insala®

How to Start a Mentoring Program

A guide to planning and implementing a successful mentoring program

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“The data tell us people find significant value in having mentors, and the benefits are clear at any stage of people’s careers.

Organizations that embrace a culture of mentorship, and encourage employees to participate in mentorship programs boost workplace happiness and lower the likelihood of losing their best performers."

Jon Cohen, Chief Research Officer, SurveyMonkey

Defining Mentoring

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What is mentoring?

It might seem basic, but before we get into the details of launching a mentoring program, let's review key terms we will use frequently throughout this eBook. Clear definitions of these terms is critical when it comes to communicating about your mentoring program.

Mentee

An individual who seeks or needs specific knowledge or experience in a given area.

Mentor

An individual with specific knowledge or experience in a given area of expertise who is willing and able to share that information with another.

> mentor ≠ coach
>
> *A mentor is not a certified teacher or a professionally trained coach. While mentors may teach and use the skill of coaching, they are more like a guide and advisor to the mentee.*

Program Administrator/Manager

An individual (or team) who oversees and manages all aspects of the mentoring program.

Mentoring

The use of an experienced individual to teach, guide, and develop someone with less knowledge or experience.

Mentoring Program

A strategic development program aligned with business objectives to help individuals achieve specific goals.



76% of people think mentors are important, however, only 37% of people currently have one.

Olivet Nazarene University

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Why do organizations use mentoring?

Low retention and engagement are typically associated with lack of career development opportunities or lack of future opportunities within the organization.

In 2021, The Great Resignation is upon us, you might be wondering how to reduce turnover. Employees are looking to organizations to actively promote a positive employee experience.

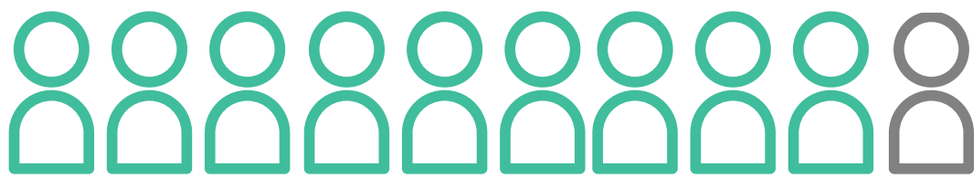
Mentoring enables organizations to promote a positive employee experience by:

- facilitating personal and professional development
- promoting connection among a remote or hybrid workforce
- improving company culture
- enhancing the onboarding process

52%

of workers are considering a job change in 2021.

Acheivers



More than 9 in 10 workers (91%) who have a mentor are satisfied with their jobs.

CNBC/SurveyMonkey Workplace Happiness Survey

What initiatives do mentoring programs support?

Organizational Career Development Programs

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Programs

Programs to Enhance Skill and Competency Building

Leadership and Hi-Potential Programs

Onboarding Programs

Programs to Improve Employee Satisfaction Surveys

Mentoring Your Way

Your workplace might look different from how it looked in the past. Mentoring is a versatile practice that can be implemented in a variety of settings: virtual, in person, and hybrid.

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Benefits of Mentoring Programs

Improving employee engagement and increasing employee retention are just some of the benefits of a mentoring program. There are several advantages for the mentee, the mentor, and the organization.

Advantages for Mentors and Mentees

- Expands professional network
- Improves communication skills
- Promotes Knowledge sharing
- Improves competency & confidence in mentees as mentors gain a sense of fulfillment & self worth
- Allows practice for giving and receiving feedback

