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## Best Practices for Creating a Culture of Mentorship

### Success Factors

- ❑ There is a visible Executive Leadership commitment to the Mentoring Program.
  - A respected senior leader is actively engaged as the Executive Sponsor.
  - The CEO and Executive Team publicly endorse the program.
  - The Executive Sponsor is willing to leverage his or her political capital.
- ❑ The Mentoring Program's design aligns with strategic goals and deepens bench strength.
  - Leadership development is connected to business results.
  - Leadership development accelerates advancement and fills the talent pipeline.
  - Identified core leadership competencies align with business priorities.
- ❑ The Mentoring Program is "mentee-driven, mentor-guided".
  - Mentee self-nomination is combined with recommendations and sponsorship.
  - The program reaches multiple levels and areas within the organization.
  - The mentor is one or two tiers above the mentee's current position.
  - The mentor is supported in understanding his or her role.
  - Sufficient mentor pool exists (2:1 ratio mentors/mentees)
  - Mentor selection is based on identified mentoring skills and capabilities
- ❑ The Mentoring Program begins with a clearly defined program charter.
  - The charter includes mission, objectives, business outcomes and scope.
  - The charter is tied to the organization's goals and strategic objectives.
  - The implementation includes change management best practices.
  - There is a motivated and accountable Core Team from a cross-section of business areas, functional areas and geography that plans and launches the program.
- ❑ There is a thorough communications plan designed to inform, create buzz and educate all stakeholders throughout the Mentoring Program.

### Pitfalls

- Programs are not tied to business results and core strategic needs of the business.
- There is either a lack Executive Leadership support or it is perceived lip service.
- There is not a clear charter for the program.
- The complex communication needs are underestimated or lacking.
- Programs don't reach all levels or areas of the business so they seem elite or corporate.
- Volunteers run the programs without clear sponsorship, direction, budget or accountability.
- There is a belief throughout the organization that this is a remedial program for a specific demographic that needs extra help.
- The organization does not allocate enough time and resources for the logistics, the launch, the meetings and the communications.
- The mentees and/or mentors don't allocate their time to fully engage in the program.
- The organization isn't ready for a visible change in the leadership demographics.



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## **Mentee/Mentor Relationship Best Practices**

Follow these best practices to establish a successful partnership, whether you have the role of mentor or mentee.

Mentoring partnerships are successful when **mentees** ...

- Honor confidentiality
- Establish and lead their learning agenda
- Coordinate the logistics for the meetings
- Are willing to take a risk – try something outside their comfort zone
- Put feedback into action
- Give and are open to honest feedback

Mentoring partnerships are successful when **mentors** ...

- Honor confidentiality
- Are accessible
- Are patient and provide encouragement
- Listen, observe, and are a sounding board
- Are willing to share experiences
- Let the mentee solve her own problems

Successful mentoring **partnerships** ...

- Articulate their purpose and goals early in the process
- Are attentive to developing a climate of trust and safety
- Are open and honest in their communications
- Respect differences
- Are committed to continuous learning
- Are willing to evaluate and self-correct partnership effectiveness