A PLAN FOR A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COHORT FOR A LARGE ORGANIZATION

Approved by Tom Lo Guidice
Date: December 3, 2012

A PLAN FOR A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COHORT FOR A LARGE ORGANIZATION

A Seminar Paper

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

University of Wisconsin-Platteville

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirement for the Degree

Masters of Science

in

Education

---

by

Kimberly Sheskey
2012

Dedication

This paper is dedicated to a few individuals. To my mom and dad, thank you for your continuous support and encouragement, and always believing in me. To Craig, thank you for your patience and comic relief when needed. To Professor Dearmond, thank you for your encouragement to pursue a Master’s Degree; without your help, I may never have taken this leap of faith. To Tracy Butz, thank you for your positive attitude, wisdom, and support.

Abstract

A PLAN FOR A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COHORT FOR A LARGE ORGANIZATION

Kimberly Sheskey

Under the Supervision of Tom Lo Guidice PhD

Masters of Science in Education

Career development is a partnership between an organization and an associate. Often times, when professional development opportunities are offered, they are offered in a singular, linear sequence; while this may be easy to administer, it doesn't foster the sense of community that a cohort program does. The structure of a cohort naturally creates an environment where associates can learn with, and from, their peers. Designing and developing the cohort program is no easy task, but following the prescribed plan may help an organization create a powerful learning strategy. Program structure, including budgets, evaluations, communication plans, and mentoring support, along with course objectives and activities will be discussed. Best practices when creating cohorts and mentoring programs are also provided.

Key Terms: cohort, professional development, mentor, facilitator, collaborative, organizational socialization, communication, transfer of learning, program evaluation, objectives, instructional method, best practices

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction

The professional development of any associate employed at an organization is important for their growth in the company. The form that development takes can differ drastically, from personal development at individual workstations to formal educational programs conducted at the place of business. Cross (1998) explained that learning is often constructed through social interaction. One way to harness and leverage social learning is through a cohort. Cohorts can be more than just a group of learners moving through training courses together, however. An effective cohort program creates a tight-knit, supportive and diverse learning environment that allows for both individual and group development (Norris & Barnett, 1994).

Another issue faced by organizations is employee engagement; that is, how to ensure associates are involved, enthusiastic, and happy with their work. As Baumruk (2006, p. 24) states, “Organizations with higher engagement levels tend to have lower employee turnover, higher productivity, higher total shareholder returns and better financial performance.” One way an organization can create an engaged associate is by providing ample development opportunities.

Furthermore, a mentoring relationship has been identified as a way for associates to understand the culture and expectations of the organization. This helps to strengthen the loyalty between employee and employer (Sange & Srivasatava, 2012). A valuable addition to a professional development program is a mentoring partnership.

Purpose of the Study

The plan will be a valuable tool to assist any training professional or business unit in creating, developing, and maintaining a successful professional development cohort. The program components act as a roadmap to follow when determining if a cohort is necessary, and if so, the action steps needed to implement.

Significance of the Study

Developing a cohort learning program, as opposed to individual learning activities, can help to create a culture of sharing, trust, and responsibility, as well as develop individual members in their roles. Great care must be taken to correctly create and implement a cohort, so as not misuse resources.

Statement of the Problem

How to design a professional development cohort program for a large organization that fosters a collaborative learning environment, promotes personal development, and provides an opportunity for peer and mentor coaching.

Definition of Terms

A cohort "consists of a group of students who begin and complete a program together and engage in a common learning experience" (Sathe, 2009, p. 33).

A mentor, or mentorship, can be defined as "an intense interpersonal exchange between a senior experienced colleague (mentor) and a less experienced junior (protégé) in which the mentor provides support, direction, and feedback regarding career plans and personal development (Russell & Adams, 1997, p. 2).

A peer coach is an individual that shares a common interest or goal with another individual; they may collaborate and support each other in an effort to become more successful (McDermott, 2012).

Delimitations of Research

The references used for the review of literature were collected over a period of 90 days using the resources of the Karmann Library at the University of Wisconsin – Platteville. The search engines provided by EBSCOHOST were used. The key search terms were “collaborative learning,” “mentor,” “cohort,” “organizational commitment,” and “professional development.”

Method of Approach

A brief review of the literature on the success and benefits to an organization that adopts a cohort/mentoring program will be discussed. The program structure will be introduced, which includes a budget, strategies to build support, a transfer of learning plan, a communication plan, evaluations plan, and the structure of the mentoring program. A 12-month cohort program will be created. Program components will include a program overview, course schedule, a facilitator guide (which includes course objectives, activities, and assessments), and a participant guide (which includes course objectives and activities).

Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature

Components and Structure of a Cohort

At its best, career development is a partnership between an organization and an associate. When an associate begins their job with an organization, there is almost an unwritten loyalty contract created. The organization can ensure the associate is safe and secure in their work environment. They can provide the associate with the resources deemed necessary to do their job. They can also arrange for the personal and professional development of that associate. In return, the associate can utilize their knowledge, skills, and expertise to perform their job duties.

There are benefits for both parties when an organization invests in career development. From an organization’s perspective an increase of skill building, productivity, morale, and motivation are all products of career development. From an associate’s perspective self-knowledge, a sense of purpose, skill building, and job enrichment are the outcomes from an organization investing in the development of their associates (Kaye & Smith, 2012).

When an organization decides to offer development courses for associates the first course of action is usually to provide a variety of open-registration training classes. Learners can register for one, none, or a number of classes based on their personal preferences. Another option is to purchase a host of eLearning courses which associates can take at their leisure. What both of these options lack, however, is a social dimension. Participants may never have the same instructor or same students in their training classes. Those options also lack an accountability component. Associates may not be required to finish the eLearning or show up to their class.

A relational approach to career growth is grounded in the assumption that interaction with others is a critical resource for learning (Hall & Associates, 1996). A student’s learning can actually become heightened when their learning takes place with others. A cohort is a way for organizations to formally structure learning communities. In a cohort, individuals complete a series of development courses together. They begin and end the program at the same time, participating in a number of collaborative learning experiences along the way. Instructors may develop course activities that promote collaborative learning – reading, writing and talking with their peer - in order to complete the activity. “Learning is enhanced when it is more like a team effort than a solo race. Good learning, like good work, is collaborative and social, not competitive and isolated” (Chickering & Gamson, 1987, 3).

The structure of a cohort naturally creates an environment where associates can learn with, and from, their peers. In a study by Dinsmore and Wenger (2006), participants noted they felt isolated while taking previous coursework as an individual. But as a member of the cohort, they began to learn better through discussions with their cohort peers, both during and outside of class. The premise that participants simply spending a large amount of time together can also help to explain a cohort’s success (Hesse & Mason, 2005; Mandzuk, Hasinoff, & Seifert, 2003) When associates are involved in the same learning experiences, at the same time, with the same people, they are likely to feel a sense of responsibility to their peers, as Mandzuk et. al (2003, 175) explain: “The loss of anonymity that occurs in close-knit communities such as cohorts results in greater demands for members to be accountable for their thoughts and actions.” Associates have a harder time shirking their learning responsibilities or not participating in discussions when they know they will continue to see the same peers for the length of the cohort. “The possibility of an improved, or ruined, reputation, in a cohort model may be the reason why learners are more committed to the program, as opposed to individual learning” (Sathe, 2009, p. 43).

