

MENTORING

The article in last month's Bulletin headed 'Hit the Ground Running!' referred to mentoring. It should be noted that, far from being a new idea, the principle of mentoring was referred to 21 years ago in the Meadowbank Orientation Address in 1994. We quote: *'We would look and hope and expect that the students will be able to help one another. There is really no better person to learn from than somebody who is just ahead of you. The whole thing is fresh in their minds, they will be conscious of the certain unknown factor that confronts you when you are presented with new material, they have accepted the challenge and they have met it and they will very often be the best ones to help.'*

Although mentoring has now been launched for senior students in most campuses, and real benefits are already being reaped, it is certainly not just for those at school. If you, a postgraduate student, feel as though you are isolated, struggling on your own and need some support and motivation, why don't you follow this excellent guidance and select a mentor? It is most refreshing how rapidly school students have nominated their mentors, as knowing straight away who would take a genuine interest in their progress. The mentor's support could cover some or all of the following –

- Your general methods and organisation;
- Preparation of a study programme;
- Set goals and dates by which those goals should be achieved;
- Agree on follow-up times, eg twice a week, weekly, fortnightly, etc;
- Be available day-on-day to help, support, guide and motivate;
- Encourage and support the smooth transition from the classroom to the boardroom;
- Take a particular interest in exam dates and results;
- Always encourage you to keep going.

DO YOU LIVE IN ENGLAND?

If you are resident in England and missed out on Government funding by not enrolling while you were still age 18, we want you to know about Babington College's generous offer to extend their 50% discount on the most popular apprenticeship courses until **31st March 2015**. The Courses concerned are listed in the leaflet accompanying this Bulletin. Babington College is UBT's approved provider of Apprenticeship Courses and strongly supports the UK Government's policy of encouraging eligible employers to use the Apprenticeship programme. This helps fund the training of young people in their job roles and supports them in securing a lifelong qualification.

Interested? send an email to giles.bennett@ubteam.com for more information and enrolment guidance.

ONLY A NARROW WINDOW

Whilst on the subject of Apprenticeship Courses, it is timely to remind students who are due to leave school this Summer (2015), who are already age 18 and who wish to enrol on an Apprenticeship Course with 100% funding, that they must enrol **before** their 19th birthday in order not to lose 50% of the funding. This means that the oldest students in the current year 13, ie those born in September 1996 and shortly after, have only a narrow window in which to enrol between leaving school and reaching age 19.

NO GAP

The article immediately above highlights the need to commence (or continue) postgraduate studies without a break following completion of secondary education. Too often there is a mindset that a rest after final exams and after leaving school is so essential, but **IT IS NOT NEEDED** and actually boils down to 'poor me!' Time is too precious to waste and it has been found only too often that those who go for a gap period never get going again, sadly to their detriment. They tell themselves that they are too busy to fit a course into their routine, whereas if there is no gap, postgraduate studies is already part of that routine!

S.W.O.T.



A SWOT analysis helps us all to identify our key strengths and weaknesses. Most would know that SWOT stands for: **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, **T**hreats. It might seem a sweeping comment, but in general everyone is good at something. Part of the purpose of schooling is to discover what you are good at, to put your abilities to good use and develop them so that you can embark on your desired vocation equipped with a broad base of knowledge and skills. Selection of a suitable postgraduate course is very much in line with the development of your inherent skills. Our advice to you is to go for a postgraduate subject that you are good at, that you will enjoy, that will stretch you and at the same time will realise your potential.

SWOT analysis is needed not only for postgraduate course selection, but also when writing your CV and preparing for a job interview. A key element to being successful when going for a job is to understand what you are good at, so that you can effectively sell yourself. Most prospective employers will ask about your key strengths and what skills you can bring to the business. You must be ready to give an honest reply. It helps to ask others to name your weaknesses so that you can try to turn them around. It's sound advice always to work on promoting your strengths and rectifying your weaknesses. Underlying opportunities and threats normally emerge during the analysis of strengths and weaknesses.

Honesty is crucial in working through the above processes, so always be utterly honest with yourself.

A RENEWED APPEAL FOR ACCOUNTANTS

Many will remember reading the following recently: *'I like my accounts up to date, up to date, up to date. It's a pain having to go back twelve months and trying to find out what a transaction is. Do it every month..... instead of trying to hold it up in fudgy land, and then in twelve months' time you're still trying to fudge.'* This statement was concluded by the words **'the need of accountants'**. Students who are currently considering which postgraduate course to pursue will be interested to read that a recent survey of 5000 workers across 60 careers has shown that Accountancy, often denounced as dull and boring, is actually ranked as **the best job in the world**. This demonstrates that, once again, the valuable guidance given over 30 years ago that we need the best tax accountants we can get to get the best tax deductions we can get has fired our students to follow that guidance and equip themselves with valuable accountancy qualifications. "One of the best things is meeting a wide variety of people and getting involved with your clients' affairs and the area they work in", said one of the persons surveyed, who works in accountancy. If you possess an accountancy qualification, the skills you have acquired will be used by thankful persons and you will be a respected member of the community. So, if you have not yet enrolled on a postgraduate course, let those words constantly ring in your ears – **'Every young person needs an understanding of Accounts, Tax and Law'** and send an email to geoff.holding@ubteam.com for details of recommended courses.

"Do not let what you think you can't do interfere with what you haven't tried to do."