them Your Passion!
   - Make Every Opportunity to Talk Positively About Quality and Your Organization.
Quality: A Thankless Job

Let’s Face it, Quality is a Thankless Job. So How Do We Mentor Around This Issue?

• Be Honest Up Front! Tell Them What to Expect.

• Provide the Praise Others Will Not. Provide Small “Rewards”.

• Provide Reassurance That the Pushback and “Distain” Others Show is Normal, its not Personal.

• Allow Them to Vent Frustrations at Lack of Thanks From Others.

• Help Them to Build Relationships With Others Throughout the Organization.

• Put Them Into Situations Where Their Accomplishments are Seen.
The Rigidness of Quality

Quality as a Career Tends to be More Rigid Than Most. It is Hard to Work Remotely When You are Chained to Production.

- Provide Projects That Allow Some Flexibility.
- Help Your Mentee to Understand and Embrace a More Rigid Work Life.
  - Provide Work/Life Balance Tips.
  - Provide Personal Anecdotes. Use Caution!
  - Follow-up Often and Listen.
Harnessing and Focusing the Enthusiasm of Youth

Youthful New Employees are Ready to Set the World On Fire and Provide Value to the Organization. This is Their Greatest Asset!

- Know Your Mentee.
  - Being Timid is Not a Sign of Lack of Enthusiasm.
  - Relate Other Areas of Quality to What Excites Them.
  - Be Excited Yourself!
- Reign Them Back When Needed, Gently!
Continual Learning and Emersion in Quality

Continual Learning and Emersion in the Quality Community Will Help Your Mentee Build Passion for and Excitement in Quality.

• Attend ASQ Section Meetings and Training With Your Mentee.

• Attend Conferences, Such as This One, With Your Mentee.

• Encourage ASQ Certification.
  • “I Just Got My Degree.”
  • “I Think I Should Get My MBA/MBS First.”
  • “This Job Already Has a Terrible Work/Life Balance.”
  • “We Don’t Do Half This Stuff Here.”
MENTORING THE EXPERIENCED EARLY CAREER HIRE
3 Mentoring Topics for the Experienced Hire

1. Experience = Skills + Biases
2. The Stressors of a Career Change
3. Continual Learning and Certification
Experience = Skills + Biases

Years of Experience Means Your Mentee Will Have Unique Skill Sets and Biases.

These Skills and Biases Can be Both an Asset and a Hinderance.

Never Discount Your Mentee’s Skills.

Biases are Normal!

Biases and Negative Outlooks are a Product of Previous Environments.
Experience = Skills + Biases

Acknowledge the Mentee’s Experience and Skills.

• Be Open to Learning From Your Mentee.

• Provide Projects Which Utilize These Skills Whenever Possible.

• Allow Your Mentee to Share Their Experiences Whenever Appropriate.

• Show How Quality Enhances Your Mentees Skills.

• Firmly but Gently Explain That Some Things May Need to be “Unlearned.”
Communicate Openly and Frankly About any Biases.

- Determine What Biases and Negative Outlooks Your Mentee May Have.
- Listen to Understand Where These Biases Come From, How Were They Formed?
- Address Each Bias and Determine if They are Negative or Positive.
- Acknowledge That You May Very Well Have the Same Bias(es).
- Create a Plan Together to Eliminate as Many Negative Biases and Outlooks as Possible, For Both of You.
Starting a New Career Path May be Extremely Stressful for Your Mentee.

- Acknowledge With Your Mentee That a New Career Can Be Stressful.
- Provide an Adjustment Period Where Requirements are Loosened.
- Create an Obtainable Short and Long Term Plan for Your Mentee.
- Act as Liaison Between Your Mentee and Previous Co-Workers and Supervisors.
Continual Learning and Certification

There Can be Challenges and Frustrations With Continual Learning and Certification for Your Mentee, Especially at This Stage in Life.

- It May Have Been Years Since Your Mentee Has Been in School.
- They Already Have a Difficult Work/Life Balance.
- Job Demands May Not Allow For Training During Work Hours.
- “I Just Got This Position and You are Already Asking me to Think About the Next Position?”
- “I’m Good Where I’m at Until I Retire.”
MENTORING REGARDLESS OF EXPERIENCE
Mentoring 101

Regardless of the Situation or Person You are Mentoring, There are Certain Actions Which Will Always be Necessary and Correct.

• Preach The Classics!
  • Shewhart, Deming and Juran Can Create Passion for Quality.
  • Give Your Mentee a Book Like “Out of the Crisis” and Discuss on Regular Intervals.
  • Provide Work Time for Your Mentee to Read and Research.
  • Explain the Origins of What They Are Doing.
Mentoring 101

- Develop a Relationship With Your Mentee.
  - Be Approachable and Relatable.
  - Ensure Communication is 2-Way.
  - Get to Know Your Mentee on a Personal Level.
    - Do not Become Friends, At Least Not Until Much Later.
  - Evaluate the Relationship Regularly.
  - Ensure Power Dynamics Have not Changed.
Mentoring 101

- Examine Yourself at Regular Intervals.
  - Are you Learning From Your Mentee?
  - Has your Passion for Mentoring Changed, Negatively?
- Are You Putting Your Mentee’s Needs First?
- How’s Your Attitude?
- Are You Still Challenging Them?
Mentoring 101

• Manage Your Expectations Vs. the Mentee’s Abilities and Learning Curve to Avoid Burn-Out!
  • Evaluate Your Mentee’s Abilities Early and Often.
  • Not Everyone Will be a Superstar.
  • Give Small, Easily Obtainable Projects & Goals Up Front.
  • Look for the Warning Signs of Burn-Out.
  • Provide Stress Reduction Techniques.
Mentoring 101

• Praise and Positive Feedback is a Universal Builder of Self Esteem and Job Satisfaction.

• Even if They Say They Don’t, Everyone Likes Praise and Positive Feedback.

• Try to Provide Daily or at Least Weekly Praise and Positive Feedback to Your Mentee.

• Reevaluate Your Mentoring and/or Your Requirements on Your Mentee if Praise and Positive Feedback are Hard to Come by.

• Small Tokens of Appreciation Can go a Long Way.
Conclusion and Final Thoughts

• It’s All About Relationships!
• Know Your Mentee, Know Your Self.
• Don’t Forget to Preach From the Alter of Our Quality Forefathers.
• Remember it’s About the Mentee, Not You!
• Learn From Your Mentee!
• Evaluate, Evaluate, Evaluate!
• Have Fun!
Mentoring 101

Books on the Fundamentals of Quality Management

- Quality Is Free by Philip B. Crosby

- Out of the Crisis by W. Edwards Deming

- Monday Morning Leadership by David Cotrell

- Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom.
Questions/Comments/Concerns/Insults