

## **Making a Mentoring Relationship Work: What is Required for Organizational Success**

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*Mentoring programs in organizations can be helpful in improving performance and transferring knowledge, and lead to higher job satisfaction and retention of employees, resulting in higher business productivity. This research will consider the history of the mentoring and its use in organizations to increase knowledge and improve performance. This research discusses why mentoring works through the theory of social learning and explores methods to use in matching individuals for a successful mentoring relationship.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the workplace, relationships naturally develop between co-workers, clients, supervisors, and subordinates. Relationships at work can be both productive and unproductive, filled with animosity or admiration, and can foster friendships that go beyond the workplace lasting long into other careers and employers. One type of relationship that can be very beneficial in the workplace, even advancing an individual's career, is the mentoring relationship. The mentoring relationship between a mentor - a more experienced employee - and mentee can provide both parties benefits offering support and knowledge in performing a job, increased admiration in the office, and navigating the politics of an organization. The benefits usually relate to an increase in performance. This relationship, although usually positive, is not without some pitfalls and risks. A mentoring relationship can sometimes develop into a negative situation with a mentor possibly sabotaging a mentee or not providing the necessary career support. If a business is considering establishing a mentoring program or if the business currently has a mentoring program, legitimate concerns can be diminished if a screening, formal training and matching program is put in place to develop the mentoring relationship. The objective of a business mentoring program is to make a successful match between a mentor and mentee in order to achieve higher productivity with knowledge transfer, retention, and greater job satisfaction.

This research will consider the history of mentoring and its use in apprenticeship programs and for teacher retention as examples of mentoring programs commonly used for increasing knowledge and job support. It will then apply the concept to businesses for use as a performance intervention, distinguishing between formal and informal mentoring programs and consider why mentoring works by examining the idea of social learning. Finally, the research will explore the problem in business mentoring relationships of unsuccessful pairing of mentors and mentees, and address factors that may contribute to a successful mentoring relationship.

## History of Mentoring

The concepts of mentoring and formal mentor programs are familiar to many in educational institutions and apprenticeship programs. Mentoring programs exist for new teachers, youth-at-risk, and in the higher education setting for faculty and students. The role of formal mentor programs in business organizations, however, is not as common as it is in education. A review of the literature shows studies on mentoring in the workplace are mostly limited to the past 25 years. The fact that mentoring is considered an innovation in performance improvement in organizations (Murray, 2006), suggests that mentoring programs are fairly new in the workplace.

The word mentor, according to Webster's New World College Dictionary (2002), is defined as "a wise, loyal advisor, a teacher or coach." It has its origins in Greek Mythology, specifically, Homer's the *Odyssey*. King Odysseus, before leaving to fight in the Trojan War (a ten-year battle), entrusts his older friend Mentor to teach and educate his son, Telemachus (Gentry, Weber, & Sadri, 2008). In Greek, the word probably meant advisor and comes from the Indo-European root – men, meaning, "to think" (The Mentor: An Academic Advising Journal). The word mentor used today usually means, a one-to-one relationship between an experienced person and a less experienced person (Okurame & Balogun, 2005). A mentoring relationship is also defined as, "a deliberate pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with a lesser skilled or experienced one, with the agreed-upon goal of having the lesser skilled person grow and develop specific competencies (Murray, 2006)." This definition allows for the possibility that a mentor may be younger than a mentee.

Before exploring the role mentoring plays in business organizations and the problem of unsuccessfully matching mentors and mentees, we should consider the historical uses of the concept in apprenticeship programs and teacher retention programs. Both of these areas have utilized the mentoring concept for learning and job support.

### *Apprenticeship*

Apprenticeship programs as a method for training youth in jobs have existed formally since the post-World War II period. Apprenticeship is defined by Hamilton & Hamilton (1992), as activities that one engages in under the tutelage of another, a more skilled scholar or practitioner, in order to best learn an art, skill, or trade through practical experience.

Traditional apprenticeships involved an agreement between an employer and an apprentice to provide a sustained period of training. For many working-class families during the post-World War II period, getting an apprenticeship and learning a trade was a key aspiration for their male children (Vickerstaff, 2007). The apprenticeship usually began after completing a high school education, but sometimes apprentices left school early to enter into an apprenticeship. Usually this meant the apprentices were young adults with the apprenticeship considered a path to adulthood. Research on the apprentice experience shows that for many apprenticeships, one of the key things learned was how to get along with other people, especially fellow workers (Vickerstaff, 2007). The approach of the apprenticeship programs during the post-World War II era was to develop apprentices' vocational knowledge and work habits, and get them to attain substantive skills in their labor area. This system was built on the assumption that it was the employer's job through instruction, to bring young people on and invest in the next generation of skilled workers. Apprenticeship programs are still used today, usually found in vocational learning.

