

Evaluation Summary of The Mentor Program at Abbott Laboratories



by

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About Abbott Laboratories

Headquartered in north suburban Chicago, Abbott Laboratories ranks number 80 on the *FORTUNE 500* and has more than 72,000 employees worldwide in more than 130 countries. Abbott discovers new medicines, new technologies and new ways to manage health, including nutritional products, laboratory diagnostics and pharmaceutical therapies.

Problem

New to the company, the Manager of Professional Development in the Human Resources Department knew of the mentoring program for professional development of engineers, but had no idea how effective it was.

Solution

TNI Consultants evaluated the program over four months. A custom-designed 12-page questionnaire requested demographic information, including length of time in the mentoring relationship and whether the boss was included in the process.

The questionnaire contained three mutually exclusive lists of potential benefits from the mentoring relationship -- to the organization, protégé and mentor. Participants selected and ranked the three items they perceived as being *most* beneficial and the three items they perceived as being *least* beneficial -- to the organization, protégé and mentor.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with nine functions of the mentoring relationship, any dissatisfaction and assign an overall value to the mentoring relationship.

Results

Ninety-five percent of participants responded to the questionnaire. Mentors, protégés and protégés' bosses perceived benefits of the mentoring program in significantly different ways base on their role, or lack thereof, in the mentoring relationship. Recommendations included:

- Establish formal role of mentor program coordinator
- Establish feedback loop between mentor, protégé and protégé's boss
- Conduct orientation and training to the mentoring program
- Conduct self-assessment of career or life skills
- Share personal values, needs and interests
- Create support system for the mentoring program

Testimonial

"Terrie gathered information we could never have collected ourselves. She was efficient, professional and instructive as she worked with corporate executives who, while experts in engineering, knew nothing about evaluation! Terrie's recommendations definitely strengthened our program." *Mark Nadicz, Manager of Professional Development, Human Resources, Abbott Laboratories, Inc.*

RESULTS OF THE MENTOR STUDY

GENDER

85 % male
14 % female
1% unknown

AGE

Mentors: 31 - 65 years; most between 36 - 45
Mentees: 20 - 45 years; most between 26 - 35
Bosses: 26 - 60 years; most between 51 - 60
Mentors/Bosses: 31- 55 years; most between 36 - 45

RACE

92% white
7% of color
1% unknown

EDUCATION

Most Mentees are bachelors level prepared; one PhD/EdD prepared
Mentors, Bosses, Mentors/Bosses are at least masters level prepared

WORK EXPERIENCE

Current Job in Organization

73% of respondents have been in current jobs up to 3 years

Previous Job in Organization

Over half of respondents have up to 5 years of experience elsewhere in organization
Another third have between 5 - 15 years of experience elsewhere in organization
The rest have over 15 years experience elsewhere in organization

Experience in Chosen Field

Mentees generally have between 6 - 10 years related experience
Mentors, Bosses, Mentors/Bosses generally have over 10 years related experience

LENGTH OF TIME IN MENTOR-MENTEE RELATIONSHIP

Most Mentors and Mentees have been in relationship between 1 - 2 years

MENTOR OR MENTEE MEETINGS AMONGST THEMSELVES

20% of Mentors report meeting *with other Mentors* 1 - 4 times per year
7% of Mentees report meeting *with other Mentees* 2 - 4 times per year

IS BOSS INCLUDED IN PROCESS?

62% of Bosses and 82% of Mentors/Bosses are *not included* in the process

EMPLOYEE CHANGES NOTED

8% Bosses and Mentors/Bosses note changes in employees including: increased interest in management/career development, communication skills, more confidence, more aware of other jobs in organization and informal rules, and how perceived by peers

TENSIONS NOTED

One Mentor/Boss noted tension between Mentee / Mentor due to poor match

BENEFITS OF THE MENTOR-MENTEE RELATIONSHIP

8 TOP BENEFITS TO ORGANIZATION (reported by ≥50% respondents)

1. Mentoring socializes Mentee into organization (77%)
2. Mentoring humanizes the organization (71%)
3. Mentoring improves interdepartmental communication (69%)
4. Mentoring helps Mentee adapt to new cultures (64%)
5. Mentoring eases job transitions (63%)
6. Mentoring grooms people for advancement (58%)
7. Mentoring improves morale (56%)
8. Mentoring develops sense of identity with organization (51%)

MOST BENEFICIAL TO ORGANIZATION

1. Mentoring helps Mentee adapt to new cultures
2. Mentoring improves interdepartmental communication
3. Mentoring humanizes the organization
4. Mentoring socializes Mentee into organization

LEAST BENEFICIAL TO ORGANIZATION

1. Mentoring helps organization overcome labor shortage
2. Mentoring decreases formal training costs
3. Mentoring enhances organization's public image
4. Mentoring facilitates recruitment

3 TOP BENEFITS OF RELATIONSHIP TO MENTOR (reported by ≥ 50% respondents)

1. Mentoring gives Mentor new perspective on the organization (66%)
2. Mentoring provides Mentor an opportunity for leadership (64%)
3. Mentoring increases Mentor's self esteem (59%)

DO GROUPS PERCEIVE BENEFITS OF RELATIONSHIP IN SAME WAY?

