



Benchmark Report 2020

What mentees need, what mentors offer and benefits derived by both



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MENTORING

BACKGROUND

Early mentoring research¹ provided a framework for mentoring functions still used today. Mentors can offer career functions - all the mentoring behaviours that help a mentee 'climb the career ladder'; and psychosocial functions the behaviours that enhance the mentee's self-confidence, self-efficacy and personal growth. It is generally assumed that mentees are looking for a little of both, and mentors are expected to be able to offer a little of both.

Few published studies have explored individual mentoring goals, or on the flip side, what mentors think they actually have to offer.

1. Kram, K.E. (1985). *Mentoring at Work*. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman



In contrast, much has been studied and written about the positive impacts of mentoring for mentees.



Benefits for mentees include more promotions, higher salaries, greater career satisfaction, career commitment and job satisfaction that non-mentored counterparts².

Less attention has been given to benefits received by mentors. The research that has been done, suggests that mentors report outcomes such as improved job performance, career success, recognition by others, and a sense of personal satisfaction.

2. Allen, T.D., Eby, L., Poteet, M.L., Lentz, E., & Lima, L. (2004). Career benefits associated with mentoring for proteges: A Meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89, 127-136.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Art of Mentoring's 2020 research project was a benchmarking exercise across our mentoring platform to reveal what mentees want, what mentors think they can and want to offer and what both parties actually get from their mentoring relationship.

We drew on anonymised data from 13,000+ mentoring applications and surveys completed by 1,500+ mentors and mentees. Because many of our clients use our mentoring application and survey templates, we were able to use data from commonly worded questions. The diverse nature of the programs, including graduate, early career, mid-career, late career cohorts, means the mentees and mentors in the sample are of all age groups, generations and gender. In-company and professional membership programs are included, therefore a variety of professions, industries and thousands of employing organisations are represented. There is a bias to white-collar employees in the sample, but it is not exclusively so.

This report details the themes and insights we discovered.



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INSIGHT 1: Mentors want to offer more than career and skills development

Mentees were asked to make a selection from four types of mentoring that they were seeking. Mentors were shown the same four and asked which they felt most equipped to offer.

The career functions of mentoring were most often selected overall by both groups, but mentees were even more inclined to career functions than mentors. Mentors were much more likely than mentees to select “General support and encouragement” – a psychosocial function.

	Mentees	Mentors	Total
Strengthen management and leadership capabilities	40.3%	35.9%	38.1%
Developing my career	32.3%	24.3%	28.3%
General support and encouragement	9%	23.0%	15.9%
Building my network	13.3%	2.9%	13.3%

Mentors don't know yet what their mentee goals will be when they complete their applications, so this may explain mentor emphasis on a broader or bigger picture. It could also be that mentors have been in mentoring relationships before, so they understand the role of support and encouragement better than mentees.

Regardless of why, this finding highlights the potential for a misalignment of expectations, between mentors and their mentees, of the role of the mentor and the subject of mentoring.

A conversation at the outset to explore what each party wants and expects is absolutely necessary, as we always suggest.

Mentees that take the conversation deeper will get so much more from a mentoring program. Mentors sometimes get frustrated with short-term 'now' problems that mentees bring to them, when they want to have more of a lasting impact and help their mentees be the best they can be.

“I’m unsure about the next steps in my career and would like someone to turn to for advice about this and bounce ideas off. I hope to gain insight from someone who has worked their way up the career ladder and has learnt how to negotiate and manage career challenges.”
(Mentee)

“I can listen, deliver honest feedback, motivate and inspire, establish mutual respect, and be open and present.”
(Mentor)



INSIGHT 2: Top 10 competencies are the same but in a different order

Applications provide a dropdown list of about 40 competencies. Mentees are asked to select a limited number that they would like from a mentor; mentors are asked to select a limited number that they believe are their strengths and/or could offer a mentee. The top 10 selected were the same for mentors and mentees. But they were not in the same order. We show below the rank order of the items most often selected.

