



MESA Planner Forum

Wednesday 17th September 2025

Experience the Power of Mentorship That's Shaping the Future of Events

Thank you for attending the recent MESA Planner Forum and thank you to **Richard John**, COO of **Realise**, MESA Member, for moderating. Thank you to our keynote speaker: **Max Fellows**, Top Voice on LinkedIn, TED Talk and Keynote Speaker, and Co-Founder of **ELEVATE Mentoring**.

Max shared lessons from a decade of advancing professional development in the events industry. He explained the differences between coaching and mentoring, detailed the structure and impact of the Elevate Mentoring Programme, and led a group exercise on personal development using the 'Wheel of Life' tool.

Mentorship Roles

We discussed the role and responsibilities of mentors in supporting others, emphasising that mentors are not therapists or counsellors but provide guidance through empathetic listening and constructive feedback. Max clarified that while mentors can help identify skill gaps and suggest resources, the responsibility for solving problems ultimately lies with the individual being mentored.

Balancing Work and Personal Development

We discussed challenges around personal development and engagement, particularly when individuals are busy with work responsibilities. Max shared an example from his previous business where despite offering significant training bursaries, only one employee utilised the benefit, highlighting how people often prioritise work demands over development opportunities.

A group discussion used the 'Wheel of Life' tool to explore work-life balance and personal growth priorities asking participants to rate eight life areas (Career, Family and Friends, Significant Other, Fun and Recreation, Health, Money, Personal Growth, and Physical Environment) on a scale of 0-10

Key Points

- Elevate Mentoring Programme has supported 2,500+ industry professionals over 10 years
- Coaching = prescriptive/problem-focused; Mentoring = holistic/long-term
- Current programme: 624 participants in 8–10-month pairings; expanding to 1,000 next year
- Common mentee challenges: confidence, branding, resilience, feedback, management, and presenting
- Mentors provide guidance - not therapy - with protections in place through agreements and support access
- Success rate: 87% of mentor-mentee pairs stay connected
- Expansion planned for New York and Sydney in 2025
- Elevate integrating AI for better mentor/mentee matching

You can meet with Max at ibtm this year in Barcelona during stage sessions and at the Elevate Lounge @ ibtm.

Request access to the [ELEVATE Knowledge Vault](#)

ELEVATE Mentoring (1)

00:00:34 | 2 questions | 21 of 23 (91%) participa...

1. Have you ever HAD a Coach or mentor? (Single choice)

21/21 (100%) answered

YES (11/21) 52%

NO (10/21) 48%

2. Have you ever BEEN a Coach or a Mentor? (Single choice)

21/21 (100%) answered

YES (9/21) 43%

NO (12/21) 57%

ELEVATE Mentoring (2)

00:00:22 | 1 question | 19 of 22 (86%) participated

1. Do you feel you could benefit from a Coach / Mentor? (Single choice)

19/19 (100%) answered

Not very much (1/19) 5%

Somewhat (4/19) 21%

Quite a bit (10/19) 53%

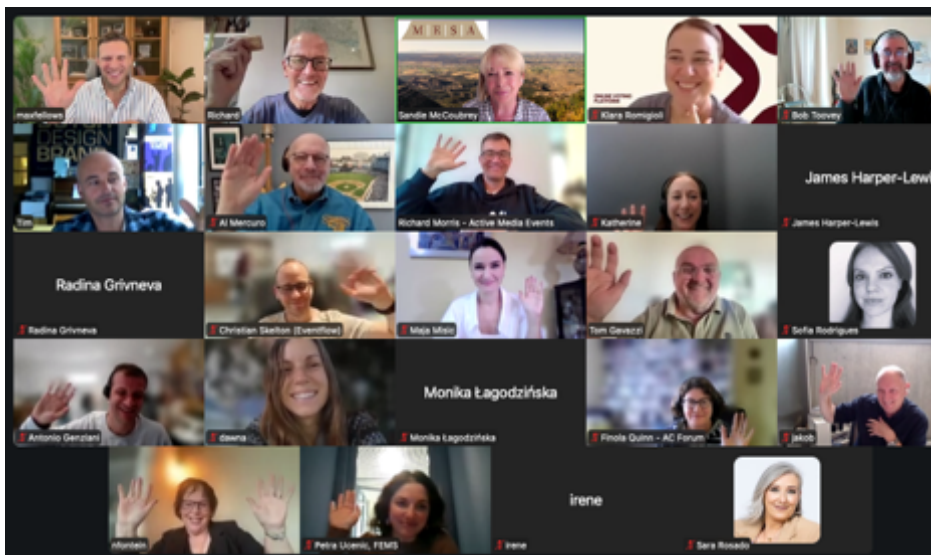
A lot (4/19) 21%

Please [complete our short post survey](#) to let us know what you thought about the event!

Wheel of Life Exercise – Downloadable from MESA Community Platform (with Member Access)

<https://mesa.wall.idloom.com/#/filelastversion/3332>

Or from <https://themesa.community/mesa/pages/previous-mesa-planner-forums>



We look forward to seeing you at our next events!

Going to ibtm in Barcelona?

Meet with us at on Stands P47 / P48 and P49!

[Attend MESA Re-FRESH Dinner](#) on Wednesday evening

[MESA at ibtm](#)

[MESA Events page](#)

[Please connect to our LinkedIn page](#)

Thank you