An important component of cohorts is peer coaching. Peer coaching is the process of an individual becoming an active participant in the learning of their fellow peers. Learners are able to share their progress with other learners and be of assistance to others when challenges arise (McDermott, 2012).

> The power of peer influencing has long been noted in psychological literature (Bennis, Berlew, Schein & Steele, 1973), and the value of consulting with knowledgeable peers has been advocated both in coaching (DeMarco & McCullick, 1997) and in experiential learning (Schon, 1983). The sense of connection with others may be found in a range of relationships, including those with peers, which provide formal and informal support (Clawson, 1996).

As Parker, Hall & Kram (2008, p. 489) explain. A distinction is made between peer coaching and a mentor. A mentor is an individual who likely has more expertise or experience than their partner and is expected to relay their wisdom, along with advice (McDermott, 2012). Peer coaching involves individuals helping each other succeed; emotional support is more likely to occur in peer coaching than in mentoring. In order to create a safe environment for peer coaching participants must agree to a few guidelines. Participants should be mutually committed to their peer's success. They should expect to give help, as well as receive it. And lastly, they should be willing and open to share their perspectives and resources with their peers. In a study by Parker et al. (2008), three quarters of the participants experienced some level of satisfaction with the peer coaching process, and for many it became a new skill that was used outside of the classroom.

The Business Case for Cohorts

There are many benefits for an organization that adopts a cohort-type development program. Studies have found that the cohort model is successful in creating learning communities and collaborative activities (Beck & Kosnik, 2001; Hill, 1995; McPhail, 2002;

Norris et al., 1996, as cited in Sathe, 2009). Studies have also noted that participants find themselves more likely to complete their cohort learning program because of the peer support it offered (Hesse & Mason, 2005; McPhail, 2002; Mello, 2003; as cited in Sathe, 2009). Browne-Ferrigno (2003) found that cohorts had a positive impact on participant's professional growth. This was attributed to the accurate reflection of the workplace that was incorporated into the cohort courses. In a study by Sathe (2009) participants in a cohort program cited the development of interpersonal skills one of the most successful components of the cohort. Participants also noted their improved ability to ask questions and inquire new facts, instead of taking information as-is. As the previous literature suggests, it is advantageous for an organization to invest in a cohort learning program.

Success of a Mentoring Program

Learning is a lifelong process, and one of the most effective ways to learn is to assist in the development of others. When an associate begins their career at an organization, they will no doubt need to learn the organization's culture. The culture of an organization is not tangible; thus it is not likely explicitly stated in employee handbooks. Van Maanen and Schein, 1979 (as cited in Payne and Huffman, 2005) define the process of learning the attitudes, behavior, and knowledge of their employer *organizational socialization*. A key component of socialization is understanding the values and goals of the employer. An associate tends to have a higher level of affective commitment when he or she shares the organization's goals and values. This compatibility is inversely related to turnover (Griffeth , Hom, & Gaertner, 2000). A mentoring relationship is one way in which individuals can be exposed to and gain awareness of an organization's culture.

Furthermore, young professionals may be seeking others who can offer advice and share experiences. While the purpose of a mentor in past decades was to advance a career, the purpose has since shifted into a supportive, collaborative and insightful relationship amongst new and tenured associates.

A mentoring program takes into account adult learning characteristics when planning meetings and activities. Literature suggests that adult learners learn best when they are able to associate new learning with previous experiences, there is an option to analyze and expand on what they learn, and they have the opportunity to apply this newly learned information to real-life situations (Sherman, Voight, Tibbetts, Dobbins, Evans & Weidler, 2000). A quality mentoring program reflects all of these characteristics.

Two types of support can be provided by a mentor; they include career and psychosocial support, according to Kram (1983). The actions involving coaching, supplying protection, providing challenging assignments, and increasing the associate’s exposure and visibility are types of career support. Being a role model, a friend, and a counselor fulfills the psychosocial support needed by the protégé (Dreher & Ash, 1990).

There are three stages to the mentor-protégé relationship. The first stage is the establishment of trust. Participants get to know one another and mentoring strategies are discussed. The second stage of the relationship occurs when the protégé begins to learn new techniques and are able to practice their skills with the mentor. The final stage of the relationship occurs when the formal mentoring program ends, although participants may decide to continue the relationship indefinitely (Sherman et al. 2000).

The success of mentoring programs can be explained a few ways. One theory is that a protégé puts a large amount of time and energy into their mentorship; it could even be considered an investment (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004). If the protégé leaves the organization, their investment is lost and would need to begin again at a new organization. A non-mentored associate would not have this investment and therefore their commitment to the organization is much lower. Another possible reason for the success of mentoring programs is the enhancement of transfer of learning, attributed to the activities provided, opportunities to practice new skills, the feedback received, and the supportive environment created.

The Business Case for Mentorship Programs

Benefits to the organization.

Mentoring programs are also a proven method for generating professional interest and commitment to the firm or department (Arms, 2010). Aryee and Chay (1994) found a positive relationship between mentoring and a protégé's level of organizational commitment. The natural extension of organizational commitment is turnover; a study by Viator and Scandura (1991) found an inverse relationship between mentoring and turnover intentions by mentor participants. The more commitment an associate has towards their employer, the less likely they are to quit.

Benefits to the protégé.

Employers are also interested in the engagement of their associates. Associate's attitudes, absence, turnover, and productivity can also be affected by their level of engagement (Hemsley Fraser, 2008, as cited in Sange & Srivastava, 2012). A mentoring program provides a means to increase associate engagement. Meetings with a mentor involve discussions about their work and difficult situations faced. The mentor may provide support by offering words of encouragement and sharing past experiences. This dialogue allows an associate the chance to be heard, the confidence to make business decisions, and the inspiration to reach their goals, all of which may lead to the creation of an engaged associate. "Engaged employees are the backbone of good working environments where people are industrious, ethical and accountable" (Cleland, Mitchinson & Townend, 2008, as cited in Sange & Srivastava, 2012, p. 37).

Benefits to the mentor.

Besides the benefits to protégés, there are many benefits to an individual who mentors others. Benefits include increased job satisfaction, enhancement of their own skills, including problem-solving and listening, and the ability to strategize. Mentors may also experience a heightened sense of self-esteem as they help others to develop. By giving constructive feedback to their partner, their leadership skills may potentially be refined as well.

Chapter Three: Program Structure

Proposed Budget

Below is the proposed budget for the cohort program. A cohort participant size of 25 was used. All figures are estimates.

