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Mentor: a trusted counselor or guide (Miriam Webster)

Mentorship: the influence, guidance, or direction given by a mentor. In an organizational setting, a mentor influences the personal and professional growth of a mentee. (Wikipedia)

When you think over the years of your professional life, are there certain individuals that come to mind who provided you with guidance? This person may have been someone that you not only learned from, but also influenced your growth as a professional. They may have been involved in your life for several years or it may have been a short, yet powerful, experience. Regardless, it probably means you were fortunate enough to have a mentor--someone that you think of with a smile and gratitude.

Does your organization offer a mentorship program? Have you intentionally sought out an opportunity to mentor a less experienced or new employee? There is more and more research that shows the positive impact on a mentor/mentee experience. It not only creates an engaged workforce, mentoring also creates retention. In the current employee-shortage environment that all industries are facing, this one step could make the difference.

Another reason for being intentional with a mentor program is to help create a solid succession plan. The two youngest generations in the workforce, Millennials and Gen Z's, have placed high importance on mentor opportunities being made available in the workplace. In fact, according to recent studies, 33 percent of Gen Z'ers say [mentoring](#) is one of the most important benefits an employer can offer. As more and more millennials take over leadership roles and Gen Z's fill supervisory positions, you can set everyone up for success by providing mentoring opportunities.

However, it is important to note that every employee would benefit from a mentor experience. As stated in the article, [Mentoring Across the Generations](#), "mentoring can take the form of traditional one-to-one pairs, reverse mentoring, group mentoring and more. Don't limit your mentoring options based on what you think different generations want."

For any individual that wants to improve and grow in your profession, don't sit back and wait for a mentor to come to you. Actively seek out someone that mirrors the type of work ethic and leadership that you would like to emulate.

Mentoring offers huge opportunities for both the mentor and the mentee. It is vital that leaders recognize the need to support young people in the workplace and give back. Not only can you provide an individual with help and guidance, but you too could also benefit from the experience. It can give you an opportunity to observe what it is like for young people starting out their careers; it helps you understand their problems and concerns, ultimately making you a better leader.

If you would like information on setting up a mentor program or if you would like mentor program resources, [contact](#) Lori at Supporting CommUnity.

Lori A. Hoffner, Organizational Development Speaker & Trainer helps people and organizations create open, positive, and inclusive environments through her speaking, training, and consulting. Over the last 15 years in her work Lori has had the pleasure of working with audiences across the country to help them learn, grow, and develop positive practices for their organizations. www.SupportingCommUnity.com