

**REPLACING**  
- THE -  
**RAINMAKER**

**WORKSHOPS**

**MENTORING**

This workbook accompanies the audio workshop. It includes speaker's notes, which summarize the content covered in the workshop. It also includes activities, which you'll complete during the workshop, and a continuing education assignment, which you'll complete after the workshop. The continuing education assignment gives you a chance to apply the theory you learned in a practical setting. At the end, there's a quiz to test what you've learned as well as space to make notes and information on where to go to learn more.

## ***SPEAKER'S NOTES***

### **Learning outcomes**

- You'll learn about the benefits of creating a mentoring program.
- You'll learn what it takes to be a good mentor.
- You'll learn how to create a mentoring program at your firm.

### **Mentoring**

- Assign mentors vertically through your firm, rather than only relying on one-to-one relationships.
- This creates a sense of responsibility and belonging.
- Mentoring is a great way to build like, trust and credibility among colleagues.

### **Play the long game**

- Creating a mentoring program contributes to your organization's long-term success.
- Employees flee firms with a bad culture and seek out those with a great culture.
- Creating a mentoring program is a way to keep your employees around for the long haul.

### **Like, trust and credibility**

- Often accounting firms can feel like they're made up of a bunch of autonomous individuals.
- This isn't good for overall morale and it impedes collaboration among your employees.
- Mentoring gives colleagues a chance to get to know each other in a less formal setting.

### **The ride along**

- One of the biggest business development benefits of mentoring is the "ride along."
- A ride along is when a more junior accountant gets to participate in real-life business development activities by tagging along with their mentor.
- This provides an invaluable opportunity for junior staff to witness business development in action.

### **A teacher of others**

- Good mentors are interested in helping others.
- They are willing to share their expertise.
- They are the kind of people who encourage others to come to them with questions.

### **A good listener**

- Good mentors are great communicators and listeners.
- Mentoring starts with listening and asking questions, so you need mentors who have able and willing to do that.
- They also have to be skilled at guiding conversations.

### **A skilled motivator**

- Good mentors are skilled motivators.
- Mentors need to help their mentees overcome any fears that are impeding their networking efforts.
- A mentor who just scolds or lectures isn't going to get great results.

### **A creative thinker**

- Good mentors are creative thinkers.
- A lot of mentoring is thinking through issues out loud with mentees and helping them arrive at the right answer.
- Mentors have to be able to think on their feet and think out of the box.

## **An old hand**

- Mentors need to have sufficient experience, expertise and knowledge.
- They need to have their own knowledge to draw on if they want to guide others.
- Accountants can serve as mentors long before they reach the top ranks of your firm.

## **A fan of culture**

- Mentors need to have an understanding of and appreciation for your firm's culture.
- Think of them as ambassadors for the firm.
- If they don't believe in the way you do things, they won't be good mentors.

## **Mutual benefits**

- Mentoring ultimately benefits both mentors and mentees.
- Mentors gain proficiency in coaching and teaching.
- Mentees get a forum to share their issues and challenges.

## **Avoid the pitfall**

- A lot of firms have no real mentoring program.
- Their mentoring program exists on paper, but not in practice.
- Every so often someone lucks out and gets a good mentor, but that's rare.

## **A pyramid scheme**

- Assign mentors vertically through a firm so that each team resembles a pyramid.
- This structure forges connections among individuals in the firm and builds a sense of responsibility and belonging.
- It creates a little internal competition, which can be a helpful motivator.

## **Assign mentors**

- Within each team, create mentor-mentee pairs.
- In some cases, a mentor may be directly above their mentee in the org chart.
- The mentor can also be someone more senior.

## **Play matchmaker**

- As you assign mentor-mentee pairs, take into account individual personalities and goals.
- You don't need to look for perfect matches, but it helps to create pairs that you think will be a good match.
- For example, two accountants who coach Little League teams could be a good match because they share a hobby.

## **Leverage strengths**

- Take personal strengths into account to find good matches.
- Everyone has their own strengths and success depends on leveraging those strengths.
- For example, a good motivator might make a good mentor for an accountant who lacks self-confidence.

## **Lay out your expectations**

- Lay out the traits and characteristics that mentors are expected to display.
- This shouldn't be a guessing game where mentors aren't sure what's expected of them.
- Laying out your expectations might also reassure some people that they have the skills they need.

## **Provide methodology training**

- Lay out the methodology for how to act as a mentor.
- Mentors should be prepared to host both group and individual mentoring sessions.
- They're expected to guide conversations, create action plans and ask questions.

