

# **Mentorship Program**

## ***Mentor Guide***

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## Introduction to the Mentorship Guide

This guide, focused specifically on mentoring, will help employees grow in their career development. This guide serves as an important tool in developing leaders across your organization. The first part of this guide provides a high-level overview of mentoring. The second part provides tools to support the mentoring relationship.

Mentoring happens every day and can take many shapes and forms. In this guide, we use the terms mentor and mentee to describe the participants in a mentoring relationship.

A key to understanding the mentoring relationship is that mentoring is not done to someone; it is done with someone. Successful mentoring requires an investment of time and effort – a commitment from both the mentor and the mentee.

*A lot of people have gone further than they thought they could because someone else thought they could.*

*~ Zig Ziglar*

## Mentor Guide for the Mentor

A mentorship can help employees acquire skills, knowledge, and behaviors needed to perform in their current job successfully, and to create exposure and visibility for future opportunities. Through a mentorship, a good mentor can help remove organizational barriers by providing support, direction, and feedback regarding career paths and personal development.

This guide is designed to help you better understand mentoring programs and to provide guidance, resources and steps for taking part in a program as a mentor or mentee.

### What is a Mentorship?

Mentoring is a two-way relationship that can facilitate career development and organizational growth and learning. In a mentorship, a person with greater experience, knowledge, or expertise is in the unique position to help another person develop both professionally and personally.

Mentoring:

- Encourages growth
- Effectively circulates knowledge and transfers skills throughout the organization
- Builds a sharing, trusting relationship between two people
- Helps individuals move towards fulfilling their full potential
- Provides a valuable, additional source of objective feedback
- Promotes mutual learning through shared dialogue
- The duration of a typical mentoring relationship is six (6) months or more. Mentees/Mentors are encouraged to continue the relationship as long as it is mutually beneficial.

By utilizing best practices, a mentorship is another way employees can take control of their own growth and development...and career!

## Benefits and Roles within a Mentor/Mentee Relationship

Mentoring is a proven developmental technique that positively affects the mentor, the mentee, and the organization. Beyond the personal satisfaction and pride in helping others grow, mentoring others brings additional benefits, such as:

- Building a Stronger Team
- Attracting Talent
- Developing Leadership Capability

The mentee will discover key abilities that enable them to accomplish goals. The mentee may develop action steps to overcome obstacles that might arise, resulting in stronger performance and new behaviors. In addition, the mentee may also gain confidence as they progress toward their career goals.

### ***The Mentor***

The Role of a mentor is to:

- Offer knowledge, insight, perspective, or wisdom;
- Listen, give honest feedback, and provide guidance, when solicited, on possible solutions;
- Share insights and understanding about the rules and culture of the organization and/or business; and
- Teach what you know, but let the mentee be themselves.

Mentors enjoy many benefits from this relationship, including:

- Gaining internal satisfaction in sharing expertise with others;
- Re-energizing the mentor's career;
- Learning more about other areas within the organization;
- Developing and/or practicing leadership skills;
- Stimulation by the mentee's energy, ideas and perspective;
- Organizational recognition as a teacher and advisor.

## ***The Mentee***

The Role of a mentee is to:

- Self-assess their needs openly and candidly, sharing insights and seeking feedback;
- Assume ownership of their development by booking the meetings, setting the topics when appropriate and following through on action items;
- Develop clear expectations and goals with mentor: being specific about needs (e.g., help learning a particular skill) and what you should expect;
- Actively participate in the activities, lessons or opportunities that you, the mentor, offer; and
- Be proactive and accountable throughout this opportunity for development.

Mentees enjoy many benefits from this relationship, including:

- Gaining key insights and perspective from the mentor's experience
- Receiving critical feedback in key areas, such as communication, relationships, technical abilities, change management and leadership capability behaviors;
- Developing a sharper focus on what is needed to grow professionally within the organization;
- Greater ability to influence within the organization;
- Learning and enhancing specific skills and knowledge that are relevant to personal goals;
- Gaining knowledge about the organization's culture, practices and unspoken rules; and
- Greater organizational commitment and sense of affiliation.

## ***Benefits to the Organization***

When the mentoring process is successful, the organization experiences:

- Increased employee productivity;
- Higher job competence;
- Reduced or lower turnover;
- Better employee socialization to organizational norms;

## ***Benefits to the Organization – Cont.***

- Enhanced organizational commitment by employees; and
- The use of an additional resource for developing talent.

## **Getting Started as a Mentor**

A great mentor works to ensure that the mentee has the opportunity to share thoughts and gain knowledge. Part of a mentor's success depends upon having the competencies, skills and experience that support bringing out the best in others.

A mentor should also provide career-related support (e.g., helping the mentee navigate and understand the organization), emotional intelligence support (helping the mentee improve their self-image), and guidance in the form of role modeling.

### **1) Career-related Support**

Mentors help foster and increase a mentee's potential by providing the mentee with a variety of career-related forms of support.

**Exposure and Visibility** – When a mentor recommends the mentee for key assignments or nominates the mentee to visible task forces, the exposure and visibility gained from this sponsorship can help the mentee to build a reputation and deepen influencing ability.

**Career Coaching** – A mentor acts as a career coach by suggesting strategies for achieving recognition and attaining career goals.

**Safety** – Mentors provide a safe environment in which the mentee can make mistakes and/or evaluate mistakes critically without losing credibility.

### **2) Emotional Forms of Support**

In addition to providing mentees with career-related forms of support, mentors can also help to increase a mentee's sense of competence, identity, and self-image.

