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Leadership Development Service's [Center for Mentoring Excellence](#) is pleased to launch Mentoring Matters, a bi-monthly e-letter focusing on best practices that motivate, inspire and grow individual and organizational mentoring excellence.

## Mentoring Matters!

It is more critical than ever to invest in mentoring. Mentoring benefits organizations in multiple ways by:

- Increasing retention rates
- Improving morale
- Increasing organizational commitment and job satisfaction
- Accelerating leadership development
- Enhancing succession planning
- Reducing stress
- Building stronger and more cohesive teams
- Heightening individual and organizational learning

In this issue we make the case for mentoring as a leadership competency, and offer suggestions for leaders to practice and promote mentoring excellence within their organization.

## Mentoring is a Leadership Competency

When leaders commit to their own development as mentors they enlarge their own capacity to lead, support the growth and development of their people, and positively impact learning throughout their organization. Even with the best intentions, not all mentors are fully prepared for the role.

We recently heard from Mark, who shared his initial experience with an underperforming mentor.

*"I was excited when I learned that Jack, one of our most visible senior leaders, would be my mentor. I asked Jack at our first meeting why he agreed to be my mentor, and was flattered when he told me that he was always mentoring "up and coming" leaders and had had his eye on me for a while. He abruptly switched gears and started talking about the recent changes in company as a result of the economic downturn and how difficult those decisions had been to make. I wanted to ask him so much more about what influenced his decision-making but he kept looking at his watch and it made me think that I might be overstaying my welcome.*

*Just as our mentoring session was ending, Jack gave me several tasks to accomplish and report back on at our next meeting. I had been hoping to shadow Jack, meet with some of the other senior leaders, and learn from watching them in action. I left that first encounter feeling disappointed. Jack didn't appear to be really interested in having any meaningful conversation with me.*

*At our second meeting, I reported on the status of my assignments. Jack nodded as I summarized my results and occasionally interjected a comment about what I could have done better. I left the second meeting feeling even more disappointed than I was*



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### March Blog Topics:

[Mentoring Success:  
What Leaders Say and  
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[Retaining Top Talent](#)

[Leaders Can Be Lonely  
at The Top](#)

[Celebrate Mentoring!](#)

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after the first one. Our time together felt more like a transaction. We really hadn't connected with one another on anymore than a superficial level and I still knew nothing more about him and his career path than I had four weeks before."

The truth of the matter was that Jack, although well-positioned and well-intended, had no real understanding about the mentoring process. As a result, he missed the opportunity to develop a meaningful relationship with a high potential future leader in the company.

Lesson learned? Accessibility and good intention are not enough to ensure mentoring success. Leaders need to actively promote mentoring and practice mentoring excellence.

Check out our Mentoring Workshops:  
[Mentoring: Strategies for Success Workshop](#)  
[Boot Camp for Mentors](#)

## Not Just Any Mentoring Will Do!

Not all mentoring relationships are equal. It is the powerful combination of experience and expertise, mentoring competence and process knowledge that makes the difference. When mentees and mentors commit to developing their respective roles, they take a large step towards mentoring excellence. They prepare, open themselves to feedback, engage in ongoing reflection and hold themselves accountable for achieving results.

We've developed a series of toolkits to help you keep mentoring excellence at the forefront of your mind. Click here for information:  
[www.centerformentoringexcellence.com/toolkits.php](http://www.centerformentoringexcellence.com/toolkits.php)

## What Leaders Can Do to Practice Mentoring Excellence



- Become as knowledgeable as you can about current mentoring best practices.
- Evaluate your mentoring skills and competencies.
- Get feedback from mentees.
- Create a mentoring development plan for yourself.
- Engage in reverse mentoring; make your mentee your mentor.
- Find a mentor for yourself.
- Prepare for mentoring meetings.
- Keep a mentoring journal.

Tips on how to raise the bar on your own mentoring practice:  
<http://leadsevs.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/12TipsforMentoringExcellence.pdf>

## What We Are Reading...

Have you seen the [September 2009 issue of ASTD's T&D magazine](#)?



The issue has two terrific feature articles on mentoring. The first by Michael Laff looks at the many masks of the gender divide and the challenges mentoring women presents to organizations. The second, Shifting the Shape

## Creating a Mentoring Culture

### Overcoming Resistance to Mentoring

### What Senior Leaders Can Do

### Begin with the Building Blocks

### Increasing Mentoring Competency in Your Organization

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LEADERSHIP  
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### Coming up:



### Chicago Workshop: Mentoring: Strategies for Success | May 26, 2010

Learn the key concepts to becoming an engaging, successful mentor.

of Mentoring, speaks to the importance of creating a global mentoring culture.

**A Note to Our Readers:**

We believe that leaders cannot be effective without a strong and ongoing commitment to mentoring excellence. This belief, our passion for mentoring excellence, and our extensive experience in the field with organizations led us to create the Center for Mentoring Excellence. At our virtual center, [www.centerformentoringexcellence.com](http://www.centerformentoringexcellence.com), you will find mentoring tools and resources, expert advice and a forum for sharing best mentoring practices. We hope that you will visit us there and let us know how we can continue to help you raise the bar on mentoring in your organization.

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