

# Mentoring Matters

*How do you get on the radar at your workplace?*

*What do you do if your supervisor is not your champion?*

**Nicole Lichowit** is one of three Executive Roundtable members that Founder and President, **Glain Roberts-McCabe** asked to share their strategies with us for achieving recognition at work and getting on the map with the CEO.



*I'm really interested in advancing to the senior management ranks but my immediate supervisor isn't very good at promoting me to the CEO. I feel like I'm lacking a sponsor.*

*How can I make sure I get on the CEO's radar without alienating my manager?*

## Start from The Inside and Work Your Way Out

*You may not be able to control your boss, but you can control yourself. As far as your reputation goes, you are your own biggest asset. **Nicole Lichowit**, experienced VP Talent, offers the tools you need to make a big impact.*

Be clear in your purpose. What do you want the CEO and the broader leadership team to say about you? Be specific.

Make a list of everyone in the company who knows you and their level of influence across, up and down the organizational hierarchy. What is the size and mix of your circle of influence? Ask yourself:

- How would people describe me?
- Is the description consistent or does it vary?
- Is what people are saying true to how I see myself and how I want to be seen?
- Does my circle touch many areas of the business and people at multiple levels in the company?

Use this thought process to refine your thinking around strategies for becoming more visible in your company. The CEO does not have to 'see' you directly to have an impression of who you are.

## 1. Define Your Personal Brand

- What are the attributes that define your value?
- Who are you?
- What are you good at?
- What value do you bring to your job? Your team?
- Do you look, communicate and act in a manner which is consistent with the impression you are looking to make?
- Where are your gaps? What steps can you take to fill your gaps?

Draft your vision. Include how you want to be seen, heard and spoken about. Start each day with this vision and regularly reflect on how you are showing up at work. Make changes where you need to. Be consistent. Every interaction is an opportunity to strengthen your brand.

## 2. Engage your Supervisor

- Ask for time to talk about your career.
- Be clear that your intentions are focused on your personal development.
- Identify specifically how your supervisor can help you and *ask* for sponsorship. For example, ask to be on a project that exposes you to different types of work and different areas within the business. Ask for a positive internal reference.
- Ask your Supervisor for his/her point of view on what you can be doing and how s/he can help.
- Ask for a 'skip level' meeting with your Supervisor's direct leader to broaden your sources of feedback and guidance.

## 3. Start a Dialogue

- Read the company newsletter, intranet or CEO's blog and post a question.
- Ask a question at a Town Hall.
- Take note of a topic of interest you heard the CEO speak about and start a conversation about it when attending company events.
- Find topics which interest you and share them on Twitter and LinkedIn with thoughtful, relevant comments.
- Introduce yourself to people in different parts of the business to get to know them and learn about what they do, thereby expanding your knowledge of the company overall.

#### 4. Seek Mentorship

- Ask a leader outside of your direct reporting line for feedback and guidance. Ask for their sponsorship.
- Volunteer to participate in internal committees such as the United Way Campaign or the Health & Safety Committee.
- Find something you are passionate about and volunteer outside your organization. Ask for feedback and introduce your knowledge and learnings from this experience into your discussion, tweets and posts.

The CEO's radar is wide and deep. Sponsorship from multiple sources is important. So is your knowledge of the business and how you can contribute now and in future roles. Create opportunities to talk about yourself in the context of the business. Be ready.



**Nicole Lichowit**  
Board Director & Chair  
of the Human Resources  
Committee, Eva's Initiatives



Nicole Lichowit's experience spans twenty years in diverse industries including Technology, Financial Services, Pharmaceuticals, Healthcare and Retail. A business driven HR Executive and inspirational leader, she has defined and executed people strategy, designed and launched integrated leadership development and total rewards programs, led divestures and cultural integration strategies, driving change and mobilizing teams to enable business results.

Nicole holds a Master of Business Administration, Master of Social Work and two Bachelor Degrees in addition to certificates in Labor Relations from Queens, Executive Compensation from Global Governance Advisors and the H.R.C.C.C designation from McMaster University.

She is currently Board Director and Chair of the Human Resources Committee for Eva's Initiatives.

Nicole is married with one son and lives in Toronto.



**Glain Roberts-McCabe** is passionate about the art of leadership and supporting ambitious mid-career leaders. She created **The Executive Roundtable** to provide emerging leaders with the navigational skills, tools and savvy needed to manage increases in scope, pressure and leadership complexity.