Mentoring as a Component of Leadership Development

Maria Marques

West Coast Water/Wastewater Utilities Workshop on Workforce Development
Today’s Presentation

How EBMUD uses mentoring & coaching to support Workforce Development programs

- Perspective & Context
- Structural components & logistics
- Mentoring & Coaching relationships
- Lessons learned
About EBMUD

- Special District serving Alameda and Contra Costa counties.
- Water: 1.3 million customers
- Wastewater treatment: 640,000 customers.
- 1,850 full-time employees
Perspective & Context

Mentoring & Coaching are Components of larger workforce development initiatives

- Provide support & accountability
- Reinforce formal learning
- Support transmission of organizational knowledge & values
## Driver: Retirement Bubble

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Supervisors</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendents</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Support</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Collar</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>31%</td>
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Development Planning Process

- Identify anticipated vacancies
- Analyze the work performed
- Identify competencies required
- Review candidate pool for competencies
- Define the gap
- Develop plans to fill the gap
Three Workforce Development Academies

- **LEAD** – develops journey-level trades workers for first line supervision
- **Superintendents’ Pathways** – prepares experienced supervisors & professionals for “next” level supervision
- **Management Leadership Academy** – prepares experienced staff for upper level management positions
Academies’ Objectives

- Prepare for future by building human resource “pipeline”
  - Create a pool of qualified candidates
- Enhance the quality of new leaders – shape the skill set & the culture
  - Development is everyone’s responsibility
- Address changing expectations for leaders
  - Technology; financial environment; regulations; customer expectations; and workforce all changing!
Structure to Support Desired Outcomes

All Academies

- Application & selection process to screen for readiness
- Personal time commitments to ensure participant commitment
- Classroom training to cover “generic” gaps, not technically specific
- Mentoring or Coaching Components
Academy Components

- Cohort group
- Core training curriculum
- Orientation & Assessments
- Individual Development Plans
- **Mentoring/Coaching**
- Ongoing support for mentors
- Graduation Celebration!
Mentoring & Coaching

- Supports development & growth
- Supports participants’ goals
- Creates accountability structure for development activities
- Does not involve evaluation
- Creates a learning pipeline – mentors/coaches grow as well!
## External vs. Internal Coaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Externals</th>
<th>Internals</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional coaching expertise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh perspectives &amp; best practices</td>
<td>Technical expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliminates “fear factor”</td>
<td>Practical, organizational knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs money</td>
<td>Cultivates internal networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not free, takes time</td>
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</table>
# Figuring the Costs

Avg. salary of mentors x Avg. # of hrs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kick Off / Mentoring Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mentoring Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Mentoring Sessions (4 hrs/mo x 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Roundtables (2 hrs/mo x 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Graduation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td><strong>Total Hours</strong></td>
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What is a Mentor?

... a trusted and credible leader who works with a partner to help them learn things more quickly ... The mentor has a breadth and depth of experience that ... They are willing to share ... because they enjoy developing people.
Mentors

- Partner to support learning
- Provide support, expertise & encouragement
- Participate in collaborative problem solving
- Gather & give feedback
- Support accountability
Fundamental Skills

- Listening
- Practicing self management
- Asking questions
- Providing direct, timely, non-judgmental feedback
- Supporting accountability—monitoring progress
Mentoring Training

- Program Orientation
- Goals of Mentoring Component
  - Support, Expertise & Accountability
- Roles
- Guidelines / Protocols
  - Meet minimum 2-4 hrs/month
  - Term of commitment: (6-12 months)
  - Confidentiality
  - “No fault divorce”
Mentoring Training

- Highly Interactive
- Phases of Mentoring Relationship
  - Connect, Create, Close
- Coaching Skills
  - Listening, Feedback, Accountability
- Creating Individual Development Plans
Mentor Training

- Review
- DiSC Style Inventory
- Learn and practice basic coaching skills
Mentor Roundtables

Regular Check-in and Support

- Updates
- Share perspectives and approaches
- Support network of mentors
- Provide on-going feedback & training
- Evaluate & improve program continuously
Challenges

- Recruiting volunteers
- Matching
- Motivation
- Coaching skills level
- Still a new experience for all of us!
Benefits

- Promotes the value of learning throughout the organization
- Supports development of “pipeline of leaders”
- Builds a common vocabulary & values
- Breaks down silos—broadens perspectives & business literacy
- Develops network of colleagues with established, supportive relationships
- Creates organizational loyalty!
Lessons Learned

- Ensure senior leadership commitment
- Clarify ground rules, roles & responsibilities
- Provide high quality formal training
- Support mentors throughout
- Allow flexibility
- Define success broadly
- Expect variations in level of engagement
- Mentors will develop new skills & greater organizational knowledge