

How to Leverage the Strengths of Four Generations through Mentoring

Established businesses are going to find themselves in an interesting position; with some workers staying with the company longer and putting off retirement (those who are over the age of 62), baby boomers (those in their mid-40s to early 60s), members of "Generation X" (those in their late 20s through early 40s) and a generation of younger workers - referred to commonly as the "Millennials" - who are just out of college, companies are finding that they need to connect four generations in the work place.

In some companies, communication between the members of different generations can prove challenging. In businesses in which those who have been with the company the longest are given a couple of weeks to "train" someone to do their position, there are often communication gaps, tensions between newer employees and those who have been with the company for a while and a sense that continuity has somehow been lost. On the other hand, those businesses that establish mentoring programs and focus on continued adaptation and growth for all employees would find that their businesses are sounder.

Mentoring, of course, is about far more than just training exercises and bringing someone up to speed so that they will be able to get the job done. Mentoring is a valuable asset for businesses that have established a successful pattern of getting everything accomplished during the course of the day because not only is there oversight, but also there is a connection and training that bridges the gaps between different generations.

With mentoring, a student who has just graduated from college - for example - may be working closely with someone who has been with the company for three years, twenty years or even in some cases forty years. Rather than just learning the ins and outs of one job, with mentoring that new hire is going to learn what the company has been founded on, will be able to see the opportunities for their own growth and will be comfortable sharing what they bring into their position.

Mentoring, in other words, serves purposes that go well beyond training; with a mentoring program in place, business often discover that they are able to take advantage of the strengths of every employee. With mentoring, companies are able to discover that their staff members create consistently strong teams, improve the spirit of the workplace and are better able to retain staff. Most importantly, the more that communication is present and the more that employees are able to work together, the greater their level of job satisfaction and, as a result, employee retention.

Mentoring programs in the workplace, as a result, serve to help bring out the strengths of all of the company's employees and allows you to leverage the experiences and strengths across the four generations of staff members who are working together. With mentoring programs in place, because of enhanced communication and the connections among staff members, most businesses discover that their profitability increases as well thanks to less down time, lower training costs and the ability for staff members to step up when something needs to be done.

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About the Author

Cecile Peterkin, a Certified Career Coach, Corporate Mentor and Speaker, started ProMentoring to help businesses leverage the mind-share of retiring Baby Boomers and senior managers, and transfer it to the next generation of leaders. The program enables these rising leaders to garner first hand business knowledge and expertise through the development of a rewarding one-on-one relationship. For more information on ProMentoring and the benefits of corporate mentoring programs, contact Cecile at 1-866-486-4112 or visit

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