Top 10 competencies	Mentors	Mentees	Total
Understanding self/ strengths/ self-motivation	1	2	1
Managing relationships	2	3	2
Developing career plans	3	1	3
Working towards development goals	5	4	4
Communication/Presentation skills	7	5	5
Developing self-confidence	6	8	6
Understanding organisational politics	4	10	7
Project Management	9	6	8
Problem Analysis & Problem Solving	8	9	9
Influencing	10	6	10

Not surprisingly, given the previous insight, mentees most often selected “Developing career plans”. This was also relatively popular for mentors. Mentees tended to select skills to develop (e.g. project management), rather than “understanding organisational politics” and “developing self- confidence” which were more favoured by mentors.

Again, the issue here is ensuring that mentors and mentees thoroughly explore together not only what mentees initially thought they were looking for, but also what mentors could offer them that they might not have expected at the time of completing an application.

Top 5 Competencies Selected by Mentor and Mentees



MENTORS

Understanding self/
strengths/ self-motivation

Managing relationships

Developing career plans

Understanding
organisational politics

Working towards
development goals

Developing self-confidence

Communication/
Presentation skills

Problem Analysis &
Problem Solving

Project Management

Influencing



MENTEES

Developing career plans

Understanding self/
strengths/ self-motivation

Managing relationships

Working towards
development goals

Communication/
Presentation skills

Project Management

Influencing

Developing
self-confidence

Problem Analysis &
Problem Solving

Understanding
organisational politics

INSIGHT 3: Mentees & mentors get much more than they expect

The data overpage is from surveys completed at the end of a mentoring program. Both mentors and mentees were asked to rate the degree of impact the mentoring experience has had across a range of items.

Mentees come into mentoring looking for career advancement, expanded networks and skills development, as we saw from their application answers. The biggest program impacts on mentees are on personal learning and growth, self-awareness and confidence, more meaning and purpose and increased likelihood of staying in profession or industry.

It's also a very developmental experience for mentors – they benefit from much more learning and growth than they would have expected, as well as positive impact on wellbeing, leadership capacity and on professional reputation. Many mentors reported being surprised at how beneficial they found the program.

Both mentors and mentees were asked to rate the degree of impact the mentoring experience has had across a range of items.