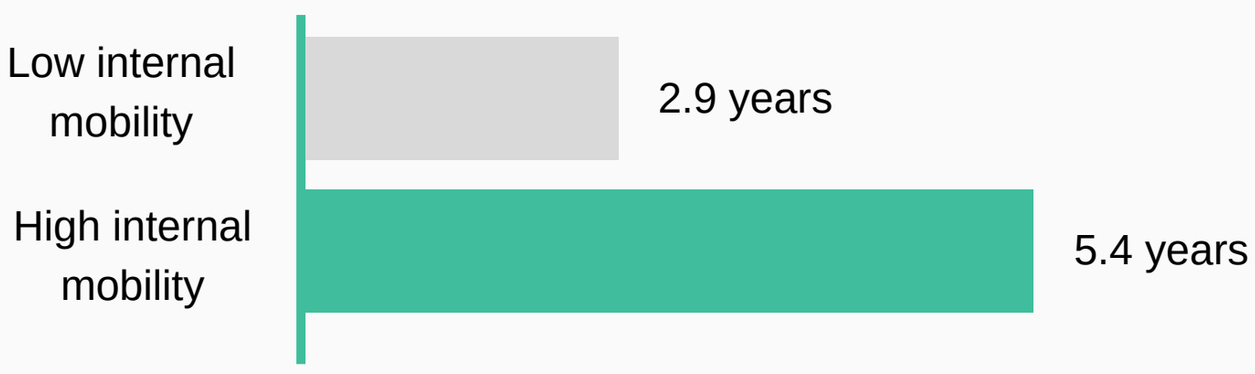
Advantages for Organizations

- Promotes the achievement of talent development goals
- Shows that leadership is willing to invest in employees
- Attracts talent, career development is seen as a benefit
- Improves employee engagement and retention
- Harnesses the power of natural leadership
- Breaks down silos

Mentoring + Internal Mobility

Mentoring programs help employees develop their career paths in addition to gaining skills and knowledge needed for future roles, potentially at their current organization.

Leadership mentoring programs help organizations secure strong succession pipelines.



Employees at companies with **internal mobility** stay almost 2x longer.

LinkedIn

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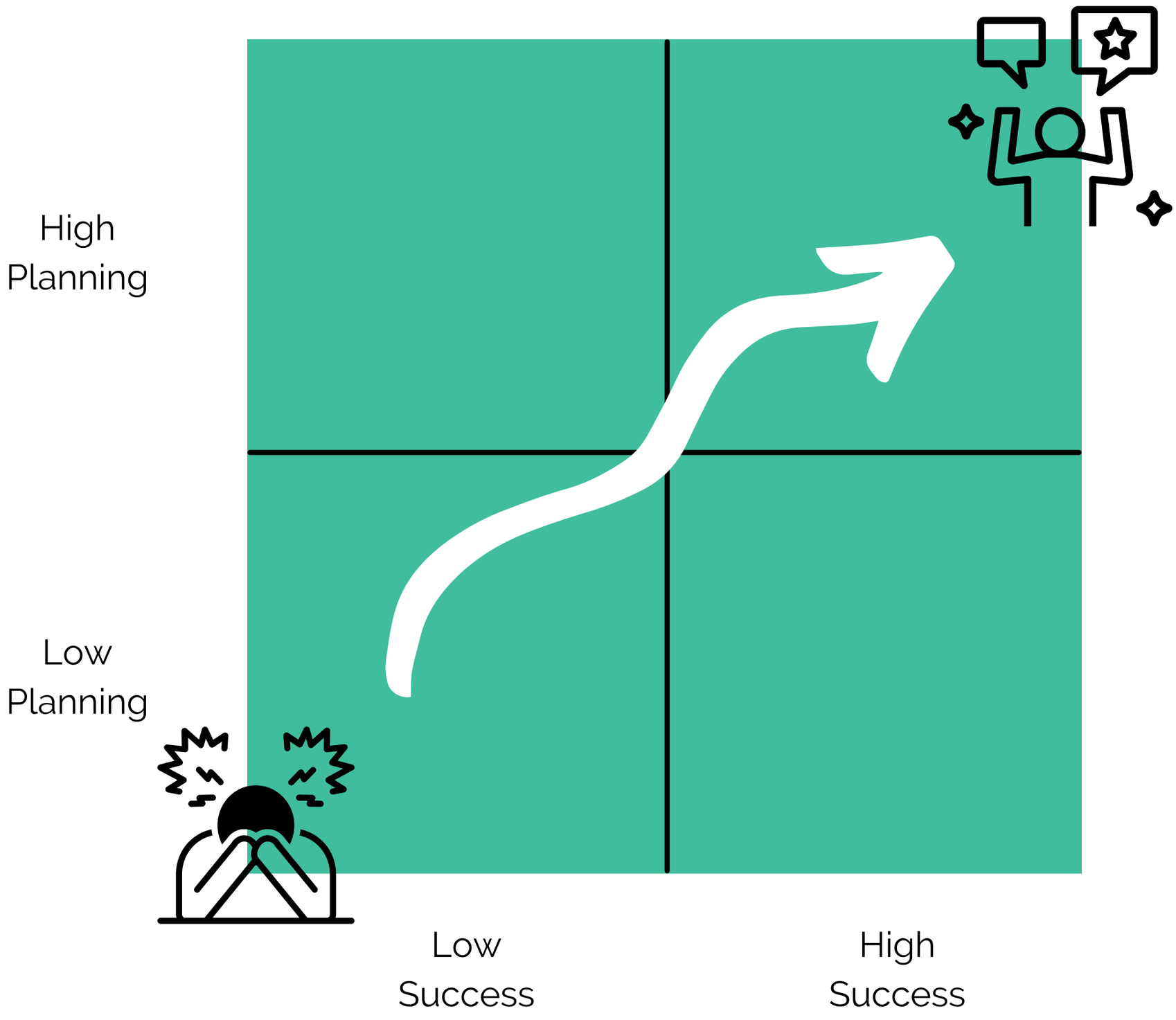
Steps to starting a mentoring program

