



Cornell University
ILR School

Cornell University ILR School
DigitalCommons@ILR

Student Works

ILR Collection

Spring 2016

What are the Benefits of Mentorship Relationships?

Alana Cunningham
Cornell University

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/student>

Thank you for downloading an article from DigitalCommons@ILR.

Support this valuable resource today!

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the ILR Collection at DigitalCommons@ILR. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Works by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@ILR. For more information, please contact hlmdigital@cornell.edu.

What are the Benefits of Mentorship Relationships?

Abstract

Implementing a mentorship program provides employees a way to develop their skills and create connections within the company. This is a way companies can use their employees to develop and train others without having to bring in outside sources to perform a function that a mentor can do. Mentorship is a developmental relationship that involves at least two individuals that have different status and skills. The mentor has a higher status than the protégé who is looking for assistance. The mentor, due to experience, is expected to provide professional help that includes coaching, protection, exposure and project completion to name a few.

Keywords

global matrixed company, global company, global, globalization, culture, mentor, mentoring, mentorship, best practices, benefits, sponsorship, HR, human resources

Comments

Suggested Citation

Cunningham, A. (2016). What are the benefits of mentorship relationships? Retrieved [insert date] from Cornell University, ILR School site: <http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/student/107>

Required Publisher Statement

Copyright held by the authors.

FINAL QUESTION

What are the benefits of a mentorship relationships? What are the best practices for creating a robust mentoring culture in a global, matrixed company? What are the best ways to match those who want mentoring to an appropriate mentor?

MENTORSHIP AND ITS BENEFITS

Implementing a mentorship program provides employees a way to develop their skills and create connections within the company. This is a way companies can use their employees to develop and train others without having to bring in outside sources to perform a function that a mentor can do. Mentorship is a developmental relationship that involves at least two individuals that have different status and skills. The mentor has a higher status than the protégé who is looking for assistance. The mentor, due to experience, is expected to provide professional help that includes coaching, protection, exposure and project completion to name a few.¹

Improve Company Culture

Roles of the mentor and protégé should be clearly identified to create a culture that is both supportive and collaborative. This culture is likely to be reached if a mentorship program is implemented successfully and all individuals take his or her role seriously.²

Protection and Inclusion of Less Experienced Workers

Mentors can act as protectors to the protégés. The protégés can have someone in their corner if they are having a negative experience. Mentors help protégés expand beyond what they thought was possible at the company. Difficult projects increase on-the-job learning, and protégés will feel more confident to perform the more difficult tasks if they have someone supporting them.³

Recruiting, Retaining and Developing Employees- Specifically Millennials

Mentoring can help attract employees, specifically millennials to a company. Millennials crave a mentorship program; two thirds of millennials responded in a survey that they want a mentor. By 2020, millennials will be 46 percent of all US workers.⁴ Millennials are seeking to develop their skills and feel as if their job is rewarding and productive. With the many different types of mentoring, it is important to ask millennials which type they want in order to secure their interest in the program and have them interested in staying.⁵

Retain Women and Minorities

Women who have achieved promotions dedicate their success to excellent mentors. Mentorship partnerships between men and women could break down the barrier that may exist in the workplace. Women are likely to stay in the company and rise up the ranks if they have a helpful mentor.⁶ Minorities who are mentored tend to feel more included than they normally would in a company. Inclusion can have people feel more committed to the company, and want to stay longer.⁴

STEPS TO IMPLEMENT MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS

1. Set Objectives and Determine Structure

Set Objectives

When beginning a mentorship program, a company should identify the target that will address specific company needs. There should be a committee set to regularly assess progress of the program once implemented. The program should have a time period with periodic goals.⁴

Determine Structure

The mentorship relationship can form either formally, through the company's agenda, or informally, by the individuals or through circumstance.¹ Mentoring can go several different ways depending on the formality of the relationship and the length intended for this relationship. There is highly structured- short term, highly structured- long term, informal-short term, and informal-long term.⁷ (Appendix 1)

2. Prepare for the Launch and Train Participants

Prepare the Launch

Communication is vital in order for a successful mentorship program to be implemented. There needs to be buy in from top executives and the rest of the company. Everyone in the company should understand the goals of the program being implemented.⁴

Train Participants

Both mentors and protégés should receive formal training before being able to begin this process. For all those interested, there should be a classroom-style setting for training under a mentoring expert. During this time, both parties should identify goals, link them to the organization, decide a timeline and practice giving and receiving feedback.⁴