Budget Item	Cost	Quantity	Subtotal	Monthly cost	Notes
Staff/Participants					
Program Director Salary	$39,000	1	$39,000	$3,250	
Support Staff (portion of their salary)	$12,000	1	$12,000	$1,000	
Participant payroll/hour (avg)	$22	76	$41,800	$3,483	25 participants * 76 hours
Total			$92,800	$7,733	
Instructional Materials					
Participant Guides	$15	30	$450	$38	5 extra ordered
Facilitator Guide	$25	2	$50	$4	1 extra ordered
Copyrights for articles/case studies	$8	6	$48	$4	
Purchase of course/certification	$2,500	1	$2,500	$208	Think on Your Feet
Purchase of course/certification	$1,000	1	$1,000	$83	DiSC Workplace
Participant Assessment	$40	25	$1,000	$83	DiSC Workplace Profiles
Supplies	$25	30	$750	$63	Leather binder, pen, nametag, legal pad, etc.
Total			$483.17	$40	
Facilities					
Room reservation	$0	0	$0	$0	Sessions will be held on-site
Catering - breakfast	$9	312	$2,808	$234	12 sessions, 25 participants, 1 instructor
Catering - lunch	$14	156	$2,184	$182	6 sessions, 25 participants, 1 instructor
Formal lunch - Module 2	$22	26	$572	$48	1 session, 25 participants, 1 instructor
Total			$5,564	$464	
Special Event #1					
Supplies	$15	25	$375	$31	
Prizes - Winners	$50	5	$250	$21	
Prizes - Not winners	$10	20	$200	$17	
Dinner	$35	27	$945	$79	25 participants, 1 instructor, 1 support staff
Keynote speaker	$2,500	1	$2,500	$208	
Total			$4,270	$356	
Special Event #2					
Awards	$60	25	$1,500	$125	
Dinner	$50	46	$2,300	$192	25 participants, 1 instructor, 1 support staff, participant supervisors (20), members of Executive Team (12)
Keynote speaker	$5,000	1	$5,000	$417	
Total			$8,800	$733	
Grand Total			$111,917	$9,326	
Cost per participant			$4,476.69	$179	The cost for each participant will come from the Associate's Learning and Development budget

Building Support

Having support from key stakeholders is crucial when planning a program of this magnitude. Before investing valuable time and resources in creating an adult education program, stakeholders need to provide approval. Below are examples of ways support will be built for the professional development program.

Support from learners.

If the program is successful, future generations of participants may be created by simple word-of-mouth advertising. Therefore, gaining the support and trust of the actual program participants is important. Techniques that will be utilized to gain support from learners are described below.

- As a group, learners will create a class charter. The information on this charter will come exclusively from the learners. It will include personal goals, classroom "rules," likes and dislikes, wishes and hopes, and other similar attitudes.
- During each session learners will complete an activity that is immediately applicable to their job,
- Evaluations at specific time intervals will assess the satisfaction of learners. Feedback will be solicited and changes made as necessary,
- After the program has ended learners may choose to create an ongoing support group. This group will be asked to help in the planning of future programs in the organization.

Support from supervisors.

The supervisors of the learners not only need to be supportive of their direct report's participation in the program, but they need to be aware of how to leverage the learner's experiences in the program and translate it to their job. Participants may learn a tremendous amount in class but if not support or encouragement to apply what they've learned on their job is not in place the program will ultimately fail. Techniques that will be utilized to gain support from supervisors are described below.

- Participants in the program will be chosen based on recommendations from all supervisors in the organization. Based on the staffing size of their respective area, supervisors will be granted a certain number of participants,
- An informational meeting will be held at the start and end of the program. Supervisors will be educated on the topics to be discussed throughout the program and ways in which their classroom activities in the classroom can be used on-the-job,
- When planning the curriculum supervisors will be asked to provide input, such as topics selection, assessment activities, etc. A final curriculum review will be held approximately 6 weeks prior to the program start date in which supervisors will provide final approval. This also allows stakeholders to see the entire program plan,
- Supervisors will be invited to observe each learning session. While they will not be an active participant, their presence is welcome,
- An informational memo will be sent, via email, to all supervisors at specific intervals. The memo will include past and upcoming program topics, strategies to increase transfer of learning, and results of recent evaluations.

Support from senior management

While supervisors will be instrumental in ensuring specific skills are used in day-to-day operations, senior managers will ensure the longevity of the program, including budget allocations. Techniques to gain support from senior managers are described below.

- Once final approval has been given by supervisors, a comprehensive program plan, to include curriculum, budget, evaluation plan, assessment plan, mentor program structure, and resources requested will be presented at a Board Meeting,

- Each quarter, a memo will be sent to senior managers indicating the progress made and results of evaluations,
- An Executive Summary will be created after the program has ended. It will include all evaluation results, sample learner portfolios, conclusions, and recommendations.

Transfer of Learning Plan

The purpose of the program is to develop associates in their current role and provide the skills necessary for future roles. Therefore, it is crucial that associates are able to translate their knowledge and learning in the classroom to their job. A variety of job-transfer activities have been developed to ensure this.

- Each module in the program includes an activity that utilizes current job information. Participants may be asked to bring in a work sample or project. By utilizing a current, working document they are more likely to apply the skill or knowledge to projects in the future,
- Throughout the program associates will be working individually and with partners and groups to develop a portfolio of work. Each module will focus on a key area of the associate's role and participants will work on an activity related to that area. At the end of the program, associates will have a comprehensive portfolio to refer to in the future,
- Each participant will be partnered with a mentor. During each mentor/protégé meeting, participants will be asked to reflect on their new skills. The mentor may provide guidance or support, and may encourage the protégé to discuss their current role, as well as challenges faced. While the mentoring program officially ends after the last cohort meeting, participants are encouraged to continue meeting on a regular basis,

- After the program has ended, associates may volunteer to form a committee with other program graduates. This committee will be responsible for coordinating quarterly gatherings. At these meetings, associates can discuss what skills they've used from the program, what hasn't worked well, how they've adapted, etc. The committee generates an ongoing community of support.

Communication Plan

Communication throughout the length of the program, and including the right individuals in communications, can make a difference in the success of the program. The table below lists the various communication strategies, recipients, and vehicles used to ensure all stakeholders are well informed.

Type of Communication	Description	Recipient
Formal written report	Detailed description of the program objectives and curriculum	Executive Board
Program informational meeting	Guided explanation of program curriculum and expectations, how to encourage transfer of learning, provided at the start and end of program	Participant supervisors
Curriculum review	Approval of entire program curriculum, six weeks before start date	Participant supervisors

Evaluation results	Excel spreadsheet listing the results of periodic evaluations, from cohort and mentoring program	Program participants and their supervisors, mentors
Overall evaluation results	Excel spreadsheet listing the result of the participant evaluations, immediate and six month, cohort and mentoring program	Senior managers, mentors
Program portfolio	Compilation of learning activities completed throughout the program	Program participants Supervisors
Executive presentation	Includes information about curriculum, mentor program, budget, evaluation, assessment, resources needed, conclusions and recommendations will be presented at a Board Meeting	Senior managers Executive Board
Company newsletter articles	Information on topics being discussed and names of participants, Quarterly articles	Organization

Evaluations

The following evaluations will be used. Level 1 (reaction) and Level 2 (Learning) data will be collected.

At the end of the training.

Course Evaluation

Training Course: ____________________
Date: ______________________________

Learning and Development values your feedback

The statements below concern specific aspects of this course. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement and provide your comments where appropriate, using the following scale:

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree

I. Content					
1. Objectives were clearly explained	O	O	O	O	O
2. Objectives stated were met	O	O	O	O	O
3. I understand the materials and topics in this course	O	O	O	O	O
4. Content is relevant to my job (if not, please explain)	O	O	O	O	O
Your comments, please:					

II. Methodology - the following activities/materials helped me to understand the content and achieve the stated objectives					
5. Pre-work received prior to the course	O	O	O	O	O
6. Participant's workbook	O	O	O	O	O
7. Class discussion	O	O	O	O	O
8. Excercises and/or readings/activities	O	O	O	O	O
9. Audio/visuals (flip charts, videos, etc.)	O	O	O	O	O
Your comments, please:					

III. Environment/Administration					
10. The classroom was suitable for this type of course	O	O	O	O	O
Your comments, please:					

IV. Facilitator					
11. Appeared knowledgeable of the subject matter	o	o	o	o	o
12. Presented clearly to assist my understanding	o	o	o	o	o
13. Promoted discussion and involvement	o	o	o	o	o
14. Responded appropriately to my questions	o	o	o	o	o
15. Effectively managed group dynamics	o	o	o	o	o
16. Kept the discussion/activities focused on stated objectives	o	o	o	o	o
Your comments, please:					

V. Overall course rating					
17. My overall rating for this course	o	o	o	o	o
Your comments, please:					
What may keep you from applying what you have learned in this program:					
Please share any additional informaiton you believe would help us to improve this course:					

Action Plan Worksheet

Specific Steps: I will do this	End Result: so that
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
Expected intangible benefits:	

After conclusion of the entire program.

