

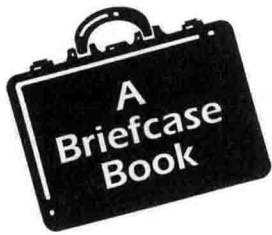


- Discover and develop your personal strengths
- Set a course for success
- Tap into your true potential

BE YOUR OWN MENTOR



ANNE BRUCE
Author of *Discover True North*



Be Your Own Mentor

Anne Bruce



New York Chicago San Francisco Lisbon London
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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 FGR/FGR 0 9 8 7

ISBN: 978-0-07-148777-1

MHID: 0-07-148777-8

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Bruce, Anne, 1952–

Be your own mentor / by Anne Bruce.

p. cm.

ISBN 0-07-148777-8 (alk. paper)

1. Career development. 2. Self-evaluation. 3. Mentoring in business.

I. Title.

HF5381.B678 2008

650.1—dc22

2007044369

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**Be Your
Own Mentor**

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Preface

Take a moment to look at the front of this book. Look specifically at the title: *Be Your Own Mentor*. Why did you purchase a book with this title? My guess is that you and I interpret *Be Your Own Mentor* to mean the same thing. In order to mentor yourself to a higher level of potential and competency, you must take what I like to call the *whole-person approach* to life.

Our lives at work are not separate from our personal lives. We are one. Henry Ford would often say, “How come when I ask for a pair of hands, I get a human being as well?” The answer is this: one dimension of a person’s life is affected by all others. No longer can organizations or their leaders afford to compartmentalize their lives or the lives of their employees. To draw an invisible line that suggests any person can leave his or her personal life at the door when showing up for work totally disregards and ignores the most critical aspects of humanness and self-mentoring.

So let’s just say that this invisible line from yesterday’s management rulebook is extremely outdated. Workplace psychology teaches us that it is practically impossible for a person to close off his or her personal life on the job, simply because this contradicts human nature at its core. When we take a whole-person approach to our lives and careers many benefits begin to surface, such as sharper innovation and creativity, clearer competencies regarding how we do what we do, brighter intellectual capital, confidence, compassion, and integrity—and that’s just for starters. I hope that this whole-person approach is something that gets you excited! This book

is going to provide you with a special magnifying glass and the life compasses you need to help these behaviors and talents all come into focus—sharp and specific—directional, not flailing and lost.

Throughout this book, I'll guide you further and more specifically into the process of taking the whole-person approach to self-mentoring. But trust me: it all connects to being your own amazing mentor in your quest for greater career and personal success, at whatever level and competency you are comfortable tackling.

Are You Ready for an Extreme Life-Coaching Makeover?

Here's the deal, right up front. There is no such thing as *abracadabra* when it comes to becoming your own mentor or life coach. With the exception of the mythical pixie dust that exists only at Disneyland and Disney World, there is no fairy dust to sprinkle on, or around, people in hopes of making them happier, healthier, more intuitive, career savvy, money savvy, smarter managers, more loyal, better moms or dads, more loving husbands or wives, devoted children, or better in any other way. Achieving those things takes all of *your* hard work and dedication. So to this end I hold you accountable.

You see, this book is also about accountability, not just self-mentoring. Accountability is a critical component of self-mentoring. In my workshops and seminars I often say, "The real learning begins when the class has ended," to drive home the point that I am not the one responsible for the attendees' learning. I can help to facilitate their expertise and ideas and knowledge. It is the learners who are ultimately responsible for following up on the materials and assignments, using my suggestions, and applying all they've gathered in class to be the best they can be on the job and at home. I cannot do this for them. The same applies to this book. It is my hope that having

this book to help you along the way will make that work less difficult. You are the only one, however, who can sharpen your skills and talents to become your own effective mentor and life coach after you have finished this book.

By asking the question, “Are you ready for an extreme life-coaching makeover?” I am trying to prepare you to get ready to take the lead, roll up your sleeves, and embrace new ideas and unconventional approaches to learning a new way to mentor yourself and be your best life coach in the process. It’s time to get on the path of a life-coaching makeover, and this book will give you lots of practical tools to get you started. You don’t have to pay anyone anything, hire a career counselor, or go to a therapist to build your confidence to try harder. It’s all right here, right now, in this book.