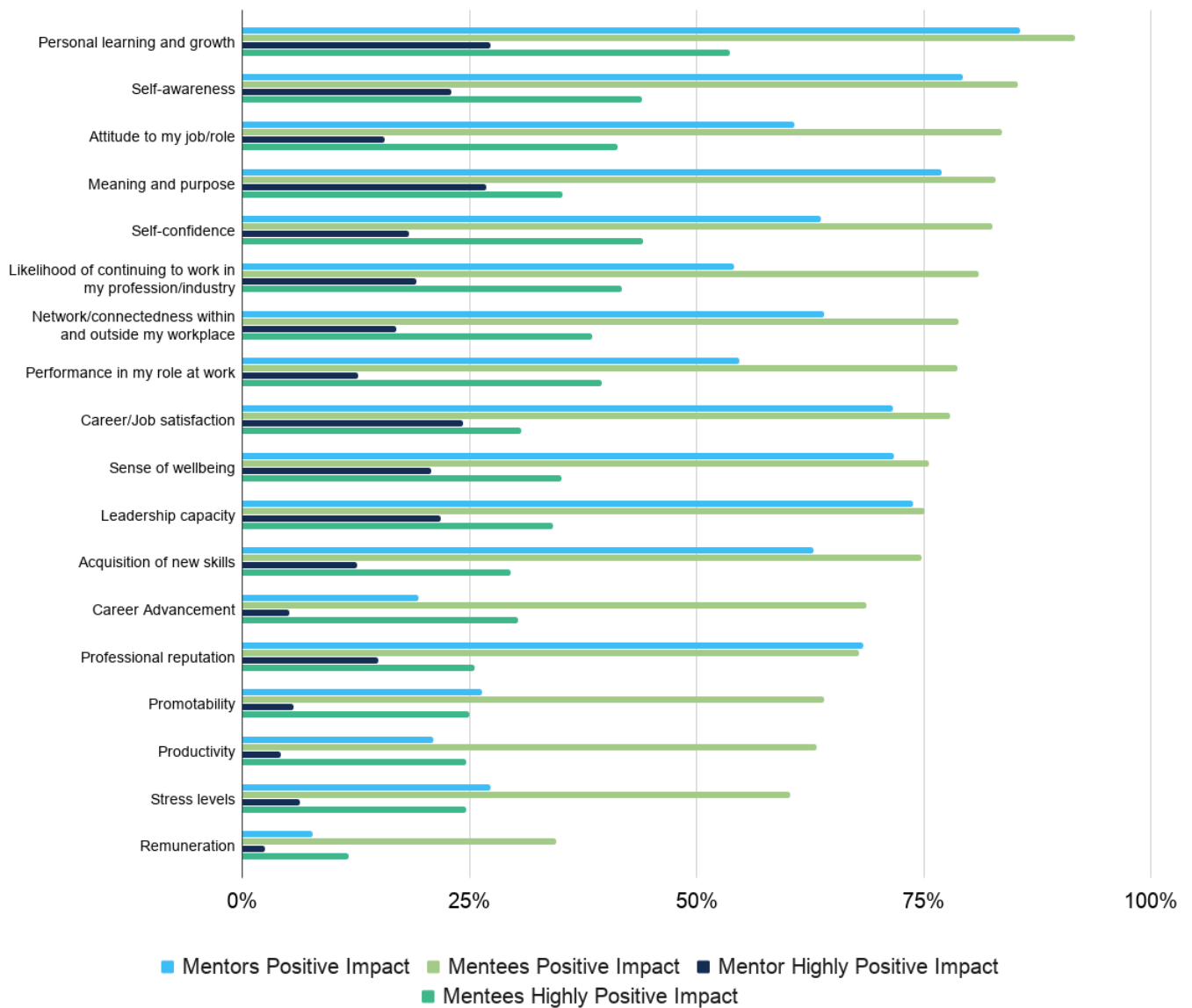


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The Impact of Mentoring

IMPACT OF MENTORING PROGRAM ON MENTORS' AND MENTEES'

