



Mentoring Software

Designing a Successful Mentoring Program

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83% of professionals would like to be involved in a mentoring program, yet only 29% are in workplaces that offer them. (Robert Walters Recruiting)

Mentoring is a proven way to make effective connections for learning, skill development and collaboration for both mentees and mentors. It also has great benefits for the mentoring program organiser in terms of increased engagement, retention rates and skill development.

Workplace Mentoring

For employers, mentoring increases retention, promotion rates, and employee satisfaction.

Student Mentoring

For schools, colleges and universities, student mentoring is proven to improve student retention, boost employability and job placement rates, whilst increasing alumni engagement by using alumni as mentors.

Association Mentoring

For professional bodies mentoring increase member recruitment and retention rates by offering a free service that will enhance members' business or career prospects.

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is not a new discovery – it has existed for centuries. It is simply the process whereby an experienced individual supports and develops another person through the sharing of their experiences and the resulting lessons that they learnt.

It is about developing ability in an individual and enabling them to reach their true potential and overcome their challenges.

A mentor will listen, support, act as a sounding board, provide inspiration, draw on their own experience and help avoid mistakes being made.

Modern Mentoring

Mentoring can take many forms:

- Reverse Mentoring
- Career Mentoring
- Diversity Mentoring
- High Potential Mentoring
- Succession Mentoring
- Peer Mentoring
- Project Mentoring
- Induction /Onboarding Mentoring
- Group Mentoring



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Designing a Mentoring Program – 5 Key Steps

When looking to develop a successful mentoring program, there are 5 key steps;

Analyse, Design, Connect, Engage, Evaluate

Analysis

The starting point when looking to develop a successful mentoring program is to do some research about the needs and goals of your potential users before designing your program. Surveys and discussion groups are a great way to begin this process. The findings of this stage will help to shape the design of your program. It will help to determine what the program will require and what it will not require and help to define program content.

Some of the key questions to ask at this stage are:

- > **What is the purpose of the program?**
- > **What are the mentor/mentee's characteristics?**
- > **What are the objectives?**
- > **What type of mentoring do you want to offer? Reverse, career etc.**
- > **Do you want formal or informal mentoring?**
- > **What results do you want to achieve?**
- > **What problems are you looking to solve?**

Design

In this phase, the key variables to consider in helping to achieve your SMART goals are:

Launch and ongoing promotion	How will you promote your platform to potential users?
Enrolment	Will it be open or by invite only. Will administrator approval be required?
Mentoring style	Formal or informal?
Structure	Will you have a clear mentoring roadmap/ journey?
Matching criteria	Self matching or administrator matching. What will the matching criteria be?
Connection limits	Will you restrict the number of mentors a mentee can have or mentees a mentor can have?
Training resources	What will these consist of, are they appropriate for users' needs?
Support tools	How will you facilitate and support mentor and mentee communications and progress?
Relationship duration	Will this be capped or open?
Relationship milestones	Will you put clear milestones in place that can be used to show progress?
Feedback	How will you ensure you get feedback from participants that can be used to make improvements?

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Connect

Getting a good match is at the heart of any mentoring relationship, yet it is probably the most difficult aspect to get right.

Unless you are running a very small program and know all of the participants, individually matching participants can be a laborious process, involving lots of spreadsheets and a great deal of luck.

Whether matching is automated or manual, the matching criteria need to be specified at the outset so that relevant information can be supplied by both mentors and mentees.

It is important to decide if you wish to offer self-matching or admin matching. If offering self-matching, you need to identify how many variables can be used and whether they can pick and choose which variables they use or if there will be pre-defined set variables. Variables could include expertise, skills, industry experience, location etc.

At PLD, we have a clear matching process that can be customised to the exact needs of our clients.

Engage

Once a match has been made it is important that the mentor and mentee are both clear about the purpose of the relationship and the goals they want to achieve so that the mentoring relationship remains on track. There are two key ways to do this.

Training

Professor David Clutterbuck, the co-founder of the European Mentoring & Coaching Council, has conducted research that found that only about one in three mentoring relationships actually work if there is no training involved, but that success rate goes up to 90 percent if there is training for the mentor and mentee.

At PLD we have developed an intuitive platform that offers a comprehensive range of training guides and videos for mentors and mentees covering everything from setting expectations around the role of mentor and mentee, to how to conduct the first meeting, set goals and to give and receive feedback.

Journey Milestones

To prevent a mentoring relationship from stalling and failing it is important that it has a clear roadmap with milestones to mark progress, such as preparing for the first meeting, setting goals, reviewing progress towards goals and ending the relationship.

At PLD, we have developed a mentoring journey which we have tweaked and improved over the last 10 years. With inbuilt automated reminders, we have developed a journey that helps keep users fully engaged and on track to achieving their mentoring goals.

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Evaluate

Having set out goals for your mentoring program at the outset, it is important to be able to measure whether your program is achieving your aims.

At PLD, we have an administration dashboard that tracks user engagement and progress through a number of metrics, including end of relationship surveys. These metrics are regularly reviewed, and tweaks are made to the platform to ensure the best possible user experience and engagement.

If you would like to see how we have designed our mentoring platform to deliver successful mentoring relationships give us a call on **01625 251 055** or email **hello@pldmentoring.com** or visit **www.pldmentoring.com**