

Let me tell you about 'meaningful mentoring' at Solomons..... no corporate speak, just telling you how it is, what does it all mean in practice in our business.

As a young and aspiring QS, I was self-driven to succeed. I knew that by committing to ongoing development and focusing on technical advancement, I would stand out amongst my peers, and would be better able to fast track my career during my formative years. I did this with limited support from my employers, seconded to remote sites with little interaction from my line manager, save for the obligatory annual appraisal, which if truth be known was not much more than a paper exercise, lacking focus and purpose. I realised that I would need to drive my career forward alone.

Now as a business owner, I have been keen to learn from my experience as an employee, to act on feedback from existing and potential team members, and to drive forward the principles set out in the Investors in People accreditation, for which we have achieved Gold standard, an achievement envisaged to be reached by top 2% of accredited organisations.

To strive to become an outperforming organisation, we are now pushing forward with 'Meaningful Mentorship' throughout the business, to ensure we create sustainable success. As an SME, without the constraints of a larger corporate, we have been able to enhance and adapt our development model to enable us to become an outperforming organisation.

What do I mean by 'Meaningful mentorship'?

Our mentoring model differs from traditional training and development methods, challenging standardisation whereby organisations provide training on a random, ad hoc, and inconsistent manner, ignorant of individual and business needs. Now, I appreciate and understand the need for the formalities of job descriptions, appraisal forms and the like, indeed we have all of these at Solomons. But these are tools to help us achieve a performance driven culture. At Solomons, the time is spent on real and focused **individual** support.

Our approach is to develop our senior team to create an uplifting and inspiring place to work, who not only communicate our company vision, values, and business performance achievements, but who also genuinely support each team member to become the best they can be. This approach is delivered through continuous dialogue between manager and team member, with support from our dedicated talent management team, who then structures development, plans methods to upskill technical and cultural competence, and will recognise staff for a job well done – how often do you hear those two very important words "Thank You" said to you at work?

I want my leadership team to lead by example, being role models and guardians of our professional standards. Our management team are there to provide support on a daily basis, and be on hand to offer guidance, support and development. Our company strives to outperform its competitors, to lead and inspire our team, to empower and involve people, to reward high performance, and to create sustainable success.....and this takes effort!



We have a business that goes the extra mile. Not only do we sponsor formal courses, professional accreditation, MSc's, Diplomas, Certificates etc., have an online learning portal to allow focused development in business critical areas, but we take time to explain how such development fits into the context of the work they undertake for our clients, so skills development becomes worthwhile to our team, and enables them to perform to higher levels, and meet our objectives of supporting people to become the best they can be.

Our managers are able to outline skills gaps, identify methods to reduce gaps, and to provide clarity on routes for progression in the business.

To be clear, there is no glass ceiling at Solomons.....just look at the age and demographic of our current Board of Directors, there is no 'dead man's shoes' here.....it's all about capability and competence - if you can deliver, you will be rewarded. Promises matter at Solomons, we mean what we say, we don't over promise, and we empower managers to involve and develop their teams. We have all the perks that you would expect from a good company, but whilst perks and benefits are great to have, a business engaging and supporting its talent, is the real mark of an outperforming organisation...and that's just where we want to be!