

# “The Mentor” Digest 3

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April – June 2007

## April 2007.

**Q:** I'm in my fifties, and have been a successful fundraiser for 20 years, after a high pressure marketing career. I work with several younger women and an older man. I am finding him increasingly difficult. He is courteous and supportive of my younger colleagues, but treats my work and me with contempt. He isn't even my boss. I can do nothing right, and my once confident self has disappeared. What can I do?

**A:** Start by acknowledging your right to be treated with respect. This man's behaviour is pushing you off balance, and you need first to regain your equilibrium, and then find a way to deal with his bullying. Talk to a trusted colleague, coach or friend, who believes in you. You will be more effective in confronting the problem when your self-esteem is restored. Work out *exactly* what is upsetting you. Then decide what you want to be different. Next, take time to get back in touch with your stronger, successful self by actively remembering when you felt good at work.

Now explore your options under your organisation's bullying policy with your HR team or a supporter, informally at first, and decide what you want to do. If you feel able to talk directly with your male colleague, be clear about what you want to say to him, and what outcome you want from the conversation. He may surprise you. If this feels unsafe, then think about complaining formally. Above all, refuse to be diminished any more.

## May 2007.

**Q:** I manage a small fundraising team. For financial reasons, we decided to combine our grants and corporate fundraising roles into one job. Recruiting into this role wasn't easy, but we did eventually find someone. However, one year on, we have a problem. While he is successful and enthusiastic at working with our corporate partners and sponsors, he is getting nowhere with grants, and we have missed some major opportunities. I am about to start a capability process with him, but don't want to compromise his success in his corporate work. What do you suggest?

**A:** Corporate and grants fundraising require very different strengths. Corporate fundraisers have to build face-to-face relationships, think on their feet and interface with a very fast-paced environment. Someone who works well in the corporate arena is likely to be more extrovert, and may tend to be a big picture thinker.

Grants fundraisers work from a basis of research and meticulous attention to detail. Successful grants officers are often happy working alone, and are very detail-focused. The two really don't mix – a good grants fundraiser would be likely to fail just as spectacularly at corporate work.

Please don't put a successful fundraiser under the shadow of a capability process. Instead, look carefully at what income you could raise if this clearly talented individual worked full-time on raising corporate income, which will maximise his strengths, and look for a part-time grants officer. You are far more likely to meet your funding targets this way.



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## June 2007.

**Q:** I left my last charity because, although I loved the work, the people were unfriendly and cliquy. I really hoped my new job would be different but my colleagues are just the same as the last ones. This keeps happening. What can I do to change it?

**A:** A man was watering his garden when a stranger stopped to pass the time of day. After chatting for a few minutes, the stranger asked what the people were like in the next town. "What were they like in the last one?" asked the gardener. "Awful" said the man, "really rude and unfriendly". "I think you'll find they are the same in the next town," replied the gardener.

A while later another stranger passed by and asked the same question. He, by contrast, had found the people in the last town friendly and welcoming. "I am sure you'll find they are the same in the next town" said the gardener.

People often respond to the way we are with them. If you are wary of them and perhaps half expecting hostility, you may be reflecting this in your body language and behaviour, perhaps unconsciously. You may find that if you decide to treat your new colleagues with openness and respect, you will receive the same in return. By choosing to expect and give positive energy, you will be modelling what you want to receive, and you'll contribute to a better work environment. Give it a try!

<http://www.professionalfundraising.co.uk/>



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