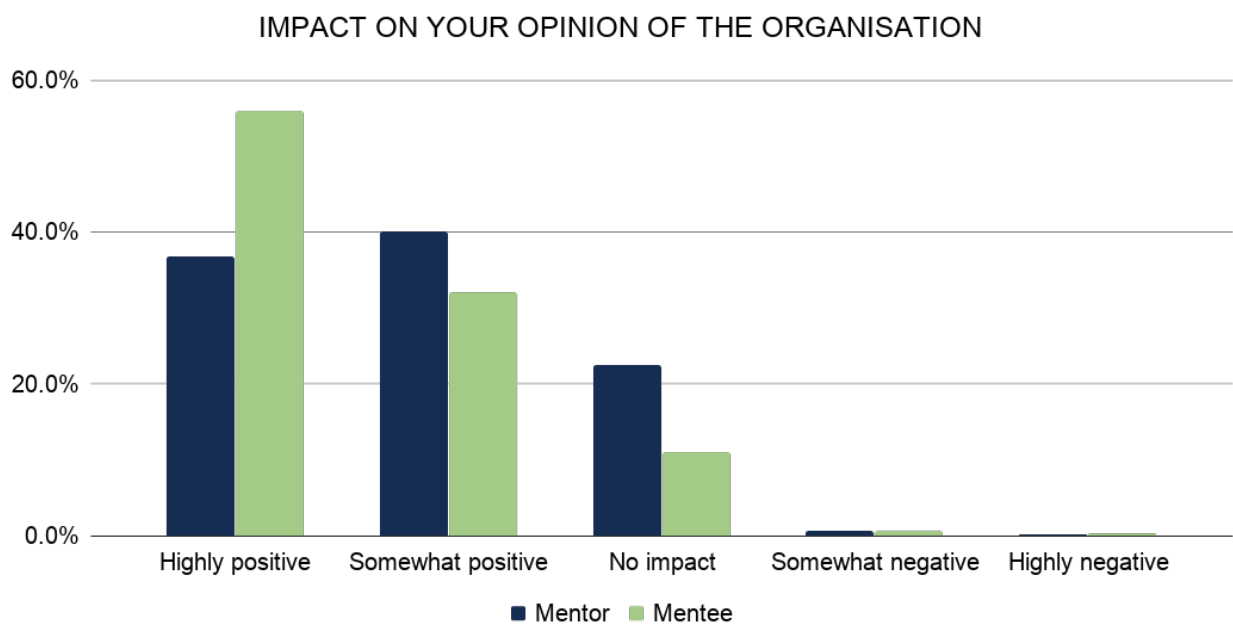


It's also a very developmental experience for mentors – they benefit from much more learning and growth than they would have expected, as well as positive impact on wellbeing, leadership capacity and on professional reputation.



INSIGHT 4: The mentoring experience positively impacts organisational reputation, too, for mentors and mentees

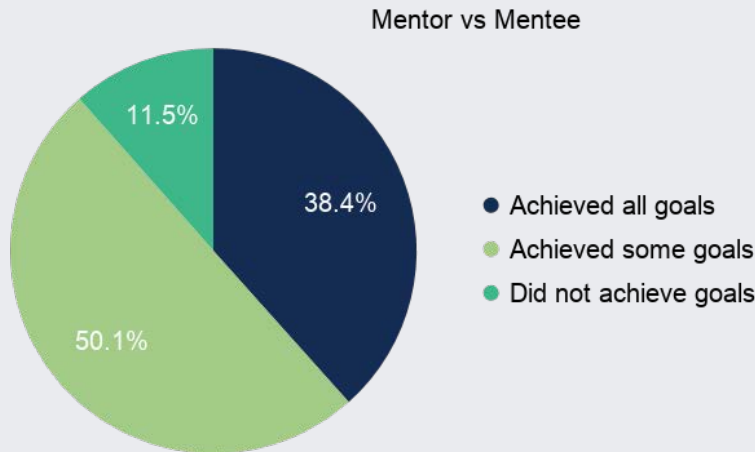
There are brand-enhancing benefits of running formal mentoring programs. Mentees, in particular, are grateful to their organisation for the mentoring opportunity, but mentors see the benefits too.



“Overall the program is a great initiative from (Industry Association name)” (Mentee)

INSIGHT 5: Well-designed and well-run mentoring programs get very strong results

We look for high mentee goal achievement, high satisfaction levels with the match and the program, as well as high net promoter scores. Sometimes unplanned goals are also achieved.



*“Goals were achieved, they just weren’t the ones she thought she was working towards at the beginning of the program.”
(Mentor)*

A measure of match effectiveness is satisfaction with the matched partner:

We look for high mentee goal achievement, high satisfaction levels with the match and the program, as well as high net promoter scores. We would normally expect high satisfaction levels with the program, amongst both mentors and mentees. the match and the program, as well as high net promoter scores.



90% of mentees and 82% of mentors were satisfied with their mentoring relationship

Whilst infrequent, dissatisfaction is typically due to lack of engagement by the other party

Mentor and Mentee's Comments

"We had an excellent connection, the mentee was extremely keen to learn, appreciative, and drove the relationship. "

Mentor



"Dissatisfied because I felt that the onus was always on myself to initiate contact and follow-up."

Mentor



"I could not have asked for a better mentor. I don't think she will understand the impact that she has had on me fulfilling my goals in such a short period of time."