What’s Your Makeover Going to Take? And What’s It Really Mean to Be Your Own Mentor?

You may be thinking, “Well, what’s this life-coaching makeover going to take?” That depends on you. How much of your life do you want to make over? What are you willing to do to take control and learn to be your own mentor in the process? Self-mentoring is not a gene you inherit from a distant relative. It’s a learned skill that you hone over time with practice and commitment.

Let’s look at it from a survival perspective. Life is about living and surviving, navigating the rough waters, and relishing a new and remarkable view of the horizon. If you’re lost in the woods, a compass quickly becomes a key instrument in your survival. So, if you are feeling lost in your career, or even in your personal life too, or if you want to start a business but don’t know if it’s worth the risk, well, you need a compass to show you the way, right? And that in turn builds greater self-confidence and self-assurance. Self-mentoring is all about *self*.

Here's where the *self* part comes in. You are the compass. I bet you were thinking that the compass was a totally separate instrument from yourself. It's not. You are the instrument. You are the precious container that holds the answers—the lightning in the bottle—and you are the bottle. You have everything you need to navigate your life and mentor yourself to higher grounds. This book is going to show you how a life-coaching and self-mentoring approach is within reach and easier to implement than you ever dreamed possible, whether your issues and challenges are in the workplace or in your own backyard. Here's how to recognize some of the signs that you may be overdue for a life-coaching and self-mentoring makeover.

You're Ready for a Life-Coaching Makeover if You Are:

- Confused and angry about your present job
- Having a difficult time with personal and business relationships
- Sick and tired of always being sick and tired (physically or mentally)
- Having problems making decisions easily
- Never happy with the outcome of your efforts
- Always feeling like a victim
- Incessantly whining about your life
- Repeating the same old bad habits
- Getting nowhere fast
- Always feeling afraid, but not sure what of
- Feeling like life is happening *at you* instead of *for you*
- Attracting all the wrong people, places, and things, but unable to figure out why
- Wishing you were working at something else, for someone else
- Dreading going home from work, or dreading going to work from home
- Afraid of taking risks of any kind
- Not feeling in charge of your own life

- Looking for a simple-to-use formula that will give you the tools you need to take charge and guide yourself in the direction of a life you so richly deserve and more—short of hiring someone else to do it for you, tell you what you’re doing wrong and how to do it right, or move in with you and live in your spare bedroom until you get it right.

A Go-to and Keep-It-Going Resource

Let this book be your official “go-to” and “keep-it-going” resource. I promise it will not tell you how to hire a career counselor or find a life coach. You already know how to do that. And do not misinterpret my perception of these services; I think they are great and they can often be a good and solid first step. I do lots of life coaching and mentoring for people from all over the world, and I even promote using a life coach heavily on my radio shows. Getting a formal coach can be a great way to kick-start your business, relationships, and overall direction of well-being. What I don’t recommend in my seminars, or write about in my books, is becoming perpetually dependent on others when it comes to self-development and professional development. It’s easy to fall into the “tell me what to do and how to do it” trap.

I have met folks at my seminars who confide to me during a break that they have been in therapy or using a life coach for 10 years, and some even longer. However, after a reasonable amount of time, I believe most of us want to learn to do things ourselves, figure things out, and solve our own work and life problems. If it takes 10 years of therapy and professional coaching to get the answers, then I’m guessing that person may not be truly motivated to take accountability for his or her own life, learn new lessons, and become a self-directed learner. Or, frankly, this question always comes to mind: “What is this person afraid of?” I wrote this book so that you will figure “it” out sooner rather than later and become accountable and self-

reliant in the process, less fearful of the unknown, and more confident in yourself. The key is to count on yourself first and foremost. Why is this important? Because the only one you can ultimately count on in the end is you.

There are two constants that support the important concept of self-mentoring at any level of personal and professional development and growth:

1. Understanding that you will one day leave this life
2. Accepting that you, and you alone, are the only one in charge of this life until that time comes

So now that you—and no one else—are the one in charge, how will you go forward with gusto? What will you do to make your career stronger, your relationships more meaningful, or your plans for the future more exciting? How will you be accountable, and what do you plan to do about it?

