Client Spotlight on Mentoring: The City of London Police

Sharing our customers' stories will help show the many different benefits that your organization can gain from designing and implementing a formal mentoring program. Today, we're shining the spotlight on The City of London Police.

Challenge: Bringing Everyone Together in One Formal Mentoring Program
In the last several years, diversity has been an especially hot topic in the UK. John Awasoga, a project manager with The City of London Police and Vice Chair of the Black Police Association in The City of London, echoes this sentiment and notes that "it's expected that every single member of staff undertakes a diversity course and you're expected to update this course as well" every two or three years.

Back in 2005, The City of London Police found that there was quasi-mentoring going on in its organization in the form of advice and coaching. None of this was part of a structured program and most of this "ad hoc mentoring" was happening among white male staff members--not female staff or ethnic staff. The City of London Police decided it wanted to develop and implement a formal mentoring program that would engage everyone on the staff--the majority as well as the minorities.

Solution: Understanding Everyone's Needs & Achieving "Buy-In"
Part of the solution involved discussing the needs of everyone who was likely to be affected by a mentoring program. After these discussions, it was decided that a smaller pilot mentoring program with a focus on diversity would be the best approach, since success with the pilot program would help achieve "buy-in" from the whole organization.

Management Mentors sat down and developed a strategy and a document of what people in The City of London Police wanted from mentoring. Management Mentors brought in a focus group of high-ranking officers, including women and people of color. Recognizing that diversity awareness was a key issue, Management Mentors developed a mentoring program with a focus on diversity, conducted a blanket advertising campaign to let the whole force know about the pilot program, and recruited volunteers. In this campaign, eight mentorees and nine mentors were selected (there was an extra mentor as a backup, in case a pairing didn't work out).

Results: Involved Program Managers, Happy Mentors & Mentorees
The program launched in early 2006, with a specific focus on diversity. Management Mentors trained the Mentors and Mentorees and paired them up. In addition, Management Mentors trained the Program Managers. The City of London Police's mentoring program enjoyed great success, in part due to the involvement of its Program Managers, like John Awasoga.

John says that one of his main goals was to make sure the pairs actually met and adhered to the contracts they put together. He says, "When you put something together that's new, if you leave it alone, you can easily revert to 'well, I won't bother doing that today, I won't bother attending' and it can just drift apart. So what we felt we had to do was just to encourage people to make sure that they did meet and also try and support them by saying if you have any issues then you can call on us as managers to resolve them."

The mentoring program was a success as mentors and mentorees shared experiences, learned about diverse backgrounds, and found a safe forum to discuss pertinent issues. As one mentoree said, "This is very good. I'm very happy to have someone to go to and talk about things I cannot talk to my line manager about."

Would you like to learn more about how a formal mentoring program can benefit your organization? Call us at 617-789-4622. We're currently conducting demos on our latest mentoring software product--Mentoring *Complete*--which is making the process of starting and maintaining a mentoring program that much easier.Would you like to see Mentoring*Complete* in action? Schedule your free demo now.

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