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Benefits of mentoring

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Benefits of mentoring

Mentoring is one of the most powerful and impactful development methods an organization can use to support and grow its people from within. It brings significant, long lasting and wide-ranging benefits not only to the mentees and mentors, but also to teams, the wider organization as well as to key third parties such as the mentees' line manager.

Adopting a holistic approach to mentoring enables individuals and organisations to make positive change through a blend of support and challenge within a unique learning environment. When an organisation has a strong pool of effective mentors, it has extra impact on the overall culture of the organisation.

Benefits for mentees

Mentees come to a mentoring relationship from a wide range of circumstances and backgrounds, and the benefits they may be looking for can be just as varied. Some of the most common benefits include:

- Being able to discuss and gain greater clarity, in an open and off-line environment, about career and development issues
- Having an opportunity to reflect on their own progress and resolve their own problems in their own timescale
- Providing encouragement to set more ambitious career goals, reinforcing belief in their own potential
- Having practical advice and help on organisational politics and behaviour (understanding the formal and informal structures of the organisation)
- Having a role model e.g. for motivating others
- The opportunity to be challenged constructively
- Improved professional and personal networking
- Transfer of knowledge and, in particular, judgment.

Spending quality thinking time with a mentor, who can help bridge the experience gap, is hugely beneficial. Research suggests that mentees achieve greater confidence in their own potential and ability, and feel more secure in their role due to their involvement in mentoring. Research has also shown that having a mentor is a critical factor in the career success of 80% of UK chief executives and case studies from Australasia, South Africa and North America support this general picture.

Benefits for mentors

The most common benefits for mentors include:

- Their own learning from the mentoring experience where mentors often report as much and sometimes more learning than mentees
- The opportunity to practice good developmental behaviours and additional

- skills outside their direct line responsibilities
- Development of their own self-awareness
- Greater understanding of other areas of the business and/or of other cultures
- Opportunities to capture and reflect on their own development
- Enhanced job satisfaction – stimulating and rewarding fresh challenge, sense of pride in mentee's achievements
- Consolidating and extending professional and personal networks.

Mentors also describe feeling more confident in their roles and often comment on the satisfaction derived from being a small part of someone else's success.

Benefits for line managers

The line manager is an essential stakeholder in the mentoring relationship and their understanding of the benefits of mentoring will help them in supporting the development of their direct report.

Line managers of mentees in effective mentoring schemes comment on the following benefits:

- The value of having a second opinion from someone independent who does not have a direct involvement in the mentees work
- Improved self awareness of the mentee
- Better relationships between the mentee and their peers, and with the line manager him/herself
- Greater clarity, sense of purpose and direction on the part of the mentee.

Benefits for the organisation

Organizations have used mentoring as the starting point for many types of change. Establishing mentoring relationships helps build trust and overcome cultural differences and has helped a number of organisations cultivate a culture, strongly supportive of individual and team excellence. Improving leadership skills in mentors and growing confidence, competence and engagement in mentees, makes our people better skilled and more self-aware, positively impacting organizational performance.

Mentoring has also been well evidenced to impact positively on an organisations' retention, recruitment, succession planning and diversity management.