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Planning a Mentoring Program

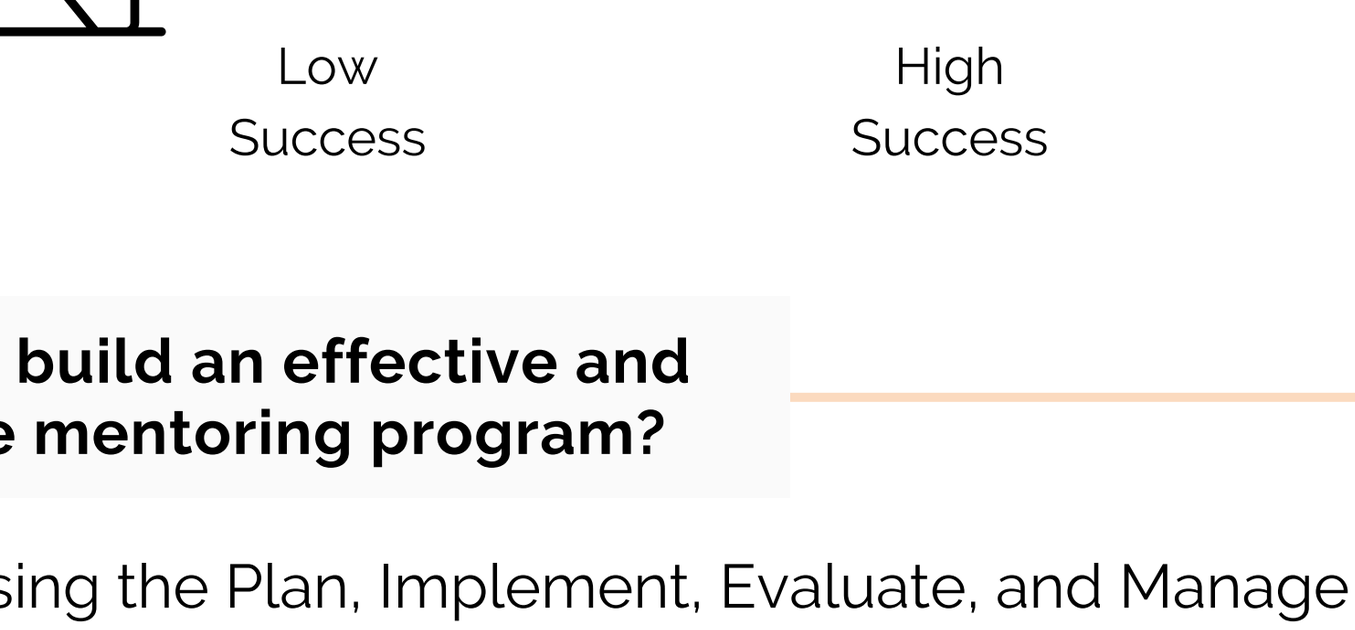
Launching a mentoring program requires a strategic effort that brings value to both the organization and participants. You may be wondering, "Where do I start?". In this section we will walk you thorough our proven method for planning effective mentoring programs.

