



# Mentoring: Effective Programs

## Yield Successful Employees

The industry digs into career development programs to improve employee engagement.

**M**

ention the word mentoring and you might get some eye rolls — the practice is not always viewed in a favorable light. All it takes is one bad mentoring experience to turn a person off the whole idea. And the risk of that is high, since there are extensive challenges from start to finish that can prevent an effective, rewarding outcome.

“The most toxic thing that can happen to a mentoring program before it even starts is a previous bad mentoring experience,” says Joanne Kamens, Ph.D., executive director, Addgene, as well as founder of the Massachusetts chapter of the Association for Women in Science and director of mentoring for the Boston chapter of the Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association. “Both mentors and mentees get nothing out of a poorly designed program, and will not be eager to participate in one again anytime soon.”

However, studies prove that companies with effective mentoring programs have more successful employees, and therefore the business thrives. And in the complex pharma industry, mentorship is crucial to career development and the company benefits from an increase in employee engagement, skills, and loyalty.

According to PwC’s report, *Managing Tomorrow’s People: The future of work to 2020*, CEOs are facing their most critical leadership challenge today, which is to keep costs under control while improving employee engagement.

Globally, the critical shortage of skills in some markets, combined with an excess of well-trained but possibly disenchanted work-

### FAST FACT

**80% OF THE U.S. WORKFORCE IS NOT SATISFIED OR FEELS DISENGAGED, OR SIMPLY WEARY, AT WORK.**

Source: The Pyramid Resource Group

ers in others, makes the cost-