

Hey! What's New? 2025-125

You Can't Complain About Retention If You Don't Mentor Your People

An article in *Entrepreneur*, written by Dr. Christina Rahm, says that a structured mentorship program is now widely recognized as a strategic business asset. Companies generate higher revenue — and thus rank higher on the Fortune 500 list — when they have one.”

Even before they're hired, she notes, “motivated individuals are attracted to companies visibly committed to career development. For experienced professionals, I've found that they see mentorship as a chance to fine-tune leadership skills and ensure mentees feel comfortable sharing their thoughts.”

Building a mentorship program for your company will look as unique as your company itself, Rahm says, “no two programs are the same. However, a mentor generally seeks to support a mentee's professional growth, learning and career development. If both individuals can learn from each other, the mentor can be anyone from a direct manager to a peer.”

At her Rahm Foundation, she says, “we use a healthy mix of common ground and new perspectives to pair two individuals together. We look for this in skill sets, leadership qualities and personal goals for both the mentor and mentee. This pairing approach increases the chances for a relationship where both mentees and mentors feel challenged.”

Although these relationships could potentially occur naturally, a mentorship program formalizes the process. “This is the key ingredient of the program: bringing informal knowledge sharing to the next level. A mentorship program offers the structure — and accountability — to ensure true mentorship and career development.”

Something Rahm believes the SMART method (a goal-setting framework) is particularly helpful for determining goals. “After they're defined on an organizational scale, work with your team to develop goals on a mentor-mentee level. At the Rahm Foundation, we use both quantitative and qualitative data to measure success.”

Of course, any initiative is only as great as its people. Rahm suggests that when you're choosing program leaders, “select people who are passionate about helping others, because their enthusiasm can be infectious. With your new leadership team in place, you can determine how to receive feedback, choose pairings and plan company-wide mentorship events.”

Next, spread the word about your new initiative. Rahm advises that, to maximize participation in the program, “work with your marketing team to produce internal communications on the topic. The priority should be to deliver a clear message on the benefits of joining the program, whether through email, a company-wide kick-off event or flyers and posters around the office. Don't discount word of mouth either, which can have a significant positive effect on program adoption.”

According to Rahm, “for a mentorship program to fully take off and stay on course, it will need consistent care. This is a group effort by everyone involved — mentors, mentees and the leadership team. A helpful way to approach this is through clarity, communication and commitment.”

Consistent communication is also essential, she says. “This includes briefing mentees’ managers on the time commitment required for their participation in the program. The time commitment for mentors should also be effectively communicated. Consistent internal communications, including success stories, can highlight your organization’s true commitment to supporting its employees.”

Committing fully requires taking a long-term view of the mentorship program, Rahm says. “Since results may not be visible until weeks or months later, encourage your participants to check in at regular intervals. Then, collaborate with the leadership team to address any program pain points. As it gains traction, commitment may also include taking a strategic look at the program and optimizing it for an improved structure.”

For more, check out [Why Every Company Needs a Mentorship Program Today](#)