

Managing the Successful Mentoring Program

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Presented by Tracy LaLonde
Summarized by Dennis Mapes

I attended Ms. LaLonde's presentation because mentoring is one of those things that many organizations leave to happenstance but it really needs to have structure and planning to get optimal results. I would guess that there are many associates who aren't successful in their firms simply because the right partner didn't take them under their wing (so to speak). This seminar was about not leaving those relationships and potential relationships to chance.

BENEFITS OF MENTORING

- Increased loyalty
- Enhanced productivity
- Sense of firm culture
- Happy workforce
- Increased retention

CAREER STAGES

- Entry Stage — Learning the Ropes
- Independent Contributor Stage — Making Your Mark
- Advisor Stage — Contributing Through Others
- Sponsor Stage — Leading Through Vision

ELEMENTS OF ANY MENTORING PROGRAM

- Management commitment
- Clear purpose or objectives

Examples:

- Introduce new associates to everyone in the practice
 - Explain the "unwritten" rules of how to actually get things done
 - Explain all of the services that the firm can provide to clients
 - Encourage interaction between new associates
 - Facilitate confidence building through work assignments
- Clearly defined program and procedures
 - Define things like:*
 - Matching process
 - Relationship duration
 - Frequency of meetings
 - Time commitment
 - Scope of the conversations
 - Budget
 - Kickoff/Introduction
 - Management and maintenance processes
 - Centralized or decentralized
 - Mentor identification
 - Program coordinator
 - Feedback mechanisms
 - Evaluation methods
 - Incentives/rewards
 - Training

CONTINUED PROGRAM SUPPORT AND MOTIVATION

Mentoring relationships are like any other relationship — they need continued effort to keep it going. Sometimes that effort can come from a third party, like a program coordinator or the firm. Here are some ways to support and motivate the program:

- Training
- Credit for time
- Rewards
- Compensation
- Discussion groups for mentors
- Retreats for mentors
- Social events for mentors and protégés
- Visible acknowledgement of mentors

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