

## The Benefits of Mentorship in an Inclusive Culture

By Ann N. Gatty, Ph.D.



Working with a mentor can be extremely helpful for employee career development and self-improvement. Having a mentor allows staff members to focus on skill enhancement and goal setting. If members of your organization are struggling with a clear sense of direction moving forward, it may be time to consider establishing a formalized mentorship program. Using the talents and expertise of a mentor can assist in self-discovery and skill development in many areas, but most notably in the soft-skill area. The focus of the conversations often begins with a broad view of the mentee and can zero in on a select few items from a wider range of self-improvement issues.

Here is an established process for establishing a productive mentoring process. The duration of the mentorship varies, but it should be goal specific and should include identified areas for skill building and self-reflection. Many times, the most significant benefits of mentorship come from improvements in soft skills. Skills such as relationship building, communication and inspiring others can be greatly enhanced. If you are implementing a program and want to ensure strong benefits of a mentorship, include the following three activities.

### [Start with a self-assessment](#)

In any mentoring process, it is important to complete a review of the skills, talents and abilities the mentee possesses before building any self-improvement strategies. There are several assessment tools available. We utilize a number of versions. [Contact us](#) for more information on which would be best suited for your needs. If you believe one of the benefits of mentorship is developing the [next generation of leaders](#), then consider creating the following assignment. Utilize the results of a self-assessment to prepare goals that allow the mentee to create stretch assignments that enhance the skill sets already in place. You also will want to encourage the development of additional skills that augment the mentee's current skill levels.

### [Develop a good relationship-building strategy](#)

To be successful in any organization, individuals must be able to play well with others. The benefits of a mentorship process is that the mentee is given specific meeting times with other more capable peers to

practice this soft skill set. Spend time dialoguing about effective ways to communicate with others, strategic ways to handle conflict resolution and efficient time management habits. Establishing comfortable and honest co-worker relationships is the foundation for business productivity. As individuals continue to grow in leadership capabilities, they begin to utilize different, but appropriate leadership styles to address the various workplace situations as they arise.

### Establish a life-long learning habit

In our [mentoring process](#), we focus on utilizing ongoing professional development as a life-long learning process that allows individuals to utilize continually improving skills, knowledge and abilities in moving forward. As future business strategic plans are crafted, integrating a continuous mentoring process allows all employees to engage in ongoing professional development. The talent pool is limited and maintaining quality staff will be essential as companies navigate through the upcoming economic turmoil.

### About the Author

Dr. Ann Gatty is a business development strategist. She helps her clients clarify the vision for their businesses, boost their leadership capabilities and add quality talent to help the clients reach their goals. Dr. Gatty is a frequent writer and contributor [www.AllBusiness.com](http://www.AllBusiness.com), and [www.WomenOnBusiness.com](http://www.WomenOnBusiness.com). She is the author of [Leadership Unleashed, A Great Dane's Wisdom for the Business World](#). Her interactive speaking engagements assist participants in discovering new-found talents and skills that they can immediately apply in the workplace. Join her [Facebook Group, Strategic Thinking Summit Elites](#) for strategies you can implement to grow your business success and enjoy camaraderie with others entrepreneur members.