In addition to apprenticeships in vocational learning, apprenticeship programs are sometimes found in higher education, usually in graduate programs of study. For example, in an effort to update a graduate program in instructional design and educational technology, Pennsylvania State University designed an experimental program using a research apprenticeship for graduate students. In the program, graduate students worked directly with their advisors in research teams as part of course credit.

In results of the study (Carr-Chellman, Gursoy, Almeida, & Beabout, 2007), students said the research apprenticeship prepared them for the dissertation phase of their education better than any other course. The course involved many aspects of the research process, including presenting at conferences and publishing. Students felt the course helped prepare them for future careers as faculty members.

### *Teacher Retention*

Studies show that between 40 and 50 percent of teachers leave the profession entirely within the first five years of teaching (Ingersoll, 2003). This high attrition rate results in inexperienced teachers, high economic costs, and a lack of continuity. Mentoring has been shown to have some positive effects in teacher retention even decreasing a turnover rate from 40 percent to 18 percent in the School and Staffing Survey given to beginning teachers in 1999 (Ingersoll, 2003).

One of the most critical components of mentoring programs for new teachers is the relationship between the new teacher and their mentor, often a veteran teacher. The mentor teacher provides crucial support and advice to new teachers in areas of classroom management, lesson planning, pedagogy and emotional support (Brill & McCartney, 2008). Mentoring also positively affects the mentor or veteran teacher by expanding upon their teaching skills and leading to the development of new skills (Odell & Ferraro, 1992).

Poorly implemented mentoring programs for teachers however, can do more harm than good (Brill & McCartney, 2008). Badly structured and operated mentoring programs for new teachers create more stress, lower career expectations, and are exhausting to mentees usually due to an ineffective and poorly trained mentor (Smethem, 2007).

## **MENTORING IN BUSINESS**

A mentoring program in the work place is most likely a new concept for most businesses even though mentoring is not. In an organization, Shea (1995) defines the mentoring process as a “developmental, caring, sharing, helping relationship where one person invests time, know-how and effort in increasing and improving another person’s growth, knowledge and skills” (p.3). Mentoring programs in business organizations are considered performance interventions. The programs are implemented to pair an experienced employee as a mentor, with an inexperienced employee as a mentee. The purpose is to increase the knowledge and productivity of the mentee and to enhance the performance of the mentee in the organization. In those organizations with established mentoring programs, the benefits of running the program have outweighed the costs involved (Barbian, 2002). It is important to first consider what a performance intervention is to determine how mentoring fits as an intervention in the workplace.

### **Performance Interventions**

A performance intervention is a solution introduced in an organization to improve human performance by improving and enhancing productivity (Pershing, 2006). Performance interventions are used by human performance specialists, in the systemic solution set of enhancing performance. The use of the word systemic is important here. Systemic means affecting the entire system. In a system, everything is connected to everything else. Systemic interventions address “organizational needs as a whole, especially with regard to an organization’s vital processes and functions” (Pershing, 2006, p.13). Performance interventions then, like mentoring programs, which successfully affect the whole organization, are worth exploring as an option for performance improvement because of their systemic nature and impact on the organization as a whole, not just the mentor and mentee.

There are several ways to classify performance interventions. A commonly used method developed by Sanders and Thiagarajan (2005) breaks down performance interventions into six categories. They are: improving knowledge, improving motives, improving physical resources, improving structure and process, improving information, and improving health. According to Sanders and Thiagarajan (2005) mentoring falls under the improving knowledge category. Interventions under this category are meant to solve some sort of knowledge gap. These knowledge interventions focus on improving the essential knowledge and skills that are required for job performance. In mentoring for example, a mentor assists the mentee in gaining knowledge on how to perform the job, the skills needed and even perhaps office politics. The knowledge gained by the mentee increases the likelihood of the mentee’s success.