Significant differences in how the four groups perceive two benefits:

1. Mentors/Bosses and Mentors differ in "a Mentor's recognition increases within the organization as a result of the relationship"
2. Mentors and Mentees differ in "Mentoring provides the Mentor with an opportunity for leadership"

MOST BENEFICIAL TO MENTOR

1. Mentor gains new perspective on organization
2. Mentor gets an opportunity for leadership
3. Mentor's skills are enhanced
4. Mentor's self esteem increases

LEAST BENEFICIAL TO MENTOR

1. Mentor receives financial gains as a result of being a Mentor
2. Mentor receives special training / professional education
3. Mentor's productivity increases
4. Mentor's promotability increases

9 TOP BENEFITS OF RELATIONSHIP TO MENTEE (reported by \geq 50% respondents)

1. Mentee learns the ropes of the organization (86%)
2. Mentee learns the politics of the organization (84%)
3. Mentee gains a broad network of resources and contacts (78%)
4. Mentee learns the organizational norms and culture (77%)
5. Mentee gains visibility within the organization (67%)
6. Mentee develops a career plan / career goals (67%)
7. Mentee feels supported (62%)
8. Mentee develops increased confidence (59%)
9. Mentee gains opportunities to advance in his or her career (56%)

MOST BENEFICIAL TO MENTEE

1. Mentee learns the ropes of the organization
2. Mentee learns the politics of the organization
3. Mentee gains a network of resources and contacts
4. Mentee learns about the organization's norms and culture

LEAST BENEFICIAL TO MENTEE

1. Mentee gains a sense of belonging to a social network
2. Mentee learns problem solving skills
3. Mentee feels protected and safe while learning the job
4. Mentee develops skills in critical thinking / reasoning

SATISFACTION WITH FUNCTIONS OF RELATIONSHIP

MENTORS/BOSSES: 55 - 91% satisfied with

Role modeling, coaching, counseling, acceptance-and-confirmation, friendship, protection, exposure-and-visibility, sponsorship and career tasks

MENTORS: 53 - 95% satisfied with

Role modeling, coaching, counseling, acceptance-and-confirmation, friendship, protection, exposure-and visibility, and sponsorship

MENTEES: 50 - 73% satisfied with

Role modeling, coaching, counseling, acceptance-and-confirmation, friendship, protection

BOSSES: 50% satisfied with

Exposure-and-visibility.

DISSATISFACTION WITH RELATIONSHIP

MENTORS/BOSSES (64%)

1. Mentors and Mentees have unrealistic expectations
2. Need time to establish relationship with Mentee
3. Matching process could be improved upon
4. Program lacks organization and structure

MENTORS (63%)

1. Mentors and Mentees have unrealistic expectations
2. Uncertain about role Boss should play in process
3. Matching process could be improved upon
4. Program lacks organization and structure

MENTEES (53%)

1. Rise and fall of Mentor/Mentee are too mutually dependent
2. Decreased Mentor/upper management support of The Mentor Program
3. Need time to establish relationship with Mentors
4. Matching process could be improved upon
5. Program needs more publicity
6. Program lacks organization and structure

BOSSES (46%)

1. Minimal or no feedback from Mentor or from Mentee
2. Program needs more publicity
3. Mentors and Mentees have unrealistic expectations

OVERALL VALUE OF THE MENTOR-MENTEE RELATIONSHIP:

BENEFICIAL:

Mentors/Bosses	46%
Mentors	37%
Bosses	25%
Mentees	23%

SOMEWHAT BENEFICIAL:

Mentors	37%
Mentors/Bosses	36%
Mentees	23%
Bosses	17%

NOT BENEFICIAL:

Bosses	58%
Mentees	55%
Mentors	26%
Mentors/Bosses	18%

Overall, Mentors, Mentees, Bosses, and Mentors/Bosses in this study generally acknowledge the benefit and value of the Mentor-Mentee relationship to themselves and to the organization. They appreciate the opportunities it provides for their personal and professional development.

Mentor, Mentees, Bosses, and Mentors/Bosses perceive the Mentor-Mentee relationship in significantly different ways. Bosses and Mentors/Bosses are half as likely as Mentors and Mentees to perceive that improved inter-departmental communication results from the Mentor-Mentee relationship. Mentors/Bosses are significantly different from Mentors in ascribing value as to whether or not a Mentors' recognition increases within the organization as a result of the Mentor-Mentee relationship.

Mentors and Mentees differ in whether or not the relationship provides the Mentor with an opportunity for leadership. Bosses are significantly less satisfied than Mentors, Mentees and Mentors/Bosses with four psychosocial functions of the relationship (role modeling, counseling, acceptance-and-confirmation, and friendship) and one career function (coaching).