Program Evaluation					
I. Demographic Information Check the appropriate answer to each question.					
1. How long have you worked for the company?	a. 2 years or less	b. 3-5 years	c. 6-10 years	d. 11-20 years	e. 20+ years
2. How long have you held your current job?	a. less than one year	b. 1-2 years	c. 3-5 years	d. 6-10 years	e. over 10 years
3. In which area do you work?	a. [insert department name]	b. [insert department name]	c. [insert department name]	d. [insert department name]	e. [insert department name]
II. Your Reaction Circle one rating numbr for each item.					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
4. The program objectives were clear.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Overall, what I learned in this program will be useful in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The order of the program topics and activities made sense to me.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The pace of this program was good - neither too fast nor too slow.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The program materials were easy to use.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I am satisfied with what I gained from this program.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I would recommend this program to others.	1	2	3	4	5
11. This program was a good investment for the company.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Examples and illustrations helped me understand the material.	1	2	3	4	5
	Not useful	Useful	Very Useful	Extremely Useful	
The Overall rating I would give this program is:	O	O	O	O	

Mentoring Program

A small but important component of the cohort is the development of a mentor program. As stated earlier, the addition of a mentor to each participant in the cohort will allow the participants to practice their skills, reflect on their current situations and learn from their mentor's experiences. As Sherman et al. (2000) stated, there are ten key steps to complete when building the mentoring program.

Program goals identification.

The main goal of the program is to enhance critical thinking and reflective skills. The second goal is to reduce the sense of isolation that may be felt by associates by creating a sense of community amongst participants. The third goal of the program is to develop an ongoing system of associate support; the last goal is to address individual participant needs in a professional and confidential manner.

Mentor selection.

The characteristics of a quality mentor sought after include interpersonal, communication, reflective and listening skills, awareness of diversity, the knowledge of job skills, and adherence to ethical and moral codes of conduct. A formal selection process will take place. Individuals wishing to become a mentor must apply to the program; the application process includes letters of recommendation, a current resume and a personal statement indicating their motivation to be a part of the program. Program staff will evaluate applications and make selections.

Identification of protégés.

The selection of protégés will be conducted through an informal process. All participants in the professional development cohort program will also participate in the mentoring program.

Mentor and protégé matching.

The key to effective mentoring is a strong relationship between mentor and protégé. Protégés will be asked to complete a professional assessment that will indicate their goals, motivations, stressors, strengths/weaknesses/gaps, etc. Mentors will also complete an assessment that asks them to rate their competency in a variety of areas. Participants will be placed together based on compatibility. The mentor/protégé ratio is 1:1.

Frequency and duration of the mentoring program.

The scheduling of mentor meetings may be one of the most difficult parts of the program. Pairs will be required to meet at least once per month to ensure that month's learning topics are discussed. The duration and dates of each meeting is left to the pairs' discretion. Participants do not need to inform the program director of times and dates of each meeting.

Professional development for mentors.

Two forms of professional development will be provided to mentors. The first development opportunity is an orientation. After mentors are selected, they will be required to attend an orientation meeting to review topics critical to their new role including the purpose and goals of the program, responsibilities, adult learning strategies such as communication, problem-solving, and reflective listening skills. Ongoing support will also be provided to mentors throughout the duration of the program. Topics to be discussed at these (informal) meetings include shifting focus when the protégé becomes more comfortable and working out interpersonal challenges. Mentors will also be encouraged to connect with fellow mentors to discuss successes and challenges.

Identifying mentoring content.

The discussions held during the mentor/protégé meetings should first focus on the topic or skill learned during that month's cohort training. Protégés are encouraged to practice their new skill and reflect their key learning. From there, mentors will conduct the meeting as necessary. Topics to be discussed include current work projects, challenges faced, obstacles overcome, and reflection on previous experiences.

Mentoring strategies.

The strategies that are most effective in a mentor/protégé relationship are those that reflect the principle of adult learning. Discussions should focus on real-life experiences, enhance problem-solving and reflection skills and build on the protégé's previous experiences. If applicable, mentors should share resources or strategies they have used in similar situations.

Assessing and evaluating the program.

Evaluation is a necessary component of any formal program. Data will be collected through online surveys and will provide insight into the satisfaction of the mentoring program and the effect on the individual's professional development. Surveys will be sent to protégés and mentors several times throughout the program. A final evaluation will be solicited at the conclusion of the program. The data collected will be placed into a spreadsheet, where it will be analyzed and presented to the Executive Board.

Financing the program.

There are a few minor costs associated with the mentoring program that need to be included in program development. All figures are estimates.

Budget Item	Cost	Quantity	Subtotal	Monthly cost	Notes
Staff/Participants					
Program Director Salary	$39,000	48	$18,720	$1,560	40 hours of training development time; 8 hours of classroom training
Support Staff (portion of their salary)	$12,000	20	$2,400	$200	20 hours of training coordination time
Participant payroll/hour (avg)	$22	12	$6,600	$550	25 participants * 12 hours mentoring meetings
Mentor payroll/hour (avg)	$30	20	$15,000	$1,250	25 mentors * 12 hours mentoring meetings + 8 hours training
Total			$27,720	$2,310	
Cost per participant			$554.40	$46.20	The cost for each participant will come from their department's Learning and Development budget

Chapter Four: Project

Program Introduction

At [organization name], we are committed to your development. We value the work you do and in return, we'd like to invest resources in your personal and professional development. The goal of this program is to develop you in your current role and prepare you for roles you may have in the future at [organization name].

You have been chosen to participate in a cohort program that will last for 12 months. Each month, you and your fellow cohort members will meet with your facilitator to learn about a new topic. You'll participate in fun and exciting activities in each class, with the goal of preparing you for your career at [organization name]. These activities can be saved and placed into a development portfolio to refer to in the future. At the end of each class, you'll also be challenged with an assignment; these assignments are not mandatory but are designed to help you apply your learning from the classroom to your job.

Additionally, you'll be paired up with a mentor in the organization. This mentor is not meant to be another supervisor. Instead, this individual is here to help you. They'll ask you questions about your classroom learning, ask you about your career goals and ambitions, and share their past experiences with you. The mentorship experience is meant to help you both with your professional and your personal growth.

Enjoy your time in this cohort. Chances are, you'll make lasting friendships and new connections that will be helpful to you in the future.

Special Event 1: This will be a team building event. You will be separated into groups and embarking on a scavenger hunt in downtown [insert city]. Working together, you'll decipher clues and navigate your way to a final destination. Once you reach your spot, you'll enjoy a catered dinner and an evening of networking and entertainment.

Special Event 2: As a reward for your dedication and hard work over the year, you'll be treated to an elegant evening of dinner, drinks and a keynote speech from a renowned business expert. You'll be accompanied by your supervisor and members of senior management.

