

DIVE IN TO REVERSE MENTORING

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Reverse Mentoring**

A guide to Reverse Mentoring

Description

This programme introduces reverse mentoring as a powerful tool for fostering inclusion and growth within an organisation. Unlike traditional mentoring, reverse mentoring flips the roles so junior employees take on the mentor role, sharing their insights and experiences with more senior colleagues, who become the mentees.

The aim is to broaden perspectives, build new skills, and strengthen diversity and inclusion across the workforce. Senior staff can gain fresh viewpoints and learn valuable skills from those in junior roles, while both parties deepen their understanding of different functions and responsibilities within the organisation.

Mentoring Objectives

- To help the mentee develop new skills
- To provide the mentor and mentee with new perspectives
- To improve diversity and inclusion within the organisation
- To enhance the organisational culture
- To bridge generational gaps
- To encourage knowledge sharing
- To improve the leadership skills of the mentor

Session 1- Introductory meeting

The first session is all about getting to know each other. Building a strong mentoring relationship starts with mutual trust and understanding, which is why this session focuses on setting clear expectations and sharing insights into each other's professional journeys and personal backgrounds.

- Get to know each other
- Career background and experience (in-depth) of the mentor and mentee
- What is the mentee looking for - skills/learning, areas of interest or support
- Expectations - confidentiality, duration of meetings, length of the relationship
- Discuss the goals of the mentee

Session 2- Goal setting

Following the initial session where the mentor and mentee connect on both professional and personal levels, the next step is to set meaningful goals. Establishing these early on helps create a clear direction and increases the chances of a successful mentoring relationship. With defined goals in place, both participants have a shared purpose to guide their journey together.

- Discuss SMART goals with the mentee and feedback
- Long-term and short-term goals are to be set in order of priority
- Discuss how these goals will be achieved - what skills are needed?
- Advice and support for mentee on first goal set and skills
- Set mentee task - topic dedicated towards first goal

Session 3 – Skill progression

Organisations often introduce reverse mentoring programmes to help senior employees develop new skills, such as adopting new technologies or mastering modern software tools. This session is therefore focused on building the mentee's capabilities and encouraging continuous learning.

- Discuss the pre-existing skill set and experience of the mentee
- Mentee skills self-assessment - strengths and weaknesses
- Advice and areas of support from the mentor
- Priorities of skills development - related to goals
- Include outside resources and learning materials for the mentee
- Set mentee task - working on particular skill

Session 4 – New perspectives

Reverse mentoring programmes provide a meaningful way for employees to broaden their perspectives. By exploring cultural diversity and generational differences within the organisation, these programmes help foster a more inclusive workplace and contribute to a stronger, more connected organisational culture.

- Discuss tasks from previous session
- The mentee and mentor share their own experiences within the organisation
- The mentor shares feedback on the organisational culture
- Both parties are to express the challenges they face
- Discuss ideas to make the workforce more inclusive
- Explore future opportunities to help the mentee gain new perspectives
- Have a Q&A on related topics

Session 5 – Leadership development

Reverse mentoring is a powerful way for less experienced employees to build leadership skills. These programmes offer junior staff the chance to engage with senior colleagues they might not typically interact with, creating valuable learning experiences. For the mentor, gaining insights from a more experienced professional helps accelerate personal and professional growth.

- Discuss the mentor's strengths and weaknesses
- Explore leadership within the organisation
- Ask the mentee for feedback on the leadership skills of the mentor
- Discuss the mentee's current leadership style
- Conduct some role-playing activities
- Explore new ideas to improve leadership within the organisation
- Ask the mentee questions related to leadership
- Discuss further training opportunities offered by the organisation

Session 6 – Review and feedback

This session is designed to reflect on the progress made throughout the mentoring journey. It centres on gathering feedback, responding to any questions from the mentee, and identifying any areas where further support may be beneficial.

- Mentee update and feedback
- Skills reassessment
- Share helpful resources with the mentee
- Development of skills
- Mentor provides support and offers feedback on improvements
- Organisation updates and next steps
- Goal progress
- Gather feedback from the mentee on the effectiveness of mentoring

Top tips for mentoring session

With a clear understanding of what each mentoring session involves, the next step is learning how to build a strong, trusting relationship. To help you succeed, here are 13 practical tips for creating a trusting mentoring partnership.

1. Exchange in honest and two-way conversations
2. Define expectations
3. Bring innovative and creative ideas
4. Actively participate
5. Set achievable goals
6. Get to know each other well
7. Be reliable and consistent
8. Carefully listen to what each other has to say
9. Maintain contact - Via PushFar or other channels
10. Be prepared to ask questions and answer them
11. Always offer constructive feedback
12. Make sure to schedule your meetings on PushFar
13. Stay positive during the mentoring sessions

10 mentoring activities

To make your mentoring relationship more fun and effective, it's helpful to include activities alongside your regular sessions. These can help you connect better and learn more from each other. Some examples are:

1. Engaging in role-playing situations
2. Job shadowing
3. Making a vision board
4. Attending a networking event together
5. Read a book together and discuss it
6. Take part in a workshop related to the relationship
7. Focus on developing a relationship outside of work
8. Discuss related news and events
9. Listen to a podcast together
10. Go for a walk to get new ideas flowing

How to be a good mentor and mentee

In mentoring, it's not just about having a relationship—it's about making it work. Both the mentor and mentee can take steps to be their best. When there's mutual respect and trust, great things can happen.

How to be a good mentor:

1. Act as a good role model for your mentee
2. Be a sounding board
3. Celebrate the achievements of the mentee
4. Actively communicate and listen to your mentee
5. Offer constructive criticism and feedback
6. Be empathetic
7. Share your knowledge with your mentee

How to be a good mentee:

1. Always be clear on your wants and needs
2. Be the driver of the relationship
3. Be open to feedback (remember, it's a gift!)
4. Always be honest when you communicate
5. Make sure that you're committed to the relationship
6. Prepare for each session
7. Be respectful of your mentor