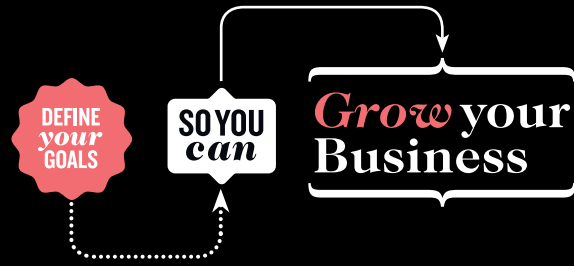


# Ian Johnston

## twenty/twenty DBA mentee



Owner, Quinine  
DBA Twenty / Twenty Mentoring Programme  
[www.dbamentoring.org.uk](http://www.dbamentoring.org.uk)

I got a huge amount out of the mentoring programme. It was recommended to me by a DBA Expert, so I knew what my needs were before I started which was an excellent starting point.

### A perfect match

My mentor was brilliant, and gave so much more than I expected. As a sole owner in the business, I don't have peers with similar experience so it was brilliant to draw on his wealth of knowledge.

You spend so much time thinking about how to please your clients, and not nearly enough time focusing on the business itself. My mentor was able to put everything into perspective – being reflective yet forward focused at the same time. As he had distance, he was able to bring observations and points that I would never have seen.

The match has been perfect, and being really specific in the application certainly helped this.

### Structure

We agreed on a disciplined approach, involving a call every week, and meeting every month, which worked really well. With mentoring, you get out what you put into it. We stuck to it, and the frequency was just right for me. Having structure, and being accountable to someone else, drove me to be professional about it. In turn, I became professional about my business, rather than just with clients.

From being solely client focused, we also became business focused – which was a huge shift for us, taking us to another level.

### Results

In practical terms, we have seen massive growth in the last 12 months: doubled our staff, implemented amazing new systems to control the growth, moved to a new office, and are managing turnover in a much more controlled way. Part of that was made possible via the tools I picked up from mentoring, and part from the sounding board of experience.

I feel so privileged that I am a part of the DBA, and that we have access to it in the UK. My mentor has 30 years experience in the industry, and this just doesn't happen anywhere else in the world. The support the DBA offers is amazing.

**MY MENTOR WAS ABLE TO PUT EVERYTHING INTO PERSPECTIVE – BEING REFLECTIVE YET FORWARD FOCUSED AT THE SAME TIME**

Mentoring has changed the way I operate within my own team. My mentor was never prescriptive; it was all about offering perspectives. The initial group meeting to dispel the myths of mentoring helped, and focused us on working on issues together rather than building contacts. As these sessions involved all of the mentors and mentees on the programme, it was a learning path for all of us together.

Beyond that, I now count my mentor as a friend, and have hired him for his financial expertise. Invaluable.