

## Training and Mentoring:

# What's the difference?

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An organisation will utilise employee development programs to support staff to develop their skills to improve their communication and performance, build teams, increase employee engagement, and develop relationships.

As a professional and personal development tool, the main difference between training and mentoring is the nature of the relationship between the parties, and the approach of each. In a **training** environment, a trainer/course facilitator imparts knowledge and skills to train the participants a set program. A trainer guides the group through course content that is applied to the participants' job or career. There is a strong focus on attaining learning outcomes. A **mentoring** relationship is a personal one-to-one relationship that is supportive and developmental as the mentee brings their thoughts, challenges, and questions to obtain guidance from the mentor to assist them to reach their goals.

**Training** is an established form of employee professional development. Gaining acceptance is a structured **mentoring** programs an effective development opportunity. Each development program—training or mentoring — needs to meet both an individual's professional and personal goals, and be aligned to meet business objectives. The alignment of goals creates a synergy that keeps everyone working in the same direction and understanding their role. Each development program benefits the individual and the organisation in the short and long term.

What is the difference between training and mentoring? Let's commence by defining each process and its aim.

**Training** is usually conducted face-to-face or online by a specialised trainer/ course facilitator or supervisor as part of a structured learning program for a group of participants to obtain knowledge, and apply new skills to the workplace.

The aim of training is to narrow the gap between one's existing skills and the required skills by the organisation to accomplish a particular job responsibility. An organisation's learning and development objectives may be to:

## The aim of training

- ✓ **Gain knowledge** or information that will assist employees to perform well in a job. This may be an orientation program for new staff to welcome them into the organisation, understand the corporate culture, structure, and introduce them to the company; on boarding takes place over a longer time to enable new employees to gain knowledge, skills, and behaviours to become successful in their new role, or **update knowledge** on legislation such as occupational health and safety laws and security.
- ✓ **Learn skills** such as a new computer program, new organisational process, or self-management skills such as time or stress management.
- ✓ **Influence employee attitudes** that impacts on their behaviour such as motivation, team development, or diversity programs.
- ✓ **Develop interpersonal relationships** that include communication skills: verbal, written, and presentation skills, and leadership programs to inspire the team.

As a result of training, employee motivation develops, communication and staff relationships improve, and staff loyalty to the company is enhanced.

**Mentoring** in its traditional sense, enables a less experienced person — the mentee — to seek the advice, guidance and support of an experienced older and wiser colleague — the mentor. The aim of the mentoring process is to develop the mentee and reduce or remove barriers that hinder their success. The one-on-one mentoring relationship allows the mentee to ask questions that they may not feel comfortable asking in a training session. There is greater monitoring and accountability when working one-to-one on attaining goals.

## Benefits of training and mentoring

Being mentored by an experienced trainer provides a range of valuable professional and personal benefits:

- ✓ Helps create new ideas and ways of thinking
- ✓ Content tailored to an individual's needs and work application
- ✓ Personalised one-to-one support
- ✓ Acquire new skills and knowledge
- ✓ Develop individual strengths and overcome weaknesses
- ✓ Provide guidance on personal and professional development and career development
- ✓ A sense of fulfilment
- ✓ Increase in self-confidence
- ✓ Improved work performance
- ✓ Enhanced self-awareness
- ✓ Control of Career direction

### An organisation will benefit by:

- ✓ Job Succession Planning
- ✓ Motivated Staff
- ✓ Learning and Development Programs that compliment organisation goals



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