That's the real question and the real response to anyone who claims to be truly accountable. What do you plan to do with your newfound accountability?

I, for one, believe you'll be better equipped to answer that after you uncover the powerful, four-part, self-mentoring formula within this book. As I said earlier, this book will become your keep-it-going resource as you go through each step of the process.

A Do-It-Yourself Guide to Achieving Greater Career and Personal Success

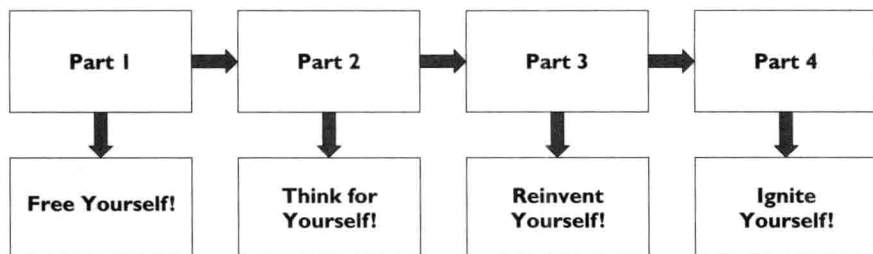
This book was written to guide you in your quest for achieving greater career and personal success. It provides guidelines and assessments, tools and practices for maintaining high levels of life performance and productivity, a safe and happy work and home environment, and hope for a better tomorrow. That's the purpose of this book. That's the challenge, and, ultimately, that is the expedition you are preparing to embark on.

Whether you are a manager, supervisor, entrepreneur, aspiring entrepreneur, part-time student, part-time worker, retiree, or a combination of several of these roles, you most likely are not willing to spend tons of time looking for the answers to every challenge in your life. Surveys frequently show that as time goes on more people have less time to find what they are looking for or willingness to spend that time investigating what's most important to them. Life happens and people usually have other demands to deal with, such as workplace issues, children, aging parents, money problems, health issues, and more.

We live in a breakneck-speed world, where *fast and practical* is the mantra and where ready references for managers and life-coaching tools, like the ones offered in the Briefcase Book Series, are desperately needed. *Be Your Own Mentor* is a book whose time has come—a time for practical self-guidance, complete with worksheets, real-life coaching tools, assessments, and the inspiration to fuel and guide you, the reader, in making the most of yourself at whatever level is fitting and appropriate for you at this place and time in your life.

Businesspeople today want a fast and easy way to get on track and stay on track. When I am teaching my seminars and workshops around the globe, participants appreciate when I can give them a formula that they can use and apply to their individual circumstances and unique personalities. Why? Because a formula that can be easily followed becomes a person's roadmap or blueprint for furthering their success and allows the journey to be navigable, one baby step at a time. When we use formulas to guide a life process, we are able to "chunk things down" into bite-sized portions of understandability and comprehension. We simplify the big picture and lessen the chances of feeling overwhelmed in a world where information and guidelines are being thrown at us from every perspective.

Figure P.1 shows the formula you'll be using in this book.



Lightning

in

a

Bottle

=

YOU—behaving as your own mentor—an innovative thinker, decision maker, solution finder, problem solver, and change agent. The lightning is *within* you. You are the bottle—the precious container that holds the talent and possibilities for a better, more productive, and joyful tomorrow. Now, how you get there will be the result of your reading and applying the information in this book and using this critical four-part formula for achieving greater career and personal success.

Figure P.1. Stay Competitive. Be Confident. A 4-Part Do-It-Yourself Life-Coaching Formula for Becoming Your Own Mentor.

Fitness Counts—Are You Up for the Challenge?

Now that you've looked at the four-part formula you'll be using, remember the first words at the top of the formula: Stay competitive. Be confident. These aren't passive requests; they are action terms, and this is where fitness counts.