## **Distinguishing Formal and Informal Mentoring Programs**

Formal mentoring programs with a structured approach to the mentoring process as opposed to informal mentoring, those relationships that develop on their own, are shown to be positive and beneficial to companies. Formal mentoring programs include training for mentors, tie the mentoring program to business goals with measurable results, and conduct periodic evaluations and coordination offering on-going support for mentoring pairs (Murray, 2006). In those situations, the mentors and mentees both benefit in different ways. For mentors, studies have shown increased personal and job satisfaction. The increase in satisfaction is a result of several factors. One is that mentors gain more influence in the organization, through the added respect gained in the development of future leaders. Mentors also gain professional assistance from the mentee on work projects and may also enhance their own skills by learning new skills from the mentee. In addition, the relationship can help to motivate a seasoned mentor by offering fresh viewpoints and new perspectives about the organization (Murray, 2006). In Ramaswami and Dreher's study (as cited in Gentry, et. al., 2008), they found mentoring helps the mentor gain support through the establishment of networks of mentee's that "payback" the mentor. This happens through the mentee acting like an informant, supplying critical information that will assist the mentor in some way when needed. This, in turn helps to strengthen a mentor's reputation and recognition in an organization, by enhancing the respect and visibility of the mentor.

The research on mentoring shows that mentee's receive substantial benefits from a formal mentoring process as well. These benefits as suggested by Kram (1985) are two separate, yet interrelated functions, classified as career –related and psychosocial. Career-related benefits include higher job performance ratings which lead to promotion and salary increases, and improved esteem and competence in the job. The psychosocial benefits are part of the relationship between the mentor and mentee and include friendship, emotional support, satisfaction and personal development. Other researchers, Chao, Walz & Gardner (1992), have found that mentoring positively impacts career success, through more promotions, more mobility, higher income and career satisfaction.

Negative experiences, however, are occasionally found in organizations with a mentoring program. The negative attributes are most often seen in those organizations without a formal mentoring process, relying instead on informal processes. According to Murray (2006), the informal mentoring process is usually not tied to business goals, has no tracking system for mentoring relationships and no training or structured support. Some of those negative concerns arise when a conflict occurs between the mentor and mentee or mentee's supervisor, such as the supervisor using the mentor to reprimand the mentee instead of discussing performance issues with the mentee. Negative experiences can also occur if the mentor exhibits negative behaviors like "sabotage, bullying, revenge-seeking and exploitation (Sandberg, 2008)." In these situations, management consultants advise against relying on one mentor and feel it is a "high-risk strategy," and "bad mentoring relationships are worse than no relationship at all (Sandberg, 2008)."

For Luciann Lajoie, former marketing director at a theater company, it was hard to break off the relationship with her mentor who, according to Luciann, never seemed to help her with any of her specific questions that were job related. By the end of the mentoring relationship, which slowly dissolved as Luciann minimized contact with the mentor, she learned "tips on applying makeup and how much cinnamon to add to the coffee before percolating" (Sandberg, 2008), not exactly the skills necessary to succeed in marketing. Luciann's mentor probably could have benefitted from some mentor training and been effective as a mentor in the relationship, if she understood the role was to provide job related feedback and teaching.

In Luciann's situation, her mentor did not exhibit negative behaviors like bullying and sabotage; instead, her behavior was non-malicious, neglecting to provide the type of job knowledge and skills necessary for Luciann to advance. This may have been due to a lack of knowledge on her role as a mentor or her lack of interest in the role.

Lillian Eby, psychology professor at The University of Georgia, has studied both informal and formal mentoring programs and has found that mentoring relationships can be as abusive and destructive as dysfunctional family relationships. She had an experience as a mentee having a mentor "who did wonders for me – gave me visibility and challenging assignments – but she was also belittling and manipulative,

and involved me in her own political shenanigans” (Gianaro, 2005). According to Gianaro (2005), Eby has found in her research studies that even in those mentoring relationships experiencing some negative issues, usually the mentor and mentee hang in there, much like a husband and wife in a bad marriage. The mentoring relationship is like other interpersonal relationships in that people have reasons for staying in a bad relationship, usually because they are getting something good out of it along with the bad.

Even with the possibility of negative situations that can occur, the strong advantages of mentoring lead to the implication that mentoring is a powerful tool of career management and organizational success (Okurame, et. al., 2005). The organization benefits by increased productivity from the mentor and mentee, increased retention and an enhanced image of the organization.