As with most things, when it comes to starting a mentoring program, **high planning is correlated with high success**.



How do you build an effective and sustainable mentoring program?

We recommend using the Plan, Implement, Evaluate, and Manage (PIE*M) model to achieve maximum success with your mentoring program.



Watch Now

*Prefer video? Our Director of Mentoring and Consulting, Judy Corner, explains each step of the PIE*M model.*

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Plan

High planning yields high success. This phase ensures your mentoring program is built on a strong foundation.

Connect your program to organizational goals. Staying on track with the overall organizational vision is essential to creating a mentoring program that truly benefits the organization. Your mentoring initiative and format need to align to your goal to achieve the best results. For example, if your goal is to develop high potential individuals, you should launch a traditional mentoring program for leadership development.

Identify success metrics. After identifying objectives for your program, you need to consider your measurements. Determine what specifically will tell you that you have achieved your objectives. Include both “qualitative” as well as “quantitative” measurements.

Find an executive champion. You need a senior level executive to increase buy-in from stakeholders. This leader should sponsor, participate in, and promote your mentoring program to help increase participation and enthusiasm.

Identify participants. Use your organizational focus and objectives to determine whether your program will be offered to specific participants, or will be more inclusive. You will want to decide on the group of participants to help determine matching criteria.

Implement

Relationships are the heart of your mentoring program. In this phase, focus on the elements that affect participant success and influence the effectiveness of your program.

Promote your Mentoring Program. Now is the time to start thinking like a marketer. Craft a message to your organization and distribute it. This message should announce your program and generate excitement from potential participants.

Build your pool of qualified mentors. Once you have identified participants, you will need to get mentors signed up for your program. You can recruit mentors in several ways, including nominations from management or request volunteers. Find your mentors first, to allow mentees to join a program that is already filled with qualified mentors.

Match your mentees and mentors. This is a critical step in the process and an area where mentoring software can improve your matches. Based on the criteria you established in the previous first step, mentor and mentee matching should follow those guidelines. This increases the likelihood that their relationship will be successful for the organization as well as the mentor-mentee pair.

Train your participants. Once your participants have been matched, it’s important that you offer them training. Training sessions should help your mentors and mentees understand their roles, align program goals and objectives, and help participants become familiar with the tools or resources available.

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Evaluate

In this phase, the benefits of mentoring begin to manifest. Stay in touch with participants; supporting and tracking goals and progress.

Set Goals and Establish a Way to Track Program Success. You will need to track the success of your program, both at an organizational level and individual mentoring partnership level. Throughout the program, you will need to measure how well your mentors and mentees are achieving the goals they set.

Manage

Streamline your processes to refine and scale your program. Software takes growing programs to the next level.

Implement Mentoring Software. Utilizing technology to manage your mentoring program increases the likelihood of program success and reduces administrative headaches. Implement a mentoring software solution that allows you to streamline your processes and includes the features administrators and participants need to thrive.



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Launch Your Mentoring Program in 12 Weeks

Now that we've outlined the model we recommend for planning, implementing, and managing a best in class mentoring program, you may be wondering how long it should take for you to launch your program. We've got you covered with a 12 week guide.

We've found 12 weeks to be a typical timeframe for rolling out a mentoring program. However, we have seen programs launch in as little as 6 weeks or even take months to kick off. **Factors that influence the timeline include your organization's readiness for the program, number of participants, and technology implementation. Adjust the timeframe for each milestone to fit your needs.**