Facilitator Guide

Module 1: Business Intelligence

Duration: 4 hours

Objective	**What will be covered**	**Instructional Method**	**Activity/Assessment**
Review types of business information you may encounter and learn how to critically analyze them	Paper files, spreadsheets, databases, reporting	Lecture, partner activity	When provided with a variety of business information, analyze the information and provide a short presentation to the class that explains the information.
Understand key terms used in financial reporting and how to compute specific ratios	Assets, liability, shareholders' equity, gross revenue, EPS, gross margin Operating margin	Lecture individual activity	Review a number of financial statements from fictitious company's, determine their financial strength using the information provided.
Become informed about the organization's competitors and how this affects your organization's strategy	Determine who the competitors are (brick and mortar, online, direct, indirect, etc.), competitor financial statements and public disclosures, review industry trends	Lecture, group activity	With a partner, review the article you brought to class (any article written about your competitor). Discuss with the class.
Recognize the departments and divisions in your company and their goals	Organization chart (structure), departments and divisions, missions/strategies of each division	Lecture, partner activity	Matching game: match the description of each department with the correct department.

Post-class activity: At your next team meeting, ask to present the company's most recent press release. Explain what each ratio means and how this may affect business strategy. How did this go?

Module 2: Building Your Professional Presence

Duration: 4 hours

Objective	**What will be covered**	**Instructional Method**	**Activity/Assessment**
Understand the importance of first impressions and the effect it can have on your career	First impressions	Lecture	Discussion of good and bad first impressions made or seen
Learn how to start and continue a professional conversation	Body language, handshaking, remembering names, introductions, conversation tips	Lecture, demonstration	Elevator Speech
Establish a personal dress code that will fit any situation	Business professional, business casual, casual, key rules of thumb	Lecture Group activity	Review slideshow and determine what's appropriate/inappropriate based on the situation
Strengthen your dining etiquette skills	Place settings Host responsibilities Guest responsibilities Tips for success	Group activity	Catered lunch, practice using the etiquette just learned.

Post-class activity: At your next business luncheon, observe your peers. What are some things they could improve? What are some things they do well? What were things you could have done better?

Module 3: Assertive Communication in Your Workplace

Duration: 8 hours

Objective	**What will be covered**	**Instructional Method**	**Activity/Assessment**
Recognize and identify types of communication behaviors	Nonassertive, aggressive and passive-aggressive, and their characteristics	Lecture	Review video clips of a standard workplace and identify behavior styles.
Assess assertiveness in conflict situations	Reflect on your personal communication style during conflict	Individual activity	Assertiveness questionnaire
Use positive communication techniques	What is, and how to, draft an "I" statement	Lecture/Demonstration	Draft "I" statements to help with communicating our satisfaction or dissatisfaction with something.
Provide difficult messages in an assertive manner	Practice using the techniques	Partner activity	Using the provided scenarios, practice giving difficult feedback using the assertiveness techniques.

Adapted from MRA®

Post-class activity: Have a difficult conversation with a friend, spouse, co-worker, parent, supervisor, etc. Think about the techniques you learned and apply them to your conversation. What went well? What didn't go so well? How did the conversation end? How might it have gone differently had you not learned assertive behavior?

Module 4: Diversity in Your Workplace

8 hours

Objective	**What will be covered**	**Instructional Method**	**Activity/Assessment**
Learn about the types of harassment that can occur	Sexual harassment, illegal harassment, verbal/non-verbal harassment	Lecture, group activity	Watching various video clips, raise your flag if you think the individual is experiencing or contributing to harassment.
Use communication that is unbiased	Should's/should not's, communication between sexes	Lecture, individual activity	Review the message or communication you brought to class; did you use any biased language? How could you modify the message to be unbiased?

Review the different cultures that may be present in your workplace, and how it may differ from your culture	Stereotypes	Lecture, group activity	After viewing a video about employees in the workplace, discuss the stereotypes that you witnessed.
Learn a strategy for communicating your intentions	What I think/what I say/what you think, perception, how body language and voice qualities can affect your message	Lecture, group activity	(based after the Telephone game) Each participant is given the same statement, but asked to communicate the statement in a different way (enforce the word X, roll your eyes, etc.)
Understand how to rebuild a relationship if trust has been broken	When things didn't go smoothly, how to rebuild trust and respect	Lecture	Discussion – how would you/did you handle a situation in which you needed to step back and re-communicate your intentions.

Adapted from: MRA® Sensitivity Skills in Working with Others

Post-class activity: Take a look at newspaper or magazine articles. Are they representative of different cultures? Are there stereotypes present? Is the communication unbiased? The next time you read something, keep these things in mind.

Module 5: Writing for Success

Duration: 4 hours

Objective	**What will be covered**	**Instructional Method**	**Activity/Assessment**
Understand the importance of professional communication	What qualifies as good communication, perceptions of those who don't pay attention to their communications	Lecture, group activity	Discussion about poor communication and it's perception, consequences, etc.
Review common grammar and punctuation mistakes and how to correct them	Verb usage, punctuation, pronouns	Lecture, individual activities	Participant worksheets (correct the paragraph, choose the correct pronoun, etc.)
Learn a strategy to craft clear and concise messages	A: action B: body C: closing	Lecture, individual activity	Given a topic, draft an email message for three different audiences.
Distinguish between levels of message	Types of recipients (co-workers,	Lecture, group activity	Change your written message to include a different audience.

recipients	supervisors, manager and above), how the message needs to change based on each audience		
Determine the correct recipients for your message	To, CC, BCC	Lecture, individual activity	Review the message or communication you brought to class. Were the correct people included in the message? In the right areas?

Post-class activity: Create a personal cheat sheet for your use when creating written communication. Include your frequently misspelled words, when to use a comma, period or semicolon, the ABC method, etc. This should be helpful to you as you are drafting your message and help you remember things you may forget.

Module 6: Personality Profiles

Duration: 8 hours

Objective	**What will be covered**	**Instructional Method**	**Activity/Assessment**
Identify and learn about your style	Review your style and key characteristics (likes, dislikes, triggers, etc.)	Lecture, individual activity	Participant worksheet
Learn about other styles	Understand the key characteristics of the three other styles	Lecture, group activity	Working together in same style groups, create a flip chart that summarizes your style.
Recognize what style you will work best with	Review each style, reflect on the style you'd most like to, and least like to, work with	Video, individual activity	After viewing video clips showcasing each style, indicate which style you'd like to work with, and which style you wouldn't like to work with and why.
Learn how to work more effectively with other styles	How each style can adapt to every other style	Lecture	Participant worksheet

Adapted from DiSC Workplace Profiles®

Post-class activity: Have a conversation with your supervisor and mentor about your personality inventory. Indicate what your priorities are, your likes and dislikes, how you like to be treated, what motivates you, what weakens you, etc. Discuss things that may need to be adjusted in your job, or what could be done to enhance your time spent at work.

Module 7: Time Management

Duration: 4 hours

Objectives	**What will be covered**	**Instructional Method**	**Activity/Assessments**
Learn strategies to make the best of your time and efforts	Tools (paired comparisons analysis, grid analysis, action priority matrix, urgent/important matrix, Pareto analysis), managing conflicting priorities	Lecture, individual activity	Make a comprehensive list of all activities you complete in a day. Prioritize them using one of the strategies learned.
Review strategies that will increase your concentration and focus	Activity logs, avoiding interruptions, working from home	Lecture, individual activity	Review mock activity logs, find trends and make recommendations for that individual.
Learn the art of filing your information, whichever format it may be	Paper files (folders, color-coding, alphabetical vs. chronological), email (managing inboxes, using folders, file vs. delete, meeting invites), electronic files (folder structure, keep vs. delete vs. archive)	Lecture, partner activity	With your partner, find a solution for your paper, email, and electronic files. Discuss how you will implement these changes.
Understand what the common challenges of time management are and how you can address them	Organizing disorganized people (your team), solving punctuality problems	Lecture, group activity	Discussion: is there a co-worker(s) that you would like to help become more organized? Why? What’s the effect of disorganization on your team?

