Mentorship: A Key to Effective Succession Planning

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Statewide Workforce Planning and Recruitment
Training Objectives

• Define mentorship and its benefits
• Explain how mentorship supports effective succession planning
• Step-by-step instruction on how to develop a mentorship program
• Examples and resources available to you
Mentorship Definitions

• **Mentorship**: relationship with the goal of professional and personal development

• **Mentor**: experienced individual willing to share knowledge, advice, and insight; serves as an adviser for a fixed period of time

• **Mentee**: individual who agrees to be advised, trained, or counseled by a mentor for a fixed period of time
Why Mentoring?

• See the United States Office of Personnel Management’s video about mentorship
Organizational Benefits of Mentorship

- Attractive to prospective employees
- Helps bridge the “generation gap” in the workplace
- Breaks down barriers within the organization
- Encourages communication and trust
- Transfer valuable knowledge
How is Mentorship Related to Succession Planning?

• Develops employees through **relationship** with department leaders and experts
• Real-world knowledge and guidance needed to become a leader/expert
• Voluntary, organic means for knowledge sharing and career support
• Offered to all interested employees
How Does Mentorship Fulfill Succession Planning Needs?

• Target needs in succession risk areas
• Consider using readiness assessments to determine needs
• Variety of development activities based on leadership competencies
How Can my Department Develop a Mentorship Program?

PHASE 1: ESTABLISH STRATEGIC DIRECTION
- STEP 1: Gain executive and stakeholder support
- STEP 2: Develop steering committee
- STEP 3: Develop program

PHASE 2: ESTABLISH PARTICIPANTS
- STEP 1: Market the program
- STEP 2: Select participants
- STEP 3: Conduct orientation

PHASE 3: IMPLEMENT
- STEP 1: Establish developmental goals
- STEP 2: Manage participant involvement
- STEP 3: Conduct midterm assessment

PHASE 4: EVALUATE, CONCLUDE, MAINTAIN
- STEP 1: Evaluate program
- STEP 2: Conclude program
- STEP 3: Maintain program momentum
- STEP 4: Administer program improvements
Phase 1: Establish Strategic Direction

• Step 1: Gain executive support
  – Conduct risk assessment
  – Develop program concept
• Step 2: Develop steering committee
• Step 3: Develop program
  – Align to strategic plan
  – Conduct needs assessment
  – Create project plan
  – Develop program components
Rally Support

• Gain executive and stakeholder support
• Support is continuous: gain and maintain
• Build a business case showing the need for a mentorship program
Step 1: Gain Executive Support

- Conduct risk assessment
  - Gather workforce data
  - Gather exit survey data
  - Stakeholder/division/employee input
  - SWOT analysis
- Business need context
- Develop program concept/project plan
Step 2: Develop Steering Committee

- Executive Sponsor: Ownership, oversight and guidance, resources for success
- Mentorship Program Manager: Facilitation, coordination, develop goals and strategies
- Human Resources: Information, partnership
- Training Officer: Support training needs
- Division/Program Managers: Commitment, input, encouragement and support
- Frontline Supervisors: Identify skill and knowledge gaps, encouragement and support, input
- Employees: Self-assess knowledge base, support, provide feedback
How do I Focus the Program?

Align to strategic direction

- Review department and division strategic plan, mission, vision, values, objectives
- Division critical functions
- Survey stakeholders
- Complete an environmental scan/SWOT analysis
Where do I Begin?

Establish priorities

- Survey divisions for skill gaps, critical needs
- Review workforce data
- 360° Survey
- Gather employee feedback
How do I Organize this Effort?

• Create a Project Plan including steps to complete each task and responsible person(s) assigned to each task
What is Involved in a Program?

Develop Program Components

• Purpose and goals
• Mentor/mentee roles and responsibilities
• Target participants
• Benefits
Mentor and Mentee Benefits

**Mentor Benefits:**
- Personal fulfillment from helping and shaping others
- Impacting others
- Share knowledge about the organization
- Continuity, projects carry on beyond your time there so the organization can benefit
- Validation of knowledge and experience
- Leadership skill development
- Prove yourself, place in the pipeline
- Broaden base of leadership philosophy

**Mentee Benefits:**
- Prove yourself
- Exposure to leadership
- Insight to make career decisions
- Networking
- Cultural exposure and appreciation
- Gaining knowledge
- Experience with a “safety net”, guidance while experiencing something new
- Exposure to new areas and types of work, finding “fit”
Program Type

• Formal program:
  – Structured
  – Oversight of relationships
  – Clear and focused participant goals
  – Matching criteria
  – Open to all or specific group
  – Specific end date

• Informal program:
  – Loosely structured
  – Minimal to no relationship oversight
  – May or may not have focused goals
  – No matching criteria
  – Open to all or specific group
  – May not have an established end date
How do I Determine Program Type?