### **3) Role Modeling**

The third function performed by a mentor is serving as a role model. By observing a mentor and watching the interaction with others, a mentee can learn how to succeed in the organization by emulating positive behaviors.

## ***Would you be a Good Mentor?***

This section helps illustrate good mentor behaviors that you have experienced or already demonstrated towards others. These are the influencing practices you'll employ throughout the mentorship.

| <b>What Mentors Do</b>                        | <b>Others have done this for me</b> | <b>I have done this for others</b> |
|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Set high expectations                         | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Offer challenging ideas                       | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Help build self-confidence                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Encourage professional behavior               | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Confront negative behaviors and attitudes     | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Teach and lead by example                     | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Provide growth experiences                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Explain how the organization works            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Stand by their Mentees in critical situations | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Offer advice                                  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Trigger self-awareness                        | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Inspire excellence                            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| Offer encouragement                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>           |

## Mentor Toolkit – Launching the Relationship

These guidelines and helpful tips are designed to help you quickly begin your mentor/mentee relationship with greater success.

### Mentee Characteristics

Mentoring works best when it is used by employees who want to focus on intangible skills connected to leadership competencies. Mentees are willing and ready to be mentored, and they respect the process.

A mentee:

- Demonstrates a desire to learn, grow, and develop new capabilities;
- Has a development plan and is willing to make changes to meet those goals;
- Is action oriented;
- Deals well with change;
- Takes initiative;
- Thrives when given new challenges and assignments; and
- Needs encouragement to find new ways of doing things.

#### When Not to Mentor:

- In a crisis situation;
- When illegal or unethical behavior is exhibited; or
- In instances of extreme anger or hostility.

### Establishing a Relationship with your Mentee

- Meet with him/her, sharing what you hope to accomplish in your time together (share a brief agenda). This meeting is typically set by the mentee.
- Spend some time learning about each other and building a personal relationship before tackling objectives and development goals.
- Be prepared (be ready to listen to their goals, objectives both short term and long term).
- Be clear on what you hope to accomplish as the mentor.

### Setting Objectives with your Mentee

- Objectives provide a guideline for your discussions and an end goal.
- Established objectives allow you to evaluate the mentee's progress.
- If the mentee is someone you do not know very well, it gives you a better idea of who they are and what you are trying to achieve in the mentor/mentee relationship.

## Guidelines to Consider

- What passes between the mentor and the mentee should be kept private unless specific permission is given. Be mindful that both parties may be sharing insights and experiences that require some discretion.
- Typically, it is the mentee's responsibility to set up meetings.
- It is best to meet in person. Mentors and mentees are encouraged to keep in touch by phone calls and/or video conference when face-to-face meetings are not possible.
- It is advisable for the mentee to be someone who is not in the mentor's immediate chain of command, unless there is specified value in doing so. Meaning, mentees are typically not mentored by anyone who supervises them.
- Throughout the mentorship, there may be situations that arise that are sometimes missed in the initial meeting. To help you address some of these issues, discuss and provide an agreed upon solution for each item below.
  - How will we meet and what will be the duration?
  - What happens if someone needs to cancel?
  - Who else needs to be involved in the mentoring relationship?
  - How should we involve other parties, as necessary?
  - What other considerations do we need to discuss?
- Both mentor and mentee must agree to keep trusted information confidential and understand that trust is built through honesty, constructive feedback and follow-up. However, any conversation that reveals 1) a violation of law or ethics policies or 2) potential harm to oneself or to another must be reported.

## The Mentoring Environment

An encouraging and genuine environment is the source of a successful mentoring experience. Ensure these key components are present:

### **Suspension of Judgement**

It is important for both the mentor and mentee to create a safe environment where ideas, fears, truths, concerns and hopes can be expressed without fear of judgement by either party.

### **Common Trust**

The mentor and mentee both bring their experiences, perspectives, backgrounds, and personal histories to the mentoring relationship. By sharing honestly, respect and trust will flourish in the relationship.

### **Open Communication**

Open communication involves deep, accurate listening and asking precise, probing and open-ended reflective questions. The willingness to be authentic, vulnerable, and transparent from both the mentor and mentee is critical.

### **Obtain Commitment**

Making a commitment to a mentoring relationship means investing time and talent in the development of another person. Failure to keep commitments will break the relationship of trust.

## The First Meeting

The first meeting sets the tone for all future mentoring interactions. Taking the time to carefully lay a foundation will increase the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship. The questions below will help in reaching agreement on how the mentor and mentee will operate in the relationship. Here are some sample questions for the first meeting:

- How will we work together, to communicate and provide feedback?
- What behaviors will be addressed?
- What are the boundaries we will establish regarding missed appointments, phone calls or deliverables?
- How will we hold each other accountable?
- What do you see as your greatest strengths?
- What are your developmental goals?
- Why are these skills important to you?
- What do you want to get out of this experience?
- What challenges are you dealing with now on the job?
- How is this challenge making you feel?
- What obstacles are you currently struggling with? How can you overcome those obstacles?
- What does your approach with people look like? How does your approach affect your relationships?
- Are there any areas where you find that actions and decisions don't come easily?
- When have you been most successful?
- Step back and take an honest look at this area... is this a one-time issue for you or something you struggle with a lot?
- What skills or experiences do you feel you want or need to advance?
- If you knew you wouldn't fail, what would you do?
- What behavior or attitude have you identified that you should change to meet your goals?
- What would success look like?
- How are you progressing against goals you've set and your career or development?
- What are you struggling with in your goals and career or development?