Post-class activity: Complete an activity log for at least the next two weeks. Be honest with your reflection. Even the smallest task needs to be recorded in order to effectively evaluate your time.

Do you notice any trends? Where are you spending a majority of your time? Does this match your job responsibilities?

Module 8: Negotiation Skills

Duration: 8 hours

Objectives	**What will be covered**	**Instructional Method**	**Activity/Assessment**
Understand the challenges associated with negotiating	Trade off's, conflicting priorities, build or buy decisions, work space, resources, vendor relationships	Lecture, group activity	Each person will review a case study of a negotiation and explain to the group the challenges each side faced.
Prepare a negotiation action plan before engaging in negotiations	Subject Matter Expert needed? research options and precedence's Motivations of stakeholders, impact of each option (time, cost, quality, scope), risk opportunities, formulate strategy based on the knowledge of the stakeholders	Lecture, group activity	As a group, review the background of the organization and the issue they will be negotiating. Determine your negotiating plan.
Understand the key motivators of each individual and how they can affect your negotiations	Fiscal workload/overtime/training/vacation Contractual/organizational issues, Intangible (desire to be heard, desire to save face, resistance to change, desire to satisfy own agenda, biases, political alliances, etc.)	Lecture, video	While viewing a video of negotiations, try to determine what the motivators are for each individual.
Identify the emotional aspect of negotiations and strategies to handle them	Emotional challenges and recommended response, tips	Lecture, individual activity	Discussion: when's a time you lost your cool with another person when things got intense? How did you handle it? What was the consequence?

Practice win-win negotiations to come to a successful outcome	Establish rapport and common goals, probing, paraphrase, analyze outcomes and risks, Summarize what was agreed on	Lecture, group activity	Role play (script provided to participants): mock negotiations.
Practice negotiating around fixed positions	Fixed positions, underlying goals and beliefs	Lecture, partner activity	When provided with a fixed position (i.e. I will not agree to outsource, regardless of savings), negotiate a solution. Switch roles and try again.

Post-class activity: The next time you interact with your friends, spouse, or parent, attempt to negotiate for something, even if it's something little. Use the negotiation skills you learned to engage in win-win negotiating. How did it go? What worked well? What did not work well?

Module 9: Project Management Fundamentals

Duration: 8 hours

Objective	**What will be covered**	**Instructional Methods**	**Activity/Assessment**
Review the roles and responsibility of the project team	Project Sponsor, project Manager, team members, project Stakeholders	Lecture, individual activity	Matching game: using a list of tasks, determine whose responsibility it is.
Learn about the helpful forms and templates that are available for your use	Project charter, kickoff checklist, contingency plan, trade-off triangle	Lecture, group activity	Using a sample project, complete these forms with the appropriate information.
Understand how to manage multiple tasks and prioritize	Work breakdown structure, critical path, parallel tasks, Gantt chart	Lecture, group activity	Given a list of tasks, determine the plan of action for the project.
Learn how to successfully manage vendor relationships	Request for Proposals, vendor responsibilities, statement of Work, price negotiations	Lecture, group activity	Using a list of vendors descriptions, recommend a vendor for the project.
Communicate effectively with key	Project updates, meeting agendas,	Lecture, group activity	Create a communication message.

project members	final reviews		

Post-class activity: Ask to be involved in the next project your team begins. Even if you are a silent participant, it's good practice to be involved in your team's project and understand the process. Brainstorm a list of projects you could ask to be a part of; if you are a part of a project, what things have you learned in the class that you can apply?

Module 10: Communicating with Clarity

Duration: 8 hours

Objectives	**What will be covered**	**Instructional Method**	**Activity/Assessment**
Learn a variety of strategies to organize your thoughts	Clock plan, Globe plan, Triangle plan, Zoom plan, Pendulum plan, Benefits plan	Lecture, group activity	Write examples of each plan on the flipcharts located around the room.
Practice using strategies to communicate clearly and with brevity and impact	Each plan	Partner activity	Each participant will roll the dice. They will give a short message using the plan that is displayed on their dice.
Learn how to use the strategies in a networking event	Plans	Partner activity	Standing in a line, each participant has 30 seconds to communicate their message using any plan of their choosing.
Understand how to appropriately bridge messages	Bridging strategies	Lecture, group activity	After the instructor has communicated his/her message, come up with a bridge statement.

Adapted from Think on Your Feet®

Post-class activity: Watch how you use these strategies in your everyday conversation. You will be amazed at how often you use these strategies. In what situations did you use the plans? How did it help you? Which plan gives you the most difficulty, and why?

Module 11: Career Management

Duration: 4 hours

Objectives	**What will be covered**	**Instructional Method**	**Activity/Assessment**
Practice writing goal statements to help guide your performance in the future	How to write effective goals, how to measure progress towards your goals	Lecture, partner activity	Draft a goal statement for the next month, year, and two years.
Understand the performance review process at this organization	Associate's role, manager's role, purpose of performance reviews, two-way dialogue, common pitfalls	Lecture, group activity	Discussion: what has been your experience with performance reviews in the past, either good or bad?
Learn the power of a strength statement and how it can be leveraged	What are strengths, how to find your strengths, write your strength statement, how to use strengths and strength statements to your advantage	Lecture, individual activity	First, review a stack of cards with characteristics. Choose five cards that are representative of you. Create your strength statement and share with the class.

Post-class activity: Draft your portion of the performance review so it accurately reflects your responsibilities. How did you do? What challenged you? What was easy? What are some things you will remember to do during the actual review?

Module 12: Presentation Skills

Duration: 8 hours

Objective	**What will be covered**	**Instructional Method**	**Activity/Assessment**
Determine audience characteristics	Review audience types, what the listener wants (prepared, confident, comfortable and interesting speaker), what's the presentation's purpose	Lecture, group activity	Discussion: what do each of those characteristics look like.

Review vocal qualities that can make or break a presentation	Enunciation, tone, inflection, projection, audibility, rate	Lecture, partner activity	With a partner, and using the provided sentences, practice each type of vocal quality, both in a good way and in a poor way.
Learn effective strategies to control your nerves before giving a presentation	Stage fright, steps toward alleviating stage fright, handling nervous energy	Lecture, group activity	Discussion: what have you done in the past to get over your stage fright or control your nerves?
Learn how to structure a message so it is clear and concise	Intro, Body, conclusion	Lecture, individual activity	Begin creating a presentation using the topic of your choice; write the intro, body and conclusion.
Include additional materials that will enhance your presentation	Introducing the message, supporting material, transitions and internal summaries, Room set-up checklist	Lecture, individual activity	Add additional materials to your presentation.
Deliver a presentation with confidence	Participant presentations	Lecture, group activity	Give your presentation to the group, a video will be made of your presentation.

Adapted from: MRA® Presentation Skills

Post-class activity: Review the video of your presentation and critique it. What did you do well?