## **Provide skills training**

- Provide training to make sure your mentors possess basic skills.
- Offer training on how to ask questions, how to listen, how to provide feedback and how to use creative thinking.
- This training also provides a refresher course for accountants and helps them brush up on their skills.

## **Meet in a group**

- Your mentoring program should include both group and individual meetings.
- The easiest way to structure group meetings is to do it by team.
- These meetings should be participatory and everyone should be given the chance to contribute.

## **Ask for everyone's thoughts**

- Ask everyone in the group to write down their thoughts.
- Structure the content around positives, challenges and recommendations.
- Share all of the answers and decide on the most important points.

## **Come up with a plan**

- Create a plan that includes measures, timelines and assignments.
- Just sitting around talking about problems isn't enough.
- There needs to be a focus on coming up with solutions.

## **Meet individually**

- Mentors should also hold one-on-one meetings with each of their mentees.
- The agenda for these meetings should be driven by the mentee.
- It's the mentor's job to ask insightful questions that provide a broader perspective and a clearer sense of priority.

## **The Three E's**

- Entry questions are broad, open-ended questions that get the other person talking.
- Elaborative questions are designed to get the other person to expand on specific topics of interest.
- The mentor can ask their mentee to elaborate on specific goals, initiatives, challenges or issues.

## **The Three E's**

- Evaluative questions aim to establish how important or urgent a topic is.
- Evaluative questions often rely on words such as "impact" or "consequence" to gauge the priority of an issue.
- It's important to determine which issues are most pressing so the mentor can focus on addressing those issues.

## **A flexible schedule**

- At the end of the meeting, the mentor should summarize any commitments that both parties have made.
- They should send an email summarizing those commitments at the earliest opportunity.
- Mentors and mentees should meet as frequently as they want or need.

## **Keep it confidential**

- Mentoring requires an element of confidentiality.
- Mentees aren't going to share feel comfortable sharing if their thoughts aren't kept confidential.
- It's acceptable to break confidentiality if the mentee gives permission.

## **Call in the cavalry**

- If a mentor encounters an issue they can't solve, they should consult the firm's business development coach.
- Mentors can do more harm than good by trying to solve a problem they're ill equipped to solve.
- They have to be willing to admit when they don't know the answer.

## Set clear expectations

- When mentoring relationships fail, it's usually because the expectations weren't clear.
- Both parties should agree on how often they would like to meet.
- Both parties should be clear on what the mentee is hoping to gain.

## Summary

- Mentoring requires specific skills, traits and experience, as well as a basic level of training.
- Mentoring benefit mentors by providing coaching experience.
- Mentoring benefit mentees by providing a confidential outlet to share issues and challenges.

## ACTIVITIES

If you're completing these activities on your own, please write down your answers in your workbook. If you're completing these activities in a group, please write down your answers individually. Then share your responses with up to two other people. Look for commonalities among everyone's responses and discuss any differences.

### Activity 1

What qualities or characteristics do you possess that would make you a good mentor of others?

### Activity 2

If your firm were to establish a business development mentoring program, what might you contribute and how would you hope to benefit from such a program?

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

If you're a relatively junior staff member, seek out a mentor to help you with your business development issues and challenges. If you're a more senior staff member, assuming you have the skills and traits to become a good mentor, seek out the training and experience you need to become a mentor. A mentor provides their mentees with a confidential outlet to share issues and challenges.

## QUIZ

1. Mentoring is a great way to build like, trust and credibility internally among colleagues.
2. Tagging along with a mentor via a "ride along" provides an invaluable opportunity for junior staff to witness business development in action.
3. Good mentors are great communicators and listeners.
4. A mentor can achieve great results by scolding a mentee or lecturing them on what to do.
5. Making your employees feel like they're part of something and giving them the necessary support and training is a key part of making sure they stick with your firm.
6. Assigning individuals to mentoring teams can create a little internal competition, which can be a helpful motivator.
7. Mentors are expected to be interested in helping others, great communicators and listeners, good motivators and creative thinkers.
8. Mentor training might include coaching on how to ask questions, how to listen, how to provide feedback and how to use creative thinking to craft solutions.
9. Mentoring requires an element of confidentiality. Mentees have to trust that their mentor will keep what's said confidential.
10. The mentor should drive the agenda at individual mentoring sessions.

## ***NOTES***

## ***FOR MORE INFORMATION***

For more information about additional workshops, or other Replacing the Rainmaker products and services, please visit [ReplacingTheRainmaker.com](http://ReplacingTheRainmaker.com).