Mentee



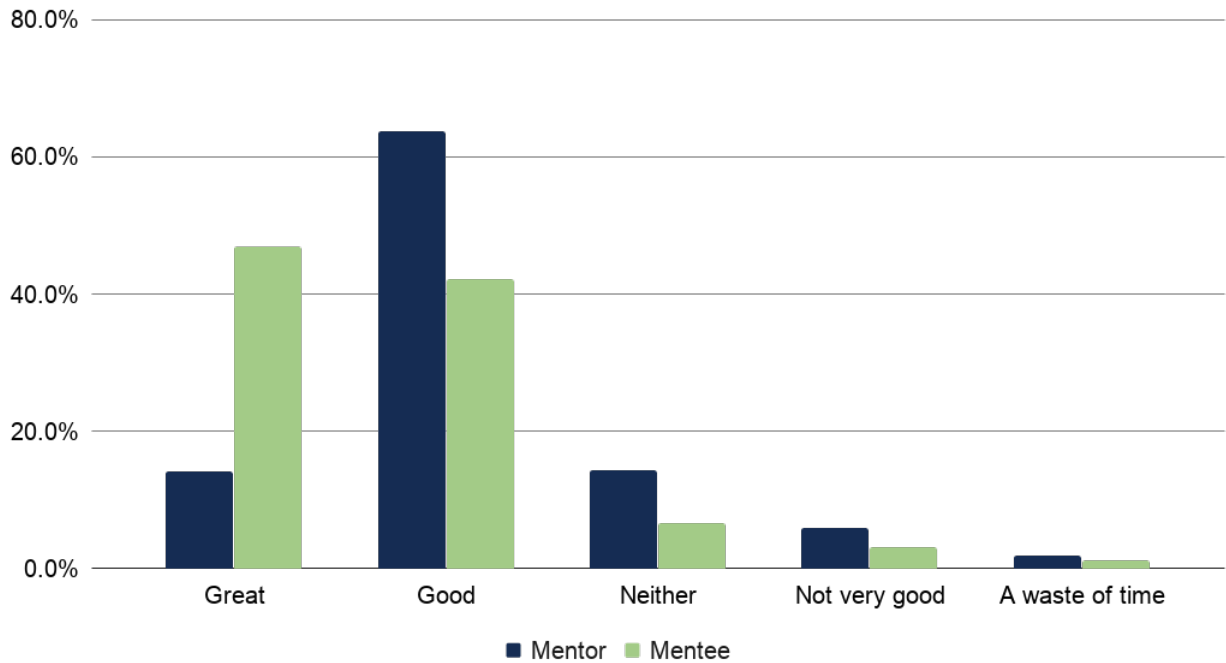
"Any failings were probably as a result of my ability to find the time to meet with my Mentor and implement his suggestions

Mentee



The Mentoring Experience

We would normally expect high satisfaction levels with the program amongst both mentors and mentees.



- 85% rated their experience positively
- 47% of mentees rated it as “one of the best things I’ve ever done”
- Dissatisfaction is typically due to lack of engagement by the other party



“It was a very rewarding experience. We are quite different people but got on wonderfully and had some really great conversations.”

