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BRIEFING NO. 3 | MENTORING

Mentoring: A win-win for women executives

Women have come a long way in the business world in past few decades ~ but they have a long way yet to go. Many female managers still lack the connections and confidence that give their male counterparts an edge. Mentoring can help.

Mentoring provides valuable resources, expertise and connections that can help women compete with the “old boys” networks that still dominate many organizations and industries.

Who’s it for

Mentoring, like education, is for everyone, advocates say. Experienced executives have much to pass on, and can use the fresh perspectives and new contacts that arise from being a mentor. You don’t have to have 20 years in the industry to be a mentor; some of the best mentoring relationships are between peers.

At the same time, you don’t have to be a novice to be mentored. Even the most senior executives can benefit from the feedback and guidance gained in a mentor relationship. You may be surprised by the insights a new pair of eyes can bring to your work and career.

Benefits to mentors

1. Creates opportunities for experienced professionals to strengthen their knowledge base and improve communication skills

2. Enhances the leadership, teaching and coaching skills of mentors and encourages them to become more reflective

3. Creates new support networks with other professionals in their field and promotes greater collegiality among professionals within and across institutions

4. Provides the satisfaction that comes with helping an emerging professional develop to his or her full potential

5. Demonstrates a commitment to personal and professional growth of themselves and others

6. Promotes the professional recognition of mentors

Benefits to mentees

1. Promotes a professional relationship that fosters guidance and support

2. May increase the self-confidence of a new professional as he or she becomes familiar with a new role, increased responsibilities or new organizational culture

3. Challenges mentees to go further, take risks, set new goals and achieve at a higher personal and/or professional standard

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4. Provides a forum to dialogue on professional issues and to seek and receive advice on how to balance new responsibilities

5. Matches a new professional with an experienced professional in their field and promotes networking and visibility

6. Provides role model for professional leadership while facilitating the development of increased capabilities and interpersonal skills

7. Reflects the mentee's commitment to personal and professional growth

Benefits to organizations

1. Contributes to a positive organizational climate and promotes a clearer understanding of professional responsibilities and expectations

2. May increase employee satisfaction and retention by reducing an employee's sense of isolation

3. May result in improved employee job performance, faster learning curves and a better trained team

4. Reflects an investment in employee development and may increase employee commitment and loyalty

5. Promotes a positive image of the organization and its employee-centered values

6. Contributes to the development of partnerships or alliances that may be useful to the organization in the future

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