For organizations, the benefits of mentoring can be broken down into four main categories of retention, promotion, productivity and personal and professional development (Triple Creek Associates, Inc., 2007). Through these categories, organizations with mentoring programs create an environment that fosters personal and professional growth by sharing business information and skills, they accelerate the processes for the identifying, developing and retaining talent and also have increased job satisfaction for both mentees and mentors (Triple Creek Associates, Inc., 2007). Businesses are always concerned about the cost to implement a new program and value it only if there is a return on investment (ROI). For mentoring programs, a simple formula can be used to calculate the ROI depending on the mentor, mentee, and organization. For mentees, the ROI can be calculated through skill and knowledge development that directly impacts productivity. For mentors, the ROI can be calculated through the sharing of knowledge and expertise. Finally, for the organization the ROI can be calculated through retention, attracting talent, saving on training and development (Triple Creek Associates, Inc., 2007).

### **Social Learning**

The mentoring relationship between the mentor and mentee can be explored through the prominent learning philosophy of social learning. Social learning recognizes the role of internal mental processing and thought in influencing behavior. The idea is best known for what the name implies – learning from others through observation and modeling. Morrison, Ross, & Kemp (2007, p.349), suggest that learning is a result of an external event or process; learning is brought about by stimuli outside the person. In the relationship between the mentor and mentee for example, the assumption is the mentee lacks certain knowledge and behaviors necessary to perform the job. The mentee learns by observing the mentor who functions as the stimulus to bring about the learning.

Social learning emphasizes the importance of observing and modeling behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. One of the most well known researchers of social learning is Albert Bandura. Bandura (1977) states:

Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions, this coded information serves as a guide for action. (p. 22)

Bandura (1977) proposed that observational learning consists of four phases: (1) attention: first learners pay attention to a model, usually someone they find important, (2) retention, having observed the model, the learner must repeat the behavior by mental rehearsal or practice to remember, (3) production: extending initial attempts to retain the behavior, the learner now tries to replicate the model’s level of expertise and (4) motivation: reinforcement is needed to sustain motivation to repeat the behavior.

According to Kearsley (2008), the principles of social learning are; the highest level of observational learning is achieved by (a) organizing and rehearsing the modeled behavior symbolically and then enacting it overtly, (b) individuals are more likely to adopt a modeled behavior if it results in outcomes they value, (c) individuals are more likely to adopt a modeled behavior if the model is similar to the observer and has admired status.

Another well-known researcher on the principles of social learning is Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky proposed an approach to learning that both describes and explains the relation of thought to action, and

the development of higher psychological functions from lower. His approach stressed the social origins of thinking (Berducci, 2004). Vygotsky focused on a developmental continuum. Infants for example, can discriminate among objects in the environment because of their possession of certain biological abilities. As the infant matures and develops into a child, the acquirement of language and social skills is largely the result of the caretaker and behaviorist in nature. As the child matures and moves along the continuum, the child will begin to operate autonomously. Vygotsky's theory explains learning in this way, by the transformation of interaction.

His theory has been applied to training in the workforce. Considering Vygotsky; following orders is the essence of training: one initially follows an order of another, and eventually an order of the self. In mentoring, for example, a mentee is hired and begins working with a mentor to learn some of the basic rules of the company, eventually, through transformation, the mentee operates within the continuation of the system of those rules without the necessary guidance of the mentor. In Vygotsky's theory, in the beginning of training, the mentee is dependent and rule-conforming but by the end of the training, the mentee is rule-obeying and autonomous.

In applying the principles of social learning to mentoring for example, we can suggest that if the mentor is admired and has similar likeness to the mentee, maybe in work ethic, career interests, and educational background, then the mentee is more likely to adopt the mentors behavior in the workplace, especially if the mentee notices the mentors behavior is met with positive results which the mentee wants to achieve.

It is easy to see how this idea can result in a positive mentoring relationship for the mentee if the mentor exhibits positive behavior. On the other hand, the theory could also work in a negative way. For example, if the mentor exhibits unethical behavior and the mentee observes this, yet the mentor continues to achieve promotions and praise from within the organization, the mentee could adopt the unethical behavior also. These types of situations, though rare, could reverse any positive effects of a mentoring program in an organization.

### **Matching the Mentor and Mentee**

Nykodym, Freedman, Simonetti, Nielsen, and Battles (1995) suggest that being prepared for a mentoring relationship along with a common language or common ground can help mentoring be successful. If a mentor and a mentee do not have enough in common, this will hurt the relationship.

