

#M303-Mentor and protégé outcomes associated with formal mentoring programs: Closing the gap between research and practice

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Session Learning Objectives:

- Understand basic elements of mentoring
- Know the benefits of mentoring
- Learn the essentials to the design of an effective formal mentoring program

What do mentors do?

Two primary forms of mentoring behavior (Kram, 1985):

■ Career - aspects of relationship that prepare the protégé for career advancement

- Sponsor protégés for projects or important assignments

- Provide coaching and performance feedback

- Protect the protégé from career mistakes or derailment

- Help the protégé coordinate professional goals

■ Psychosocial - aspects of relationship that enhance the protégé's sense of competence, identity, and work-role effectiveness

- Convey respect for the protégé

- Counsel the protégé through difficulties

- Serve as a role model for effective behavior

- Provide support and encouragement

Mentoring has benefits for

- Proteges

- Mentors

- The organization

Types of Mentoring Relationships

■ Informal - occurs spontaneously through the process of identification and mutual attraction

■ Formal - begins based on assignment or match initiated by a third party
Formal Mentoring Programs

Research Objective

Examine relationships between formal mentoring program characteristics

- perceived program effectiveness
- mentoring behavior
- mentorship quality

Program Design Features

Participant Input into the Mentoring Process

- Voluntary participation, input into the matching process

Dyadic Structure of the Relationship

- Physical proximity, difference in department, difference in rank

Training

- Receipt of training, training quality, training hours

Method

- A total of 175 protégés and 110 mentors from four different organizations (13 different programs) that had existing formal mentoring programs participated

- 91 matched mentor-protégé dyads

Results

- Voluntary participation - no evidence of effect

- Input into the match - strongest evidence

- Dyadic structure - mentors report providing more psychosocial mentoring to protégés from the same department

- Crossover effects

-The experiences of one mentoring partner relate to outcomes experienced by the other mentoring partner

Results

■ Training

- Receipt of training and training quality were key to perceived program effectiveness
- Mixed support for relationships with mentoring behavior and mentorship quality
- Little evidence that training hours makes significant difference
- Negative relationship with mentoring behavior as reported by mentors

Considerations for Formal Programs

1. Support from the top
2. Thoughtful matching process
3. Careful selection of mentors
4. Training for mentors and protégés
5. On-going interaction support
6. Program monitoring and evaluation

Overarching Keys

- Program must have clear purpose and goals
- Expectations of program participants must be managed
- Formal programs should not be viewed as a replacement for informal mentoring within the organization

Recommended Reading

Allen, T. D., & Eby, L. T. (Editors) (2007). *Blackwell handbook of mentoring: A multiple perspectives approach*. London: Blackwell.

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