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# A Solid Retention Strategy » BY GLAIN ROBERTS-MCCABE

*A guided group approach to mentoring drives learning and more*



*71% of millennials will leave their organization within the next two years because they are dissatisfied with their leadership development opportunities.*

**Consulting firms like Bain, Deloitte and McKinsey** are reporting that millennials, leadership gaps and the need for coaching and mentoring are taking the headlines. Deloitte's 2016 Millennial Survey revealed that 71% of millennials will leave their organization within the next two years because they are dissatisfied with their leadership development opportunities.

But before you jump in and launch your mentoring or coaching programs, consider these challenges:

- 1 Inconsistent capability with mentors:** From a mentee's perspective, it's a bit of the "luck of the draw". Some mentors are great, others are lacking.
- 2 Lack of direction with mentees:** Many mentors complain mentees are not clear on their goals or role.
- 3 Mentoring is time intensive:** Busy leaders can only be stretched so thin, and work with so many one-on-one relationships.
- 4 Programs are front-end loaded:** Energy is invested into setting up matches and giving basic training. After that, matches are often left with loose check-ins and no clear program support. Many mentors shy away from taking on more mentees because they find it tough to finish a relationship.

This is not to say that mentoring should be thrown out as a leadership development tool. If you're looking to address leadership gaps through mentoring, a guided group mentoring process has a few key advantages over the traditional one-on-one approach.

Guided group mentoring allows one senior leader to mentor a small group of three to four individuals over a specific period of time on specific learning topics. The process can help eliminate gaps that exist in one-on-one mentoring and also strengthen a number of key challenges facing organizations including:

- 1 Broadening senior leader's perspective on talent:** Through a group process, your mentors will get a broader view of cross-functional talent, and attain a better sightline to how each mentee thinks and behaves.
- 2 Building internal networks:** In a group mentoring program, participants benefit not only from their interactions with the group mentor, but also from each other. As organizations get flatter, and internal networks and peer relationships become key, collaboration and influence skills will be crucial. Group mentoring enables both.
- 3 Guided learning:** By providing mentors with a specific coaching agenda, organizations benefit from increased consistency in the learning experience for participants. Plus, mentors are broadening their own knowledge and understanding as they take their mentees through the content.
- 4 Time efficient and effective:** Group mentoring programs can last between four and 12 months, with the average being six. Short bursts of group learning with time to practice skills in between allows for rich dialog and learning in context. This increases the "sticky factor" and is what drives sustainable change.

As organizations move more quickly, and time becomes more of a premium at all levels, learning and development must be proactively integrated with approaches to help leaders learn in real time. A guided group approach to mentoring not only drives learning but also increases collaboration, broadens perspectives, provides learning for both mentors and mentees and allows participants to explore and practice skills and behaviours that matter. **W**

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