

INVEST IN POTENTIAL

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By now, we have probably re-engineered every process, become a strategic partner with all the departments, and empowered the whole organization. With all that behind us, we can embrace the concept that is developing renewed acceptance, *mentoring*.

With fewer people and the need to maximize the potential of each of them, we must insure that people have the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential. Furthermore, as we invest in the training and development of people and as core competencies become more critical and more complex, retaining our best players is essential for a return on our investment and for the stability of the organization.

Mentoring addresses these and other needs of the organization:

- As the mentee becomes better acquainted with the way things really work in a company, productivity increases.
- As mentees receive feedback and guidance, their loyalty to the company increases and their sense of belonging does as well, reducing turnover. This is one of the payoffs inherent in demonstrating that people are valued.
- Mentoring facilitates the smooth transfer of leadership from one generation of management to another.
- As mentees model leadership qualities and expand their awareness of company issues and culture, there is increased ownership of the company's mission and values, more dedication and commitment.
- Management skills that might never have been acquired without the mentoring relationship are passed along. Usually, those skills are developed on an accelerated schedule in a mentoring relationship, which increases satisfaction and the likelihood of success.

Mentoring offers human resources managers an effective tool with which to drive the development of people, maximize the talent in the organization, improve interdepartmental and cross-functional communication, and help foster the values and culture which make the company unique. Used well, it can be a methodology that drives organizational development and builds partnerships between your best people.

The information presented in this article is extracted from Mentoring: Buzzword or Breakthrough? by Ruth N. Bramson, Sr. Vice President, Shaw's Supermarkets. Bramson's article is available on the Monster Board of Canada web site at <http://english.monster.ca>.

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