Think of this book as your personal “life gym” where there are no dues to pay or membership requirements. There is no aerobics class or equipment to jump on and ride. The sweat you’ll produce will be “sweat equity,” not the kind you perspire while using the treadmill. When it comes to making this book a life tool for greater success, fitness counts. As you can tell, I’m not talking about your weight, eyesight, physical strength, endurance, illnesses you might be living with, cholesterol count, or blood pressure reading. I’m talking about life fitness—your overall well-being when it comes to your fitness as it relates to the following:

- Family relationships
- Marriage
- Children
- Friendships
- Business relationships
- Management skills
- Financial savvy
- Happiness
- Loving your job
- Igniting your passion
- Activating your higher potential
- Firing yourself up and staying motivated
- Spiritual well-being
- Teambuilding
- Igniting your many intelligences and competencies
- Getting organized
- Living up to your greater potential and possibility
- Reaching your goals for work and life

Within the pages of this book you’ll find a powerful new way to activate your greater potential and become the primary navigator of your own destiny. But all of this takes muscle if you are to play a significant role in the process. How will you build your self-mentoring muscle? How will you select and utilize the best ideas for you?

Selecting the Best Ideas for You in This Book

Whether you're reading Chapter 2, "Traditional Career Planning Will Be Gone as We Know It," or Chapter 10, "Why Your Self-Esteem Is Directly Related to Your Intelligence," you'll find within this book some of the best and most useful ideas on creating a jubilant and uplifting self-mentoring program—a program that fits your specific needs and requirements. These ideas and suggestions in the program come from a wide variety of experts and sources—businesspeople like you who have been mentoring themselves along the way in a fashion that works for them and then getting the results they've always wanted.

Other ideas in this book come from many talented people—some you have heard of and some you haven't. Many are well-known managers and leaders, others not so well known but noticeably effective in their self-mentoring and management styles. Some are authors, consultants, scholars, and entrepreneurs. Some are living and some are dead. Maybe you have heard of these people and their companies, or perhaps you've read about them and admire their people skills and talent for bringing out the best in others. Regardless of your familiarity with the experts in this book, all of them have proven performance records when it comes to creating extraordinary opportunity for themselves and their organizations and for leaving their indelible imprint on the hearts and minds of those who have been fortunate enough to work with them or know them as friends and family.

So where do the experts and examples in this book come from? They come from all sectors of the global workplace—business, professions, politics, government, social and nonprofit organizations, manufacturing, health care, technology, and more. Their contributions to this book consist of interviews I have conducted in person and by phone. Plus, there are organizations and people in this book whom I have yet to meet in person or interview. Yet, I've studied and researched them and their

organizations for years, showcasing their invigorating and mentor-boosting styles in my keynote speeches and workshops I facilitate around the world. When it comes to the subject of being your own mentor, lots of people are doing it right and love to tell their stories. You'll find those stories and real-world examples from which you can glean the gems of how to be your own mentor right here.

The Purpose of This Book

I wrote this book with a specific purpose in mind. That purpose was not just to have this book be read by managers and then put on the shelf to collect dust. I wrote *Be Your Own Mentor* to be *used* by managers and others, including you, as a valuable field guide to help shape and increase your chances of success. I wrote this book with the explicit idea that the four-part formula I have developed over years of research, writing, and training will give you some of the tools you need—specifically, a compass—to find your way to greater prosperity and inner happiness.

My goal while writing this book was that you, the reader, would be able to easily glean important pieces of information and apply them in the most appropriate and effective way on the job and at home, as quickly as possible. The format and style of a book such as this one in the Briefcase Series allows that to happen quite easily.

Manager's Call to Action

In all of the Briefcase Books I have written, I have made a personal request of my readers. Here it is again. My request is that you take the abundant wellspring of information in this book, information that will hopefully inform and inspire you, and interpret it as your own personal call to action as it pertains to



These boxes give you tips and tactics for being smart as a new manager and help you to develop important self-mentoring skills as your own life coach.



These boxes provide warnings for where things could go wrong when you're dealing with employees and mentoring.



Here you'll find how-to hints to make managing and self-mentoring go more easily.



Every subject has its special jargon and terms. These boxes provide definitions of these concepts.



Want to know how others have done it? Look for these boxes.



Here you'll find specific procedures you can follow to understand various management tasks and life-coaching tools.



How can you make sure you won't make a mistake when managing? You can't, but these boxes will give you practical advice on how to minimize the possibility.

becoming your own mentor. In other words, do something with this information!

Remember earlier I asked you to think about if you were ready for an extreme life-coaching makeover and told you that,