



Downsized and No Training Budget? Why It's the Best Time to Develop a Mentoring Culture

How can we afford to develop a mentoring culture in these economic times? Actually, the better question is, *how can you afford not to?* Now is the best time to begin. Here's why:

1. When times are lean, higher productivity and less waste can make a real impact on balance sheets. Organizations with mentoring cultures excel because their people learn at exponential rates and the continuous learning within these organizations goes directly to their bottom line.
2. Employee engagement is critical following downsizing – you are likely asking fewer people to do more work. Mentoring cultures promote personal and professional success and well-being. Employees work at optimal levels in an atmosphere of support and growth, of understanding and learning.
3. A mentoring culture is the ideal solution when training budgets have been slashed. Downsized companies have a core workforce of the most qualified and experienced people from all areas of the organization. This represents a great opportunity to have your workforce share its knowledge with each other by mentoring each other.

What do we need to develop a mentoring culture? You need:

- Management. A commitment from management that permeates the entire organization and not only “says,” but also, “uses” effective mentoring skills.
- People. People who have the knowledge and the experience and the tools to be effective mentors and protégés.

How much time will it take? Less time than you think, and you get all of it back – plus more. Upfront, it's necessary for people to learn the skills to be effective mentors and protégés. Once they have the skills, people grow their mentoring relationships with outcomes that grow the bottom line and support personal success.

How will people get their work done if they're mentoring each other? Like a winning team. When people mentor each other, the cumulative results, the benefits and value, are reflected in every aspect of the business with higher productivity and improved quality throughout. Every organization has a culture whether the culture was intentionally created or incidental. Some cultures are positive. Some are not. By consciously developing and nurturing a mentoring culture for your organization, everyone benefits. As people mentor each other they become more flexible, innovative, knowledgeable and supportive...and your bottom line grows.