



Retaining Staff Through Mentoring

We know that retaining good staff is critical to company success. Keeping good people saves us the time and money needed to train or retrain new people. It keeps productivity levels humming. Perhaps most important it retains the credibility of our organisations, keeping customers and other key stakeholders confident in our ability to deliver.

We also know that staff retention is about far more than money. Study after study has shown that people stay because they feel valued, engaged, challenged and connected.

We might be thinking that staff retention isn't something to worry about in these tough economic times. And it's true, employees are more likely to stay put when fearful about the economy. But this doesn't necessarily apply to our best, most productive staff members. And we don't want to suffer an exodus when the economic malaise lifts.

Enter mentoring. Widely considered a tool for junior staff development, mentoring is also a powerful tool to retain staff at all levels. According to the mentoring expert Professor David Clutterbuck, a well-constructed mentoring program will increase the chance of people staying by one third on average.

SURPRISED? WELL CONSIDER HOW MENTORING IMPACTS ON THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED:

1. Participating in a mentoring program makes staff feel valued by their organisation. This is obviously true for mentees, but also true

for mentors who appreciate having their knowledge and expertise recognised.

2. A mentoring program raises awareness and understanding between different levels within the organisation's strata. Senior management become aware of frustrations experience by juniors and are able to take timely action.
3. Mentees feel heard, given the opportunity to voice their career frustrations and concerns.
4. Mentors feel reinvigorated, finding a sense of purpose in the opportunity to help someone else's career.
5. The mentoring relationship enables people to shape a career strategy within an organisation and points them toward internal job opportunities.
6. And if you do lose someone, the mentoring process has the surprising effect of attracting them back. When former staff start looking for their next opportunity, they are likely to turn to their former trusted mentor for advice.

A well constructed mentoring program makes your staff feel valued, builds connections between different organizational levels and provides a foundation for building long-term career strategies within the organisation. It is hardly surprising that increased staff retention is an outcome.