Workplace Mentoring

Creating a Supportive Work Environment and Passing On Work Skills
Today’s Training

• Introduce Mentoring Concepts
  – What is mentoring?
  – What are the different types of mentors?
  – How can mentors be successful?
When You Were A New Employee……

What were some highlights of your first days on the job?

Were there any lowlights?

Was there anything nobody told you?
Mentoring: Formal or Informal

• New employees **WILL** be mentored in most situations…

• Either formally… in a structured approach with the blessing of the organization

• Or informally…
  – In a structured way, or
  – In an unstructured way
The Purpose of Workplace Mentoring

• To help a new employee become so familiar with the work environment and so proficient with the work skills that he or she can work efficiently, productively, and contentedly.
Mentoring Foundations

- Tremendous variations in work environment and in supervision styles.
- Tremendous variations in employee personality and styles (i.e., Myers-Briggs).
- We learn best by doing and by making mistakes.
- We learn the least when we make mistakes and never know it.
What is Mentoring?

• Mentoring refers to on-the-job person-to-person training in which a veteran employee helps a newer employee learn how to do their job, including:
  – How to relate to others in the workplace,
  – How to apply their skills and abilities, and
  – How to follow accepted protocols and procedures.
## Mentor Roles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MENTOR ROLE</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Host</td>
<td>Acclimate/Integrate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expert</td>
<td>Knowledge transfer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisor/Coach</td>
<td>Encouragement/Guidance</td>
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<td>Role Model</td>
<td>Exemplar of values/practices</td>
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<td>Sponsor/Facilitator</td>
<td>Provides opportunity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborator</td>
<td>Involvement as a peer</td>
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Two Primary Types of Mentors

• Social Mentors = 1st Days

• Skills Mentors = 1st Year or Project
Social Mentoring: First Days

• Become acquainted with new colleagues
• Learn how to get around the office
• Get started doing something
Who will be the social mentor?

Ideally, a peer who is:

• Friendly and comfortable
• Reasonably available
• Has some experience, and is familiar with the work environment (i.e. able to answer questions)
• Understands the purpose of mentoring
What does the social mentor do?

- First day activities
  - Introduces new employee to the work environment and to various people
  - Takes them to lunch
  - Answers questions

- Phase them into the office routines
Other First Week Things

• Meet with Supervisor
• Orientation activities
• Get involved in real work on an assignment, or
  – Take them on an interview or to a meeting
  – Give them something you are working on to proofread
  – Ask them to do an assignment that you have recently done for practice
• Do not leave them sitting with NOTHING to do
Social Mentor = Short Term Focus

- After the first week, the social mentor’s **formal** role rapidly diminishes.
- Ongoing relationship between social mentor and new employee depends on intangibles.
- Social mentor should continue to take special interest in that employee.
Skills Mentoring Takes Over

• From the beginning, social mentoring should be preparing the way for skills mentoring

• If social and skills mentors are different people, they should communicate

• Skills mentoring focuses on ensuring that the employee developing the skills necessary to be successful
Skills Mentoring: First Year

- Determine their level of experience/skill
- Explain work context and assignments
- Coach them in their work efforts
Who will be the skills mentor?

• Ideally a more experienced person in the same location, or
• A more experienced employee in another location, or
• The supervisor
What does the skills mentor do?

• GUIDE new employee into competence with work skills and processes
  – Teach, tutor, coach, demonstrate, consult
  – Facilitate interaction within the organization
  – Facilitate opportunities for growth
  – Provide ready feedback for improvement
The Ideal Relationship

YES

NO

Mentor

Mentee
Three Do’s of Skills Mentoring

• Give them meaningful tasks and responsibilities (let them make mistakes)
• Give prompt feedback on performance and products
• Ask them what they would do and listen carefully to their ideas and suggestions
Three Don’t of Skills Mentoring

• Don’t give them complex tasks without discussing the approach to those tasks

• Don’t redo work that they have done without walking through and explaining what you did and why

• Don’t tell them that something is fine or okay when it was not
Mentoring Mistakes

- Overemphasizing tradition or history
- Being paternalistic or patronizing
- Passing on bad office characteristics
  - Cynicism
  - Officemate Libel
  - Inter-office Divisiveness
Skills Mentor Role Phases Out

• At the end of their first year or project, the “new” employee should be ready to take key responsibilities for the next year or project.

• Supervisor may assume responsibility for ongoing assistance.

• New employee may request, or skills mentor may recommend, additional mentoring.
Mentoring Bonanzas

- Leadership development
- New employee contributes more effectively, sooner
- Veteran employees often refreshed and rejuvenated by new employee enthusiasm