Program Objectives



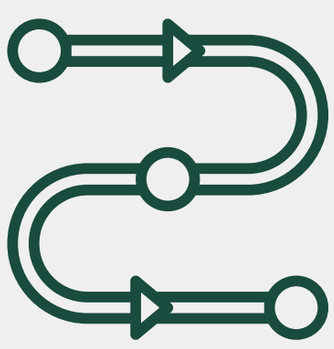
Participant Requirements



Marketing Plan



Matching Criteria



Enrollment Process



Communicate



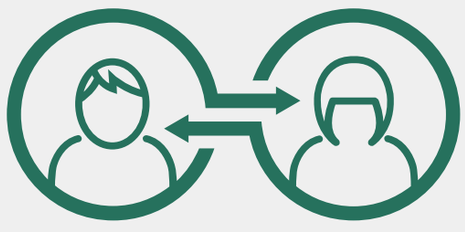
Enroll & Train Mentors



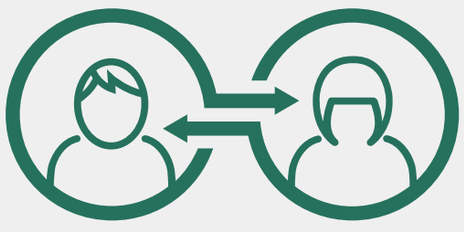
Enroll & Train Mentees



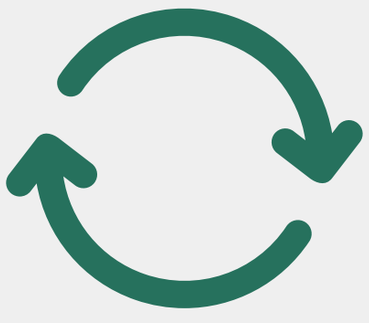
Enroll & Train Mentees



Match Participants



Match Participants



Prep Ongoing Evaluation

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Week 1

Meet with stakeholders to understand the objectives your organization has for the mentoring program and the metrics that will be used to measure success.

Objectives typically include:

- improving leadership development
- enabling career development
- assisting in skill & competency development
- assisting in onboarding employees in a new role

Week 2

Define the criteria that will be used to qualify mentors and mentees to be part of the mentoring program and how they will enroll as a participant.

Week 3

Create a marketing plan. It is important to market your mentoring program to potential participants to ensure there is an adequate number of participants and that everyone has a clear understanding of the program.

Get your copy: Guide to Marketing Your Mentoring Program

Week 4

Define how participants will be matched including the type of matching that will take place as well as what tool or process will be used for matching. Be sure that your matching questions align with and support your business objectives.

3 Common Types of Matching Self Match Admin Match Hybrid Match

Standard matching criteria include:

- Career level
- Business function
- Job role
- Job related skills
- Interpersonal skills

When creating these criteria, take your business objectives into consideration.

For example, if your business objective is to create a diverse leadership team, you should include ethnicity or gender in your matching criteria.

As your program grows, so will the time spent making good matches and managing relationships. Save time with a matching tool.



Learn more about mentoring software

Insala P3 Power Matching

Our matching algorithm applies a process that combines your matching criteria and the use of filters to guarantee the best possible matches.

- Program - We can configure multiple matching criteria that achieves your program goals.
- Profile - Continue to refine your mentor search by selecting mentor profile criteria.
- Personality - Built in personality assessment tools allow you to select a mentor that meets your participants' working style needs.

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Week 5

Set up enrollment for your participants. Mentoring software can help to reduce administrative burden and provide a streamlined user experience.

Week 6

Communicate with potential mentors and mentees to share the objectives of the program and the expectations for both roles. The communication strategy should be defined in your marketing plan from week 3.

We recommend maintaining communication through email. Other channels of communication include events and company newsletters.

Week 7

Enroll and train your mentors. Be sure that you have an adequate number of mentors enrolled before you start enrolling mentees. Training ensures that the mentor has a clear understanding of the program objectives and their role.

7 Topics to Include in Mentor Training

1. Clarity in the objective of the mentoring program.

2. Promote the benefits for the mentor. When mentors know what they're getting out of their mentorship, they are more engaged and invested in their role.

3. Provide a role profile for the mentor and the mentee. If they don't know their roles, both participants can be confused. Role profiles offer clarity and guidance throughout the relationship. Remind them that the relationship is always mentee driven and mentor guided.

4. Define phases of the relationship. Defined phases and checkpoints for the mentorship let the mentor know what to expect and set the pace.