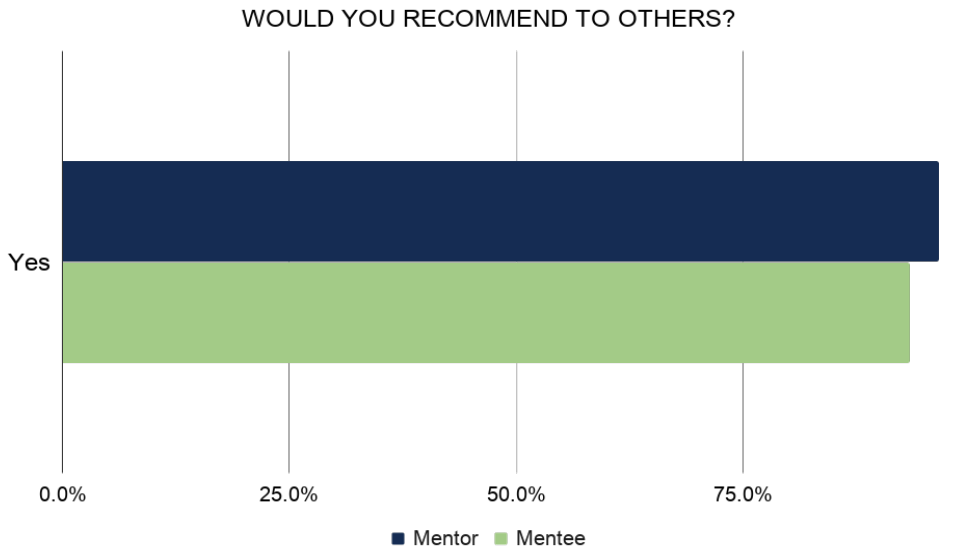
Mentor

“Having someone to learn from and to give an experienced yet objective opinion on career questions has been invaluable to me. I feel very grateful that I was given the opportunity to be included in this program.”