What did you do that you didn’t realize you did? What can you improve on?

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

Cohort Best Practices

A majority of the cohort program will be spent in the classroom, so it is important to review strategies which will help the program director create a successful program (Post, 2010; Scott-Conley, 2006).

- Pedagogy, the art and science of teaching children, is vastly different from andragogy, which is the model of learning that relates to adults. Therefore, strategies used to instruct children differ from the strategies that are successful in teaching adults,

- Accommodate different types of learners; some participants like to learn by seeing the information, others learn best by hearing the information, and others learn best by doing something or practicing the skill,

- Give practical examples or let the participants engage in role play activities,

- Participants should view other individuals as resources,

- Encourage participants to share their ideas and experiences; explain the content and then ask for questions and comments,

- Guide learners to their own knowledge instead of simply providing them with the answers,

- Ask for and follow-through with the learner’s expectations for the program,

- Provide ample opportunities for learners to work in pairs or small groups,

- Don’t be frightened by silence; adults need adequate time to think and process a question before answering,

- When introducing new information, relate it to prior knowledge and experiences,

- Provide ample time for practicing a new skill,

- Use tones, gestures, and body language that communicate respect for participants,

- Affirm or accept all contributions; make clarifications as needed,
- Create an environment that is supportive, positive, and respectful,
- Give feedback on individual performances and allow their peers to provide feedback as well,

Mentoring Best Practices

While there is no one size fits all method to creating a mentoring program, there are a few guidelines to follow to increase the chance of success (Sherman et. al, 2000, & Adeyemi, 2011).

- A mentoring program needs someone dedicated to coordinating activities. This person could be responsible for facilitating the mentoring training session, communicating with mentor and protégé participants, addressing issues as they arise, and providing resources to mentors as necessary,
- Mentors should meet with the mentor coordinator or program director prior to their first protégé meeting to discuss the goals of the program,
- Mentors and protégés need time for observations, feedback, training, activities, and identifying resources,
- Count mentoring in the time allotted for professional development; schedule mentoring meetings during regular working hours, encourage the use of email in-between meetings, and make resources or materials available to participants,
- Mentors may need to be mentored, so consider pairing a new mentor with an experienced one,
- In some cases, supervisors may need to serve as mentors. If this is the case, ensure that ground rules, roles, and expectations are defined clearly,
- Sometimes a mentoring relationship just doesn’t work out. Allow participants to end the relationship in a respectful way without consequences,

- The mentor/protégé relationship is reciprocal. Mentors can learn from their protégés experiences, and they can also increase their leadership skills,
- Mentors should consider a number of strategies when working with their protégé as there is no one strategy that will work for every individual. However, successful strategies include ongoing feedback and opportunities for self-assessment and reflection,
- When evaluating the mentor program, remember that behavior change takes time. Allow adequate time to pass before evaluating mentor activity success,
- An effective mentor values confidentiality, is willing to share their knowledge and experiences, is a respectful communicator, and is knowledgeable about the organizational culture, among other things,
- An effective protégé is aware of their personal strengths and goals, is motivated to learn, and takes time to reflect, is willing to apply advice and feedback, and is prepared and organized, among other things.

The preceding information is the foundation, or plan, for any organization wishing to engage in a cohort learning program. By following this plan and utilizing the recommendations, an organization is on its way to providing an enriched learning opportunity for its associates.

References

Arms, D. (2010). How to retain your employees. *Strategic Finance, 92*(3), 19-22.

Allen, T.D., Eby, L.T., Poteet, M.L., Lentz, E., & Lima, L. (2004). Career benefits associated with mentoring for protégés: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 89,* 127-136.

Aryee, S., & Chay, Y. W. (1994). An examination of the impact of career-oriented mentoring on work commitment attitudes and career satisfaction among professional and managerial employees. *British Journal of Management, 5*, 241-249.

Bamruk, R. (2006). Why managers are crucial to increasing engagement. *Strategic HR Review*, *5*(2), 24-27.

Browne-Ferrigno, T. (2003). Becoming a principal: Role conception, initial socialization, role identity transformation, purposeful engagement. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *39*(4), 468-503.

Chickering, A. W., & Z. F. Gamson. (1987). Seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. *AAHE Bulletin*, *39*(7), 3-7.

Cross, K. P. (1998). "What Do We Know About Students' Learning and How Do We Know It." AAHE National Conference on Higher Education.

Dinsmore, J. , & Wenger, K, (2006). Relationships in preservice teacher preparation: From cohorts to communities. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 57-74.

Dreher, G. F., & Ash, R. A., (1990). A comparative study of mentoring among men and women in managerial, professional, and technical positions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *75*, 539-546.

Griffeth, R.W., Hom, P. W., & Gaertner, S. (2000). A meta-analysis of antecedents and correlates of employee turnover: Update, moderator tests, and research implications for the next millennium. *Journal of Management, 26,* 463-488.

Hall, D.T., & Associates. (1996). *The career is dead: Long live the career. San Francisco: Jossey-Baas, Inc.*

Heese, M. , & Mason, M, (2005). The case for learning communities. *Community College Journal*, 30-35.

Kaye, B. , & Smith, P., (2012). Career development: Shifting from nicety to necessity. *T&D*, 52-55.

Kram, K. E., (1983). Phases of the mentor relationship. *Academy of Management Journal, 26*(1), 608-625

Mandzuk, D., Hasinoff, S., & Seifert, K. (2003). Inside a teacher cohort: Teacher education from a social capital perspective. *Canadian Journal of Education*, *28*(1), 168-184.

McDermott, L. (2012). Tapping the wisdom of peers. *T&D*, 70-72.

Norris, C. J., & Barnett, B. "Cultivating a New Leadership Paradigm: From Cohorts to Communities." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the University Council of Educational Administration, Philadelphia, PA, October 1994.

Parker, P., Hall, D, & Kram, K, (2008). Peer coaching: A relational process for accelerating career learning. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, *7*(4), 487-503.

Payne, S. , C., & Huffman, A., H. (2005). A longitudinal examination of the influence of mentoring on organizational commitment and turnover. *Academy of Management Journal*, *48*(1), 158-168.

Post, H. (2010). Teaching adults: What every trainer needs to know about adult learning styles. *Family Advocacy and Support (FAST) Project*.

Russell, J. E. A., & Adams, D. M. (1997). The changing nature of mentoring in organizations: An introduction to the special issue on mentoring in organizations. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 51: 1-14.

Sange, R. , & Srivasatava, R.K., (2012). Employee engagement and mentoring: An empirical study of sales professionals. *Synergy*, *10*(1), 37-50.

Sathe, R., S. (2009). Using the cohort model in accounting education. *Accounting Education: an international journal*, *18*(1), 33-49.