• Formal program:
  – Objectives are focused
  – More time commitment required
  – Higher amount of oversight over mentoring relationships
  – Fits a more formal culture

• Informal program:
  – Objectives are broad
  – Less time commitment required
  – Lower amount of oversight over mentoring relationships
  – Fits a more informal culture

• Group size depends on resources available
• Survey employees
• Pilot program to build greater interest
Program Type Examples

Formal or informal program?
Target Participants: Whole department (3,000 employees). Objective: General knowledge transfer.

Target Participants: 300 analysts. Objective: Close gaps in skills and abilities identified by each analyst.

Target Participants: 50 engineers. Objective: Developing interpersonal skills.
Develop Program Components

• Method to select and match participants
• Participant tracking method
• Initiatives and activities
• Marketing/communication plan
• Midterm assessment method
  – Resolve program issues
  – Contingency plan for mentorship mismatch
• Final Evaluation method
• Program policies, tools, and resources
Approval

• Ensure you have approval from leadership to move forward with the mentorship program
Phase 2: Establish Participants

• Step 1: Market the program
  – Conduct information session
• Step 2: Select participants
  – Selecting mentors
  – Selecting mentees
  – Matching
• Step 3: Conduct orientation
Step 1: Market the Program

• Participation in the program is voluntary
• Purpose of the program
• Target participants
• Summarize benefits to mentors and mentees
• Date of Informational Session(s)
• Communicate participation goal
Information Session

• Provide prospective mentors and mentees with enough information so they can make an informed decision about participating in the program
Step 2: Select Participants

Mentor Qualities:
• Knowledgeable
• Willing to share time and resources
• Sufficient communicator
• Non judgmental
• Global perspective (department, job); experience with the department, invested time in the department
• Ethical
• Inspiring
• Empathetic
• Able to teach
• Available

Mentee Qualities:
• Desire to learn
• Flexible
• Open minded
• Enthusiastic
• Initiative, driven
• Ethical
• Able to accept constructive criticism and feedback
Relationship Types/Matching

• Collect information from participants:
  – Experiences and developmental goals
  – Classification level
  – Desired classification

• Reverse mentorships

• Self-matched

• Personal Characteristics

• Peer Mentoring

• Situational Mentoring
Phase 3: Implement

• Step 1: Manage participant involvement
  – Participant tracking
  – Maintain Engagement

• Step 2: Conduct midterm assessment
How do I Keep Participants Engaged?

• Participants should not be expected to completely self-direct their participation
• Crucial for program coordinators to continue encouraging engagement throughout the span of the program
• Offer short trainings and workshops, facilitate group activities, distribute literature/videos, explain the benefits of mentoring, provide mentoring tools and techniques, and share testimonials
Phase 4: Evaluate, Conclude, Maintain

• Step 1: Evaluate program
• Step 2: Conclude cohort
  – Debrief participants
  – Closing ceremony
• Step 3: Administer program improvements
• Step 4: Maintain program momentum
Step 1: Evaluate Program

- Participant Evaluation
- Focus Groups
- Survey control and experimental group
- Analyze business results
- Analyze workforce data
- Assess lasting impact
How do I Bring Closure to the Program?

• Debrief Participants
  – Benefits from the experience
  – Challenges of the experience
  – Lessons learned
  – Suggestions for improvements
  – Most enjoyable activities and strategies
  – Ending or transitioning the mentorship relationships into a maintainable source of guidance and support
Closing Ceremony

• Conclude the program with a “graduation” or closing ceremony to celebrate participation in the mentorship program

• The closing ceremony should:
  – Express appreciation for all participants.
  – Highlight positive outcomes of the program.
  – Give participants the opportunity to share success stories.
  – Encourage participants to continue mentorship relationships

• Invite the Executive Sponsor and other senior leaders to speak at the closing ceremony so they can express support for the program and congratulate participants.

• Awards can be presented to honor time and commitment (e.g.: certificates, books)
Mentorship Program Examples

- CalPERS Mentoring Toolkit
- United States Office Of Personnel Management Mentoring Guide
- National Institute of Health Mentoring Information
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