### *Cognitive Style*

One way to match a mentor and mentee is through cognitive style. Cognitive style is a personality variable defined by Tennant (1988) as "an individual's characteristic and consistent approach to organizing and processing information." Cognitive style affects how an individual interacts socially and in any interpersonal function. A simple way of explaining cognitive style is the left brain/right brain analogy. A person who has a dominant left-brain or cerebral hemisphere will be more analytic, rational and sequential in processing information. A person with a dominant right brain is more holistic and intuitive for simultaneous information processing (Sperry, 1964; Luria, 1966) (as cited in Armstrong, Allison, & Hayes, 2002).

In the workplace, an analytic or left-brain dominant individual will be more compliant, prefer structure in decision-making and apply systematic methods of investigation or step-by-step solutions in problem solving. On the other hand, a right brain dominant individual will rely on random methods or holistic approaches to decision making (Lynch, 1986). Cognitive style compatibility is important because it helps decrease stress and frustration in the workplace. People who are similar in their cognitive styles will approach problem solving the same way, in a sense they are on the same page (Tennant, 1988).

When matching a mentor and mentee on similar cognitive styles, Armstrong, Allison, and Hayes (2002) found both parties reported enhanced psychosocial and career mentoring functions. This meant they felt the person was a confidant and someone to talk to about problems and anxieties in the workplace. In addition, the enhanced career functions from the relationship enabled the mentee to discuss career plans and performance feedback with the mentor.

In addition, their findings also show the importance of mutual liking. In other words, if a mentor perceives the mentee to be similar to themselves, the mentor was more likely to like the mentee. If you consider this a moment, in the workplace we tend to work better with those who have similar work ethics and interests. When we work well with someone, we usually like him or her also. Working with individuals who cause us stress, leads to dislike, frustration, avoidance and even anger. It seems natural that these patterns would extend into the mentoring relationship.

Another area of commonality found to be important in the successful pairing of a mentor and mentee is gender. If finding commonality is important in the pairing of mentors and mentees it seems likely that pairing by gender would be important. Armstrong, et al. (2002) found relationships reporting a positive experience were most likely to be of the same gender. In those relationships with a male and female, the reported psychosocial and career functions were significantly lower and therefore less successful.

### *Personality and Temperament*

Personality, the patterns and qualities of behavior that are distinctive in an individual (Webster's New World College Dictionary, 2002), and temperament, the nature or disposition of an individual, are two aspects to consider when matching a mentor and mentee for a long term mentoring relationship. Having an understanding of personality and temperament is important in the workplace and in a mentoring experience, because it can give insight into how an individual will interact with others, make decisions and perceive a situation. In mentoring, one of the greatest challenges in implementing and sustaining a mentoring program is in finding and recruiting good mentors. One tool to use in this process is a personality test. Perhaps the most well known personality test is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), developed over 60 years ago. The Center for Applications of Psychological Type (CAPT) indicated in 2002 that this test was used in over 1,000 empirical studies and was administered to over three million people per year (Capraro & Capraro, 2002).

The MBTI personality test is based on the research of Carl Jung. Jung believed human behavior could be explained through different psychological type classifications. Those classifications are the two basic functions of people's personalities. In Jung's theory, the first function of a person's personality is how information is taken in or how it is perceived. The second function is how an individual makes a decision. The functions of our personalities, while seemingly random, are actually very ordered, structured reactions based on the way we prefer to use our judgment and perception (Myers & Briggs Foundation, 2008). Jung's theory was later expounded upon by Katherine Briggs and her daughter Isabel Briggs-Myers, who developed the MBTI assessment as it is known today.

The MBTI assessment classifies a personality type in 16 different ways based on four preferences of thinking and acting. Each of the personality types has an abbreviation symbolizing a primary cognitive preference or type of function. These types include preferences for extraversion/introversion (EI), sensing or intuition (SN), thinking or feeling (TF), and judging or perceiving (JP).

Describing the preferences further, the EI preference focuses on whether an individual's general attitude toward the world is oriented outward to other persons and objects or is internally oriented. The SN preference reflects whether a person prefers to rely primarily on observable facts detected through one or more of the five senses or intuition or relies on insight. The TF preference distinguishes between individuals who prefer to use logic when making decisions or prefer to consider the people involved or special circumstances. The JP preference deals with the outside world in decision-making; it is the difference between making decisions to get things done or staying open to new ideas and options (Myers & Briggs Foundation, 2008).

