

THE MERITS OF MENTORING¹

The art of mentoring is a time-tested method for efficiently passing on the wisdom and knowledge of the experienced to those new in a field.

Mentoring remains a big part of the process at Pleasanton, California-based Clorox Corp. As one of the world's largest manufacturers of household products, Clorox has an intensive training regimen² for maintenance workers, which includes self-directed training and mentoring, proof that some companies still recognize its value. New craftspeople at Clorox need to acquire a particular array³ of skills, and to do so, each is paired with a more experienced veteran.

"We invest a lot in this type of training," says Bob Hooper. "Ours is a seasoned⁴ workforce, so we want our less experienced staffers⁵ to learn good habits from our veterans." The company assigns mentors to impart such skills as instrumentation, electrical, fluid power, HVAC⁶ and safety.

According to Hooper, the company sends trainees from one facility to another to gain access to mentors with particular skills. Visits typically last one week and "in another three months, they may have to go to another plant to learn something else." Good people, good skills

At Clorox, a group of veterans has been designated as mentors. These pros are spread throughout the company's 18 plants nationwide. Each is considered an expert in a particular craft or technology, and the company uses them on a regular basis. Clorox ensures that its workers take the mentoring program seriously by relating it to their pay. For example, if the company's mentoring requirements are not met, workers lose the chance for pay increases or promotions. "They have no choice but to follow through on this if they want to get anywhere," says Hooper.

Experts agree that the greatest efficiencies and the greatest savings that can be achieved by mentoring occur when the process takes place on-site. By doing more on-site mentoring and relying less on schools companies can save money.

Hooper agrees. "Not only is it cheaper, but people learn better when they can put their hands on the machines in the environment they'll be working in."

In the long run, this approach leads to more well-rounded, even happier employees.

GREGG MCQUEEN, impomag.com (adapted), January 1999

¹ mentoring: : *tutorat*. (a mentor : un *tuteur*.)

² regimen: *régime, rythme*

³ array: *nombre*

⁴ seasoned: experienced

⁵ staffers: : *personnels*

⁶ HVAC: : *courant à haute tension*

I. COMPREHENSION.

Faites, **en français**, un compte-rendu du document, en 150 mots environ. (10 points)

II. EXPRESSION

Répondez à ces deux questions **en anglais**.

1. Talking about yourself and your professional activity, give one example of technological training for which it is more appropriate to get on-site mentoring or, on the contrary, outside your workplace. Explain why.
(100 mots - 5 points)
2. Later in your career, would you accept to be a mentor? Why, or why not?
(100 mots - 5 points)