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## OUR MENTORS AND MENTEES SHARE WHY THEY FIND MENTORING SO VALUABLE

Mentee

### Nicole Eckels

Co-Founder and Creative Director at Sapphire Group, Glasshouse Fragrances and Circa Home. Featured in *Rare Birds: Australia's 50 Influential Women Entrepreneurs*.

#### WHAT WERE YOUR KEY OBJECTIVES OR EXPECTATIONS OF THE MENTORING PROGRAM?

Being an entrepreneur is lonely and sometimes I felt crazy and out of my depth. When I contacted McCarthy Mentoring, I wanted someone I could talk to that would understand my trials and struggles and that could give me advice about the best way to move forward.

#### DID THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS?

It has exceeded my expectations. Where on earth could I have met such a distinguished woman in business with decades of experience to help me through my journey? While Geraldine wasn't an entrepreneur, she guided me on how to define roles and responsibilities for the staff and how to address structural change for the board which has made an enormous difference.



NICOLE ECKELS

#### WHAT ASPECTS HAVE BEEN MOST VALUABLE?

I felt isolated and disempowered before I worked with Geraldine. She helped me find the techniques and language to face the tough issues I was facing.

#### WAS YOUR MENTOR A GOOD MATCH?

Geraldine was a perfect match, yes.

#### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS FOR YOU AS AN ENTREPRENEUR?

As an entrepreneur, I lacked the extensive corporate business experience of a person who would most likely be in my very senior role. I didn't have to earn my position through experience like most senior people in business, I inherited it. And yet, a corporate structure is what many experienced employees are used to working in and rely on for peace of mind. We now have enough structure to keep balance and govern the business. The mentoring provided alignment, clarity and focus.

#### WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THE MCCARTHY MENTORING PROGRAM?

Absolutely. It was nothing short of an honor to have worked with Geraldine and McCarthy Mentoring.

#### WOULD YOU RECOMMEND HAVING A MENTOR?

Absolutely. I consider having a mentor a must have for entrepreneurs.

#### HOW CAN MENTORS SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS?

By connecting them to their network and people that are experts in their field.

Mentor

### Geraldine Paton AO

Former Executive Director of News Corporation, Company Director, founding member of Chief Executive Women (CEW). Received Order of Australia in 1999 and the Centenary Medal in 2001.

#### WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT BEING A MENTOR?

I enjoy working with talented individuals from disparate occupations who present with different challenges. While I share my knowledge and experience I also continue to learn as we problem solve and explore issues together. I also delight in my mentees' success.

#### HOW DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE ASSISTED NICOLE AS HER MENTOR?

We developed trust and rapport very quickly which allowed Nicole to share her greatest concerns early in the program - no time was lost in targeting her greatest challenges.

#### WAS IT A GOOD MATCH?

Yes. Nicole is a force of nature...brimming with ideas and a passion for developing her business. I had worked with similarly driven people in my corporate career so we connected immediately.

#### WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE BENEFITS OF THE MENTORING FOR NICOLE?

She is more self-aware and confident, has a clearer understanding of corporate structure and essential management skills. Nicole now acknowledges how critical clear and consistent communication is when running and developing a business.

#### WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE BENEFITS FOR NICOLE'S BUSINESS?

Strong confident leadership inspires a team to work more effectively towards delivering targets. Clear communication ensures everyone knows what the goals are and what is expected of them. These basic guidelines work in any corporate structure but are more critical for small start-up business which need to perform within a specific time frame.

#### WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE FOR FUTURE MENTEES?

I believe each mentee needs personalised guidance and bespoke solutions.



GERALDINE PATON AO



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