3. Match Mentors to Protégés

There are several different ways to match protégés to their mentors. There could be a questionnaire and an interview process for all people looking to be matched. Both parties should fill out what they hope to obtain or offer from this relationship. The mentor and protégé should be given options for a partner and allowed to make the final decision.⁴

It is very important that people are paired with a person who can benefit from this relationship. Both parties should feel as if the relationship is enriching their lives whether it be professionally or ethically. The better matching there is, the more likely the mentor/ protégé would perceive the relationship to be of quality. People who volunteer in programs voluntarily are more likely to give positive feedback on the relationship. People who are geographically closer and in the same department report a higher quality of mentorship.⁸

Not only is it important to match people by industry, personalities also matter in order to have a successful mentorship relationship. Informal mentorships are often productive because people who get along usually work well together. If these people are put together by personality traits that are shown up in surveys, this matching process should be successful. This relationship should inspire the protégés to accomplish more work that will help not only the company, but his or her own career.³

4. Evaluate Program Progress and Effectiveness

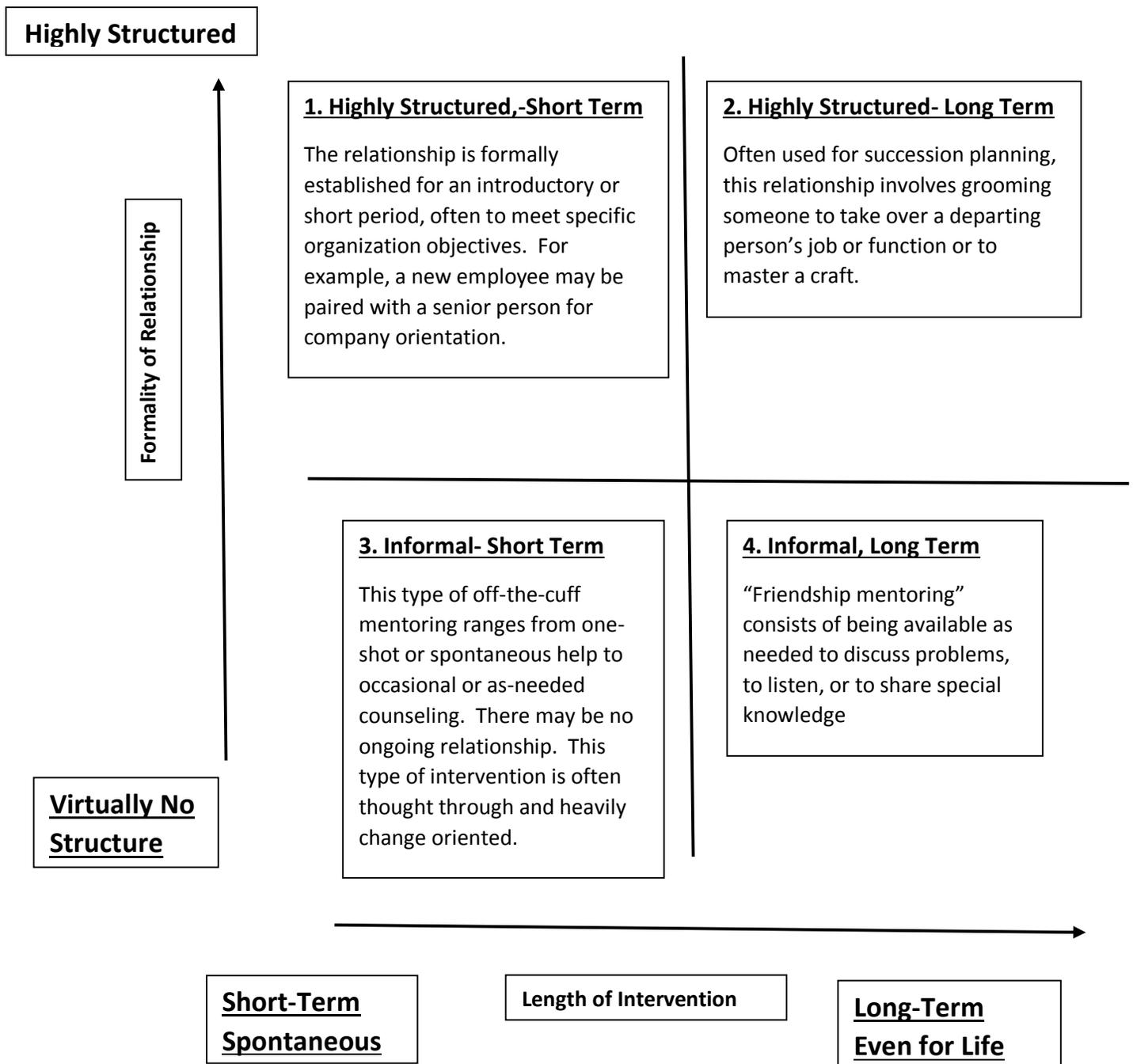
There should be both qualitative and quantitative measures to show the program's effectiveness. Time to proficiency can be measured compared to people who did not participate in the mentorship program. It is important to give senior leaders feedback on the program's process.⁴