The MBTI assessment could be a useful tool in a mentoring program because it can offer insight into a mentor and mentee's personality in order to match each with a compatible personality type. Some personality types do not mix well with other personality types and in a mentoring relationship, it is crucial to make an effective match from the beginning in order to maximize the productivity and efficiency of the mentoring relationship.

In a research study, the MBTI was used by Stromei (1999) to test personality types of mentoring pairs for compatibility. Mentors in the study were upper level managers, directors, and vice presidents. The

mentees were middle level managers. The study found that mentees showed significant improvement on their leadership effectiveness and overall satisfaction of the mentoring experience when paired with a mentor with a compatible personality type to their own. This finding was used to propose a model for a formal mentoring program.

Many businesses use the MBTI assessment as a training tool for professional development and organizational improvement. The MBTI assessment is useful with teams, for conflict management and performance improvement, for employee coaching, for management development, and for executive coaching. Despite the use of the MBTI in businesses for organizational improvement, Stapleton (2007) found that organizing teams based on heterogeneity of the MBTI assessment provided better performance on problem solving than forming teams of homogeneous individuals. This is the opposite method of pairing in a mentoring relationship. In mentoring, homogeneity in personality traits results in a more satisfying mentoring experience (Stromei, 1999; Nykodym, Freedman, Simonetti, Nielsen, & Battles, 1995).

The MBTI is frequently used with the Keirsey Temperament Sorter (KTS-II), developed by David Keirsey. The KTS-II helps explain how an individual will react in situations based on temperament.

The KTS-II is a 70-question instrument based on Keirsey Temperament Theory (Keirsey, 1978). The theory classifies temperaments into four groups used to describe human behavior: artisan, guardian, rational and idealist. A person with an artisan temperament is fun-loving, playful, unconventional and bold. Artisans are usually known as troubleshooting leaders. A guardian temperament is dependable, hardworking, responsible, and makes a stabilizing leader. A rational temperament is independent, strong-willed, focused on problem-solving and makes a strategic leader. Common characteristics of an individual with the idealist temperament are; enthusiastic, kindhearted, and nurturing. This type of temperament makes an inspirational leader (Keirsey, 1978).

These four types of temperament are further subdivided into character types. Of these 16 different types of characters, one type is known as the mentor temperament and falls under the idealist group. The mentor, or teacher personality, otherwise known as the ENFJ, is considered externally focused, introspective, altruistic, and positive and have excellent people skills. An ENFJ feels it is important to help others grow. The ENFJ personality is warm and has a natural desire to be supportive and encouraging. The ENFJ's are considered charismatic and possess excellent language skills; therefore, they do well in leadership roles. ENFJs strive to enhance the lives of others.

While it may be tempting to suggest that only those individuals who are classified as a mentor personality qualify for a mentoring program, that would be a mistake. Each personality has leadership qualities that are compatible with different types of personalities. The key is to use the assessments to match a mentor and mentee for compatibility and not necessarily mentor personality qualities because not all mentees will have personality types compatible with the mentor type qualities.

### **Implications and Further Questions**

This research explored the history of mentoring and the use of mentoring in the traditional learning environments of apprenticeship programs and teacher retention. By considering the traditional uses of mentoring for learning, and understanding why mentoring works by considering social learning theory, business organizations can use the mentoring concept for learning as a performance improvement and performance intervention.

The most common negative factor of mentoring programs in businesses organizations is the unsuccessful matching of a mentor and mentee. This research explored and discussed some commonalities to use; such as cognitive style, gender, personality and temperament, when pairing a mentor and mentee in the workplace, in order to avoid the problems of unsuccessful mentor relationships. Before undertaking the implementation of a mentoring program in a business or entering into a mentoring relationship, it is important to understand that successfully matching a mentor and mentee is crucial to the success of the mentoring relationship and mentoring program.

If mentoring provides so many advantages to an organization and a mentor and mentee, the question remains as to why more businesses are not incorporating formal mentor programs into their operational



structure or human resource training and development programs. Mentoring as a concept has been around for a long time, but because it is fairly new in businesses, there may be a lack of trainers or consultants available with knowledge on how to establish formal mentoring programs, or businesses may not recognize the strong relationship between mentoring programs and productivity. Additional research is necessary to establish the ROI for formal mentoring programs in businesses.

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