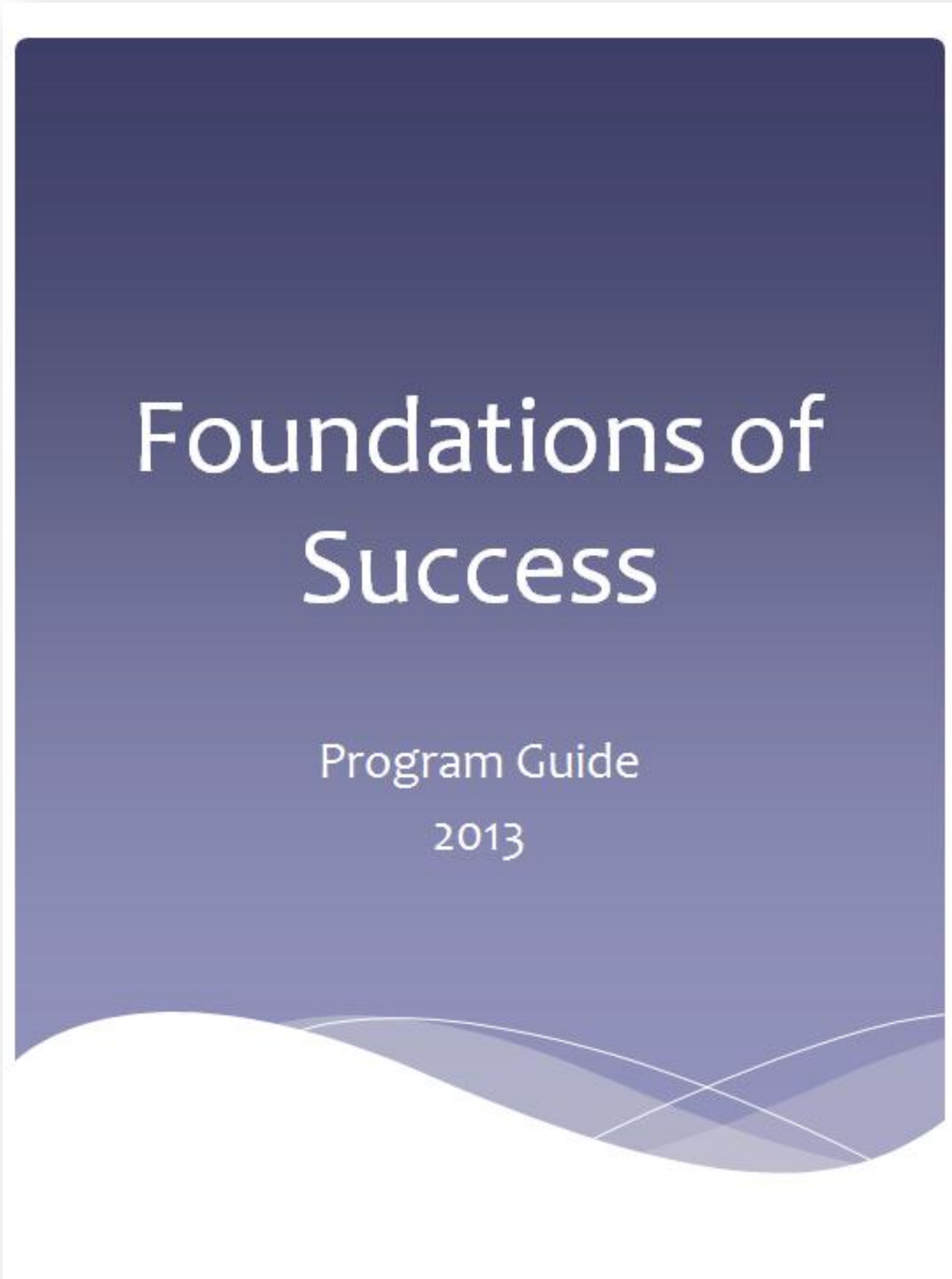
Scott-Conley, L. (2006). Principles of adult learning and best practices in teaching adults. *School of International Training,* 1-4.

Sherman, R., Voight, J., Tibbetts, J., Dobbins, D., Evans, A., Weidler, D. Pelevin Research Institute. (2000). Adult Educators' Guide to Designing Instructor Mentoring. *Washington D.C.*

Adeyemi, S. (2011). Enhancing organizational performance through effective mentoring. *IFEPsychologIA,* 366-378.

Viator, R. E., Scandura, T. A., (1991). A study of mentor-protégé relationships in large public accounting firms. *Accounting Horizons, 5*, 20-30.

Appendix A



Foundations of Success

Program Guide

2013

Foundations of Success

At [organization name], we are committed to your development. We value the work you do and in return, we'd like to invest resources in your personal and professional development. The goal of this program is to develop you in your current role and prepare you for roles you may have in the future at [organization name].

You have been chosen to participate in a cohort program that will last for 12 months. Each month, you and your fellow cohort members will meet with your facilitator to learn about a new topic. You'll participate in fun and exciting activities in each class, with the goal of preparing you for your career at [organization name]. These activities can be saved and placed into a development portfolio to refer to in the future. At the end of each class, you'll also be challenged with an assignment; these assignments are not mandatory but are designed to help you apply your learning from the classroom to your job.

Additionally, you'll be paired up with a mentor in the organization. This mentor is not meant to be another supervisor. Instead, this individual is here to help you. They'll ask you questions about your classroom learning, ask you about your career goals and ambitions, and share their past experiences with you. The mentorship experience is meant to help you both with your professional and your personal growth.

Enjoy your time in this cohort. Chances are, you'll make lasting friendships and new connections that will be helpful to you in the future.

Foundations of Success

Program Goals:

* Enhance critical thinking and reflective skills,
* Reduce the sense of isolation that may be felt by associates by creating a sense of community amongst participants,
* Develop an ongoing system of associate support,
* Address individual participant needs in a professional and confidential manner.

3

Program Schedule

Here's a look at how the program will progress throughout the year:

- Module 1: Business Intelligence
- Module 2: Building Your Professional Presence
- Module 3: Assertive Communication in Your Workplace
- Module 4: Diversity in the Workplace
- Module 5: Writing for Success
- Module 6: Personality Profiles
- Special Event
- Module 7: Time Management
- Module 8: Negotiation Skills
- Module 9: Project Management Fundamentals
- Module 10: Communicating with Clarity
- Module 11: Career Management
- Module 12: Presentation Skills
- Special Event

Module 1: Business Intelligence

Objectives:

1. Review types of business information you may encounter and how to critically analyze them,
2. Understand key terms used in financial reporting and how to compute specific ratios,
3. Become informed about the organization's competitors and how this affects your organization's strategy
4. Recognize the departments and divisions in your company and their goals.

Duration: 4 hours

Facilitator Insert

Objective	What will be covered	Instructional Method	Activity/Assessment
Review types of business information you may encounter and how to critically analyze them	Paper files Spreadsheets Databases Reporting	Lecture Partner activity	When provided with a variety of business information, analyze the information and provide a short presentation to the class that explains the information
Understand key terms used in financial reporting and how to compute specific ratios	Assets, liability, shareholders' equity Gross revenue, EPS, gross margin Operating margin	Lecture Individual activity	Review a number of financial statements from fictitious company's; determine their financial strength using the information provided
Become informed about the organization's competitors and how this affects your organizations strategy	Determine who the competitors are (brick and mortar, online, direct, indirect, etc.) Competitor financial statements and public disclosures Review industry trends	Lecture Group activity	With a partner, review the article you brought to class (any article written about your competitor). Then discuss with the class.
Recognize the departments and divisions in your company and their goals	Organization chart (structure) Departments and divisions Missions/strategies of each division	Lecture Partner activity	Matching game: match the description of each department with the correct department

Module 1: Business Intelligence

Activity 1 notes
7

Module 1: Business Intelligence

Activity 2 notes

8

Module 1: Business Intelligence

Activity 3 notes

9

Module 1: Business Intelligence

Activity 4 notes

10

Module 1: Business Intelligence

Post-class activity: at your next team meeting, ask to present the company's most recent press release. Explain what each ratio means and how this may affect business strategy.

How did this go?