5. Provide tips and ideas for the mentoring relationship. Give your mentors tools and direction for their mentorship. This will ensure a learning agreement and goal setting session take place.

Top Tips for Mentors

6. Highlight challenges they may encounter and provide solutions. There are always challenges in any kind of situation, so don't try to skip over them. Let your mentors know what they may face and give them solutions to use.

7. Discuss how to transition the relationship once the learning has been completed. The mentor may decide to continue the relationship unofficially or take on a new mentee.

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Weeks 8-9

Enroll and train your mentees. Enroll mentees **after** you have met your recruitment goal for mentors. There will be more mentees interested in joining the program. Training should prepare them for their role of mentee and include tips for their success.

Top Tips for Mentees

Training can be completed using webinars, videos, or in-person training.

Weeks 10 - 11

Begin the matching process. Depending on the type of matching process that you choose, this could take up to 2 weeks. Don't forget that implementing a mentor matching tool will make this process easier and more successful.

Week 12

Prepare for ongoing evaluation. Continuing to evaluate your program will allow you to successfully manage the program and make adjustments if your objectives are not being met.

Watch Now

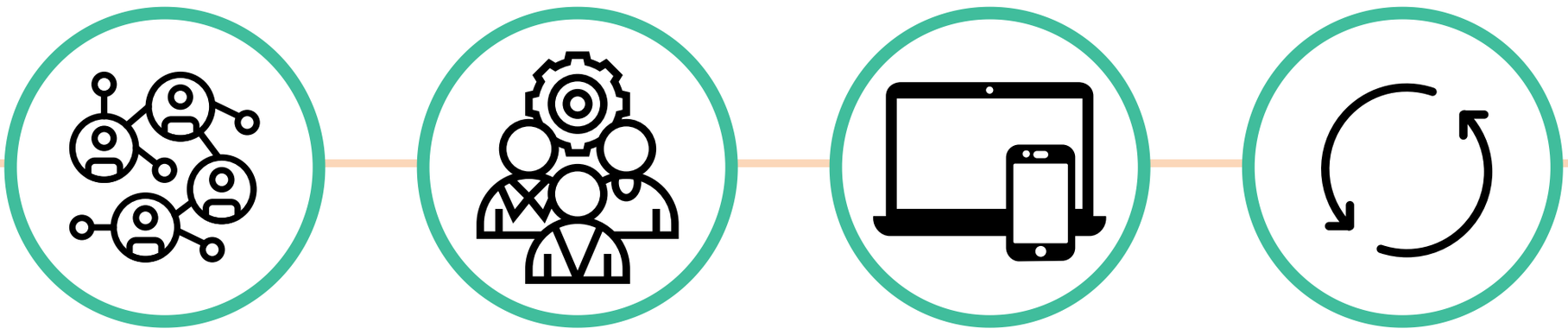
Watch our webinar: How to Launch a Successful Mentoring Program in 12 Weeks



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Insala's Mentoring Solutions

Insala's solutions are designed to help you deliver a best in class mentoring solution for your participants and organization.



Mentoring Readiness | **Training** | **Technology** | **Reinforcement Elements**

Mentoring Readiness During our expert-led sessions, we use our 30 years of mentoring knowledge to help you build your program from the ground up by determining the precise, strategic reason for implementing a mentoring program then analyzing and planning the elements of a successful program.

Training Individualized training sessions focus on the methodology, individual participant roles within the program, and user and administration experiences regarding general processes including the software's major tools and reporting metrics.

Mentoring Software Save time and make your mentoring program more successful. Our comprehensive online mentoring software will take your mentoring program to the next level by automating all your current activities and creating successful mentoring relationships.

By partnering with Insala, customers gain access to 25 years of mentoring knowledge and software implementation experience. Our mentoring implementation framework combines structured program management methodologies with change management consulting and clear objectives to ensure timely completion within budget.

Reinforcement Elements Our solution is developed with successful and sustainable programs in mind. Customers have access to thought leadership, decades of combined experience, and best practices. Our team works with the world's largest, most successful organizations, delivering mentoring initiatives built on formalized ROI outcomes.

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