Although Mentors/Bosses express the most dissatisfaction with the relationship, Mentors and Mentors/Bosses are still more likely to perceive the relationship as being at least somewhat beneficial -- as compared to Mentees and Bosses who are most likely to perceive the relationship as not being beneficial. Bosses are the least satisfied of any group with the Mentor-Mentee relationship.

IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS / ORGANIZATION

Benefits of the Mentor-Mentee relationship to the Mentor, Mentee and to the organization have been identified by the Mentor, Mentee and Mentee's Boss. Some of these benefits have also been ranked from most important to least beneficial. Results of this study have implications for those involved in a Mentor-Mentee relationship including potential Mentors, Mentees and Mentee's Boss. There are also implications for organizations which have or hope to have a mentoring program, however formal and informal.

This study demonstrates how the Mentor-Mentee relationship affects the organization, the Mentor, the Mentee and the Mentee's Boss. The Mentor-Mentee relationship makes it easier and less stressful for the Mentee to adapt to new cultures, socialize into the organization and learn about the organizational norms and culture. It heightens an awareness the Mentor, the Mentee and the Boss have of various divisions within the organization -- their collective strengths, limitations and contributions.

The relationship enhances Mentees' understanding of organizational politics and helps them better learn the ropes of the organization. It makes the organization, and the process of acclimating to it, more humane -- critical in view of today's corporate consolidations.

This study has shown that the Mentor, the Mentee and the Mentee's Boss perceive some aspects of the relationship in different ways. Several of the potential benefits are perceived differently by Mentors, Mentees, Bosses and Mentors/Bosses.

The level of satisfaction over the way in which functions are carried out within the relationship also differs amongst the four groups. Bosses are significantly less satisfied than Mentors, Mentees and Mentors/Bosses with role modeling, counseling, acceptance-and-confirmation, friendship and coaching functions of the relationship. None of the four groups appear particularly satisfied with the career task function of the relationship.

It may be appropriate for the four groups to perceive some aspects of the relationship differently. There are some things, however, that might be done to minimize the dissatisfaction expressed by respondents in all four groups.

An orientation and training program to kickoff The Mentoring Program might help at the very least define program goals and objectives. How Mentors and Mentees are oriented to their roles and responsibilities directly influences how they related to each other and how they carry out their developmental responsibilities (Kram & Brager, 1992; Murray, 1991). An orientation might include Mentors and Mentees in one group or as two distinct groups before coming together as one. Content might include how and when to apply skills such as active listening, conflict resolution, assertion, leadership, motivational and reinforcement techniques, in addition to effective instructional methods and techniques.

Listed below is an example, as adapted from Murray (1991), of an orientation program including Mentors, Mentees and the Mentees' Bosses:

<u>Sample Outline for Group Orientation</u>	<u>Process</u>
1. What The Mentor Program is and what it isn't	Presentation
2. Where the present job can lead / career paths	Presentation
3. Overall structure of The Mentor Program	Presentation

4.	Self assessment of career and life skills	Interest/skills inventory
5.	Mentee's complete biographical data sheet (or have this brought to session)	Individual task
6.	Recognizing human motivation and needs	Presentation
7.	Organizational mission, values and culture	Group process
8.	The mentoring process as a part of human resource development, staffing requirements, and succession planning	Presentation
9.	Roles of the Mentor, the Mentee, the Mentee's Boss and The Mentor Program Coordinator	Presentation/Discussion
10.	Identifying individual work behavior patterns (or have people do this prior to session)	Personal Profile System
11.	Documenting personal values, needs, interests	Guided individual process
12.	Assessment of skills against criteria established for Mentors	Discussion
13.	Communications / Feedback skills	Presentation/Discussion
14.	Negotiations / Learning Contracts	Presentation/Discussion
15.	Establishing project reporting requirements with Program Coordinator	Discussion
16.	How to get started	Presentation/Discussion
17.	Negotiating agreements and individual plans	Mentor-Mentee-Boss

Other recommendations for The Mentor Program, in addition to conducting an orientation and training program, might include the following:

Formalizing The Mentor Program

1. Clearly articulate and define the mission of The Mentor Program
2. Enlist financial and emotional support of senior level people within the organization

3. Re-examine Mentor and Mentee identification and selection process
4. Revise Mentor-Mentee matching process
5. Structure mechanism for follow-up once matches are made
6. Publicize The Mentor Program so that everyone is aware of this opportunity
7. Define roles and responsibilities of the Mentor, Mentee and Mentee's Boss
8. Develop feedback loop through which Mentors, Mentees and Mentee's Bosses can communicate on some regular basis
9. Provide guidelines for meeting activities and topics; frequency of meetings; how Boss could be included in the Mentoring process; how to make time for the relationship in spite of busy schedules
10. Provide some type of ongoing continuing education to those involved in The Mentor Program (i.e. seminar on team building)
11. Monitor The Mentor Program by conducting formative and summative assessments or evaluations

Respondents from all four groups in this study acknowledge the benefits resulting from The Mentor Program. They have given honest, constructive feedback and seem eager to make The Mentor Program a success -- yielding benefits not only to themselves but to the organization as well.