BUILDING MENTORCITY

INTRODUCTION

Building a mentoring program is more than just building a home; it's more like building a vibrant city. In this city, every resident values helping everyone achieve their goals, and every resident is engaged and passionate about creating give-and-take mentoring relationships.

This series of guides will help you to build that dynamic city and create a mentoring program that achieves both individual and organizational results:

- **Foundation - Determining how mentoring will help you solve business need(s).**
  - Identifying business needs
  - Understanding the benefits of mentoring
  - Defining participants
  - Building a mentoring culture
  - Supporting the program
- **Design - Planning your mentoring program.**
  - Designing the mentoring program
  - Sending invitations
  - Providing orientation sessions/training
  - Creating matches
  - Structuring mentoring relationships
  - Maintaining program momentum
- **Renovations – Customizing MentorCity.**
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GUIDE 1:

FOUNDATION

The first step to building a solid foundation is to identify your business's needs, determine how a mentoring program can address those needs and select participants and program champions.

Identifying Business Needs

It's important to not only determine how a mentoring program can add value to your business but also its return on investment.

For companies, mentoring increases employee engagement, assists with succession planning and aids with leadership development and diversity and inclusion strategies. A successful mentoring program typically leads to increased employee retention rates, which lessens the financial load of losing productive employees.

For schools, mentoring keeps students and alumni connected to each other and the school they are passionate about. Mentoring programs can be built into a school's fundraising campaign, offering donors a hands-on way to give back to their school. A successful mentoring program can attract new donors and increase the amount of money that a donor gives.

For associations, mentoring offers an opportunity for increased member engagement and can act as a re-certification activity. As an additional membership benefit, mentoring increases the value of belonging to an organization and increases annual renewal rates.

Once you have clearly defined the business case for mentoring, it will be easier to get buy-in from your leadership team.

What is the anticipated ROI?

Additional Resource:
- Understanding how to measure the ROI of your mentoring program

Understanding the Benefits of Mentoring

A mentoring program is essential for both personal and professional development. Everyone goes through stages in life and in their career where they can benefit from the guidance and support of a mentoring relationship. In a mentoring program:

- Mentees learn about the corporate culture, develop skills and have someone who can act as a sounding board.
- Mentors develop their leadership skills, pay it forward and build their network of colleagues.
- Organizations transfer knowledge, develop future leaders and increase employee/member loyalty.

Once established, the benefits to mentors, mentees and to the overall business should be communicated often to ensure everyone fully understands the purpose and the goals of the program.

What are the mentee's benefits?	What are the mentor's benefits?	What are the organization's benefits?

Defining Participants

At the beginning stages of your mentoring program, it's important to decide on the type of ideal participants for your mentoring program. As the program evolves, the scope of participants can be broadened.

Here are a few examples:
Companies: The mentees are high potential employees, and the mentors are senior executives.
Schools: The mentees are current students, and the mentors are alumni.
Associations: The mentees are new members, and the mentors are long-standing members.

Some participants may be both a mentor and mentee because everyone can benefit from having a mentor throughout their career.

Who are the mentees?	Who are the mentors?	Who are both mentees and mentors?
How many:	How many:	How many:

Building a Mentoring Culture

The success of a mentoring program depends on how well it is established into the culture of the organization. To entrench the view that mentoring is important to your organization, build in ways to recognize people for participating.

For Example:

- Companies can include mentoring as a part of their performance review process. While mentoring doesn't have to be considered mandatory, its inclusion turns it into a corporate expectation, which can be properly planned for and discussed.
- Schools can include mentoring in course curriculums.
- Associations can include mentoring hours as part of their re-certification process.

Additional Resource:

- Creating a mentoring culture

Supporting the Program

For a mentoring program to be successful, it needs to be supported by a business's senior levels. It's a good idea to identify a few leaders as the program champions and ambassadors by publicly endorsing the mentoring program, speaking about it at every opportunity and actively participating.

Who are the program ambassadors?	What is their role?

Additional Resources:

- Promoting the value of mentorship to senior management
- Mentoring program readiness quiz
- Mentoring program proposal template

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