CONCLUSION

Mentorship programs, when done correctly have several benefits that help not only the mentor and protégé, but can also aid the company. There are different types of mentorship relationships that could be successful. It is dependent on how much assistance the protégé wants and what amount of time both parties are willing to put into the relationship. It is important to implement successfully and thoroughly because poorly run mentorship programs have been shown to give employees more stress and increase their likelihood of leaving the company.³

Appendix 1

Variety of Mentoring Relationships- Modified from Gordon Shae-How to Develop Successful Mentor Behaviors



Sources

1.

Bozionelos, N., Kostopoulos, K., Van der Heijden, B., Rousseau, D. M., Bozionelos, G., Hoyland, T., & ... Van der Heijde, C. (2016). Employability and Job Performance as Links in the Relationship Between Mentoring Receipt and Career Success. *Group & Organization Management*, 41(2), 135-171. doi:10.1177/1059601115617086

2.

Gazza, E. A. (2004). Establishing a Supportive Culture through Mentorship. *Phi Kappa Phi Forum*, 84(4), 47-48.

3.

Menges, C. (2016). Toward improving the effectiveness of formal mentoring programs: Matching by personality matters. *Group & Organization Management*, 41(1), 98-129. doi:10.1177/1059601115579567

4.

Kenan- Flagler Business School at University of North Carolina. Date Accessed March 7 2016. http://onlinemba.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/How_To_Build_A_Successful_Mentoring_Program.pdf

5.

DeLong, David. December 18 2015. How to Give Millennials Mentoring that Pays Off. Date Accessed March 7 2016. <http://expertclick.com/NRWire/Releasedetails.aspx?id=75970>

6.

Meyers, M. (2015). IMPROVING MENTORING FOR WOMEN IN CORPORATE AMERICA. Allied Academies International Conference: Proceedings Of The Academy Of Marketing Studies (AMS), 20(2), 77-79.

7.

Shae, Gordon. 2002 Axzo Press . How to Develop Successful Mentor Behaviors. Date Accessed March 7 2016. <http://cengagesites.com/academic/assets/sites/Axzo/1560526424pv.pdf>

8.

Allen, T. D., Eby, L. T., & Lentz, E. (2006). Mentorship Behaviors and Mentorship Quality Associated With Formal Mentoring Programs: Closing the Gap Between Research and Practice. *Journal Of Applied Psychology*, 91(3), 567-578. Gazza, E. A. (2004). Establishing a Supportive Culture through Mentorship. *Phi Kappa Phi Forum*, 84(4), 47-48.

Additional Readings about Women and Minorities

Ortiz-Walters, R., & Fullick, J. M. (2015). Mentoring protégés of color: Experiences of primary and informal mentors. *International Journal Of Management Education (Elsevier Science)*, 13(2), 141-153. doi:10.1016/j.ijme.2015.02.001

Laukhuf, R. L., & Malone, T. A. (2015). Women Entrepreneurs Need Mentors. *International Journal Of Evidence Based Coaching & Mentoring*, 13(1), 70-86.

Ibarra, H., Carter, N. M., & Silva, C. (2010). Why Men Still Get More Promotions Than Women. *Harvard Business Review*, 88(9), 80-85.

MCDONALD, M. L., & WESTPHAL, J. D. (2013). ACCESS DENIED: LOW MENTORING OF WOMEN AND MINORITY FIRST-TIME DIRECTORS AND ITS NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON APPOINTMENTS TO ADDITIONAL BOARDS. *Academy Of Management Journal*, 56(4), 1169-1198. doi:10.5465/amj.2011.0230