Mentee



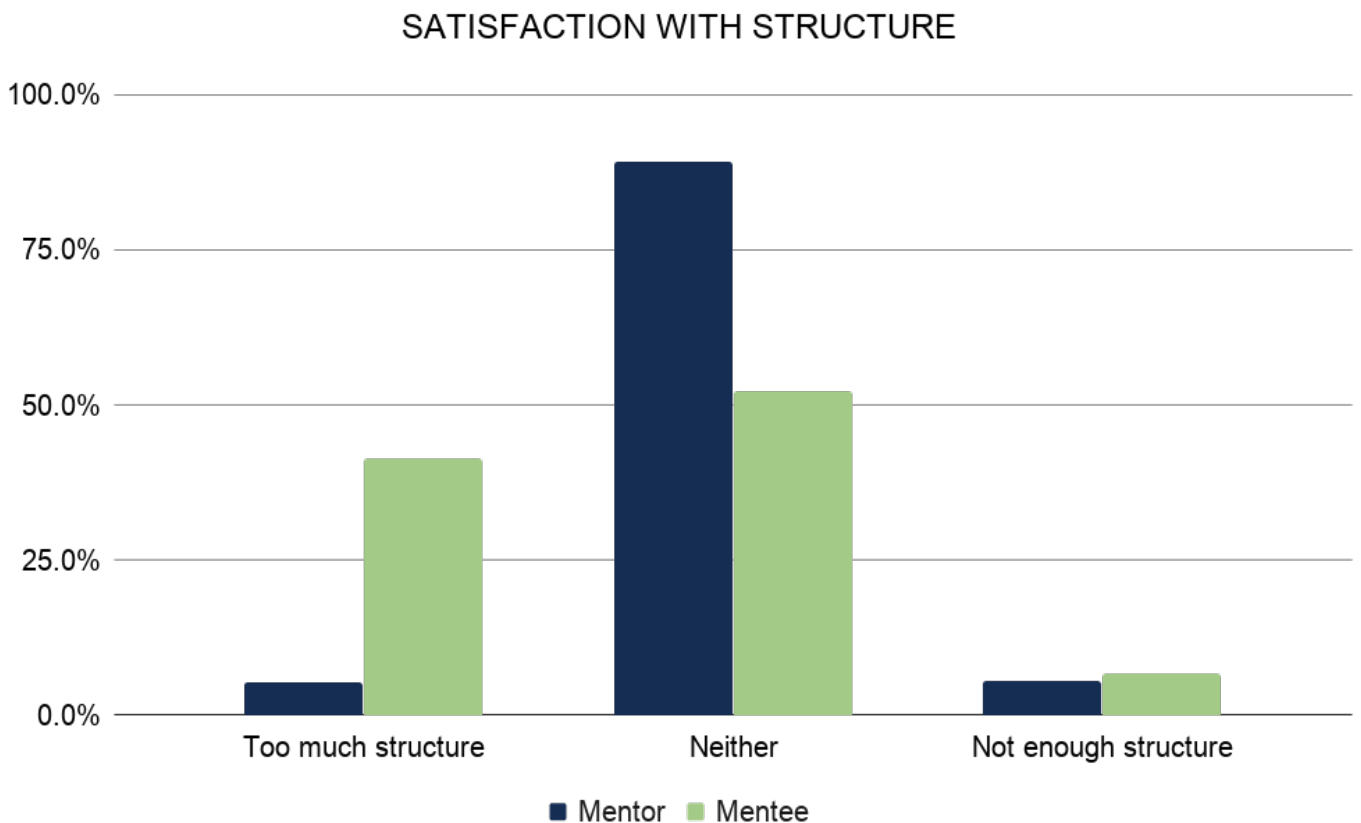
High net promoter scores



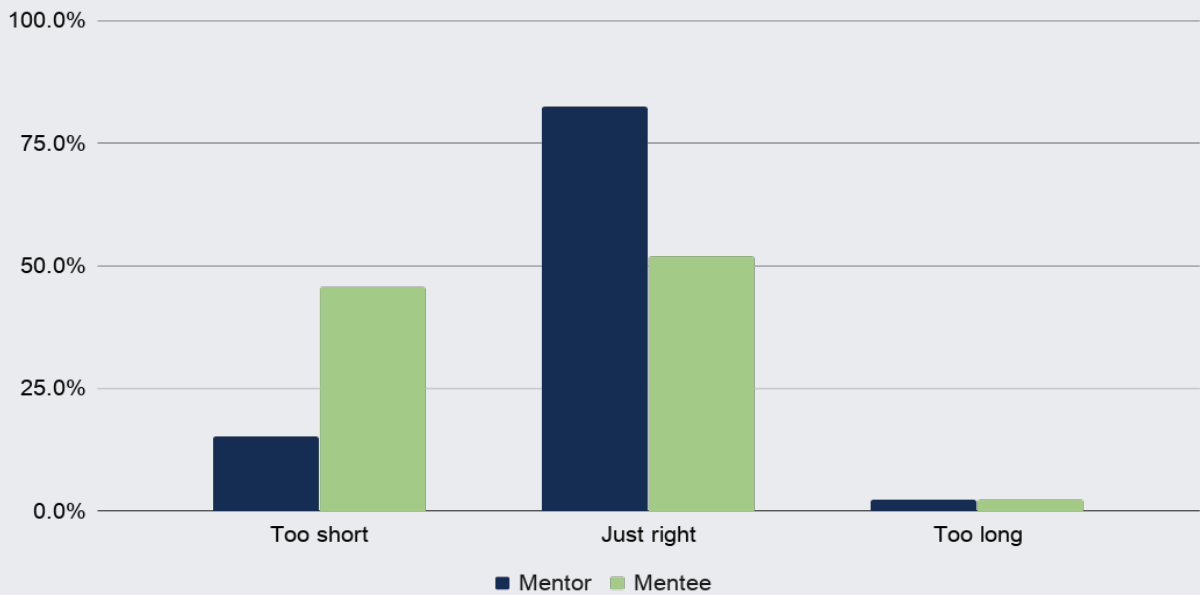
- Often people who did not have the best experience themselves still recommend the program.
- Some mentees express regret at the end that they did not engage more.

INSIGHT 6: Mentees want less structure and longer engagement than mentors

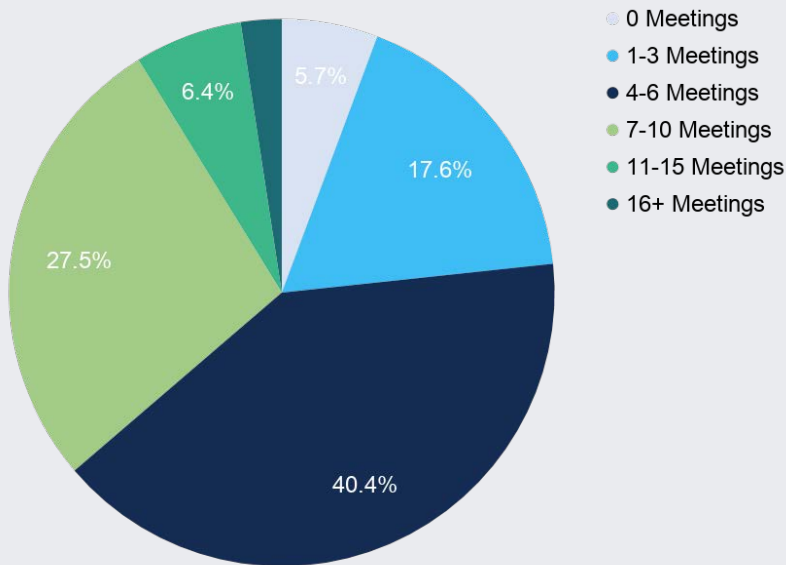
Many mentors are first-timers who need more structure and support. Without it, they can feel out of their depth and don't know where or how to start. Program lengths varied across the sample. Some were less than six months, which we believe is too short.



SATISFACTION WITH PROGRAM LENGTH



Number of mentoring sessions



Across the programs pairs had, on average, 4-6 mentoring sessions. This tallies with the finding that some found it too short – if the first couple of sessions are dedicated to getting to know one another, then less than six sessions is not optimal. We recommend contact at least monthly, preferably more at the start.



To sum up

- Mentees come in with a strong career/ skills focus but gain much more in ‘soft’ outcomes
- Mentors see their role more broadly as one of general support, than do mentees
- Well-structured programs should achieve high goal achievement and satisfaction levels
- Mentoring enhances organisational reputation amongst participants and can have strong and lasting impact for both mentors and mentees.

About Art of Mentoring

Art of Mentoring is a specialist mentoring firm with an evidence-based methodology that has helped over 20,000 people become better mentors, have more successful mentoring relationships and run more effective mentoring programs.

We do this through world-class educational materials and skill building workshops, smart technology and expert consulting. Our people love mentoring and bring a unique passion to their work.

We've worked with clients all over the world to successfully implement mentoring initiatives to create more effective onboarding of new employees, better engagement and retention, higher productivity, greater collaboration and

stronger leadership in organisations.

Art of Mentoring is the Australasian representative of the Coaching and Mentoring International network, founded by Professor David Clutterbuck. The company has conducted and supported many research projects investigating best practice for mentoring and brings this expertise to its clients.

To learn more about mentoring, download free resources and find out how to make mentoring work in your company, please visit our website:

www.artofmentoring.net



About the Authors



Melissa Richardson

Managing Director of Art of Mentoring

Melissa is one of Australia's leading experts in mentoring and coaching, having worked in the field for over twenty years. She has designed and implemented mentoring programs across dozens of public and private sector organisations and has trained and worked with thousands of mentors and mentees. Her research into effective mentoring practice, mentoring relationships and emerging mentoring trends has global influence and is built into Art of Mentoring's suite of offerings. Melissa is a global assessor for ISMCP awards (International Standards for Mentoring and Coaching Programs at EMCC, European Mentoring and Coaching Council) and leads a global working group that accredits and recognises outstanding mentoring program managers.



Gina Meibusch

Client Service Delivery Manager

With diverse qualifications in engineering, psychology and project management and experience in both the private and public sectors, Gina brings hard and soft skills to Mentoring Program Design and management. She was instrumental in designing and setting up the AWRA eMentoring Program for women in the Australian mining sector, as well as programs for school-aged children to build confidence, competence and connections.



Lars Sorhus

CTO of Art of Mentoring

Ex-M&C Saatchi and eBay, Lars set up and ran his own software development company before joining Art of Mentoring. He is passionate about technology, innovation, networking and learning.

Lars drives our technology team, managing our platform and overseeing future development and improvement.

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