

## Unit 4.1 Affirming Success

### OVERVIEW

When we look back over our careers, most of us can point to a mentor that helped us along the way. Perhaps it was a teacher, a first boss, or an older co-worker. The mentor showed us “the ropes,” and probably helped us to climb them. But more than that, the mentor helped us to realize that we *could* climb the ropes. The mentor helped us to trust ourselves.

What effective mentors do is very straightforward: they *affirm success*. Of course, as we progress in our careers, we have fewer and fewer mentors. And very few of us have mentors in our personal lives and relationships. In those cases, there is only one place to look: *to ourselves*.

Affirming success is the process of becoming our own best mentor. How do we do that? Think about it a moment. A good mentor is someone who can see more in you than you ever could see yourself. A mentor sees the positive in you, and helps you to build on it. And when a mentor notices defects or challenges, he doesn't ignore them, but he doesn't focus unduly on them either. Instead, he helps you to correct them, or to turn your weaknesses into strengths.

In other words, a good mentor looks at you with a clear purpose in mind: helping you to be the best that you can be. If you can look at yourself in that same way, you will make great progress in building the kind of personal life, work life, and relationships that you want.

### UNIT QUESTIONS / EXERCISES

1. Think of a mentor that you have had in your life? How did the mentor treat you? What did you learn? Share your answers with your coach and/or the group.

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2. Now think of a situation in which you were a mentor to someone. How did you adjust your perceptions of that person? Discuss your answers with your coach and/or the group.

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3. Think about how this applies to your work relationship at John L. Scott. What kind of informal mentoring takes place, even among peers? Do individuals in the organization play a constructive mentoring role, or not? Do you? Discuss your answers with the group.

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