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Meet the Mentor!

BY KAVERI ROY

MENTORSHIP refers to a personal developmental relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps a less experienced or less knowledgeable person. The word itself was inspired by the character of Mentor in Homer's Odyssey. The legend behind mentoring is as old as history itself; from Socrates who was the mentor of Plato, and Plato who then mentored Aristotle.

It is often said that to make it the top, one needs to have a mentor who helps show him/her the roadmap to success. The discovery of one's career - some say - begins with finding a mentor in the first place. Realizing the importance of this concept, a trio of ex-IIT graduates and young professionals have founded Mentorpolis.com, an online and offline venture that has been started with the idea of providing mentoring to the Generation Next.

The Concept

Ex-IITians Avijit Sharma along with his friends Anshul Agarwal and Pratik Agarwal started the online venture that provides professional advice to students, from accomplished mentors of top-notch institutes and has notched over 600 registered mentees in a span of a year. "The traditional sense of mentoring has been of coaching but our perspective is different. Mentorship today is more about the providing information guidance by someone who has been in your shoes not too long ago, keeping the traditional value intact," explains Sharma.

"We had our seniors as your mentors who probably guided us through everything related to our career and even relationships and life in general! However, we realized not everybody has such kind of resource at his or her disposal. And this is where we felt the need to provide a unified network for all to find authentic advice on their career goals from people who have done what the mentee aspires to do," adds Sharma, co-founder of Mentorpolis.com on the

birth of the website that provided a mentor-mentee nexus online.

The Connect

Mentoring is now being looked at as a notch above counseling, more as a one-stop solution from people who have been through the same phase in their lives. The mentees in distress can seek solutions from mentors who can best understand the mentee's situation and who are from different verticals of higher education. The current list of mentors boasts alumina of IIT, IIM, Stanford, Harvard who dish up the much needed worldly advice to the mentee on verticals ranging mostly between engineering and MBA. "We have kept the verticals concen-

A bunch of young professionals have started a new venture which underlines the importance of Mentoring

on the kind of background and the query of the mentee and find them a mentor from our pool who has the expertise on the same field for a better connect and equipped enough to provide the advice being looked for," explains Sharma. Once the connect is made they could provide the service through web, telephonic consultation and even in-person.

The Business model

There is a per session fee of Rs 500 for the facility, which helps the mentoring reach beyond the obvious boundaries, so that more and more people may benefit from it. The venture is modeled to provide authentic information on niche topics, with a reach that can be available for the tier two cities, as well. "Mentoring has to step beyond the confines of management schools because it is based on the fact that it would help one find their chosen area of interest and not just a career to look for." Sharma signed off with the popular 'Three Idiots' sentiment echoing strongly. Something that is the absolute need of the hour in the current stress-laden world of the young ones.

TRENDS



trate on the major higher educational concerns so far. But we are soon going to expand into law, finance, medical and even the unconventional careers," adds Sharma.

A mentee calls to put forth his/her questions, which are soon followed by a two-sided exchange of customized advice. "We enquire

Fast Facts:

How does it work?
Register on the website <www.Mentorpolis.com>, request a mentor after browsing through the pool. You are connected soon to a mentor who offers three hours a week on the telephone, or even personal meeting if possible.

How much does it cost?
Rs 500 per call for a telephonic consultation. Personal meetings are obviously costlier.

Which verticals do I call for?
Study abroad
Management
Engineering
Job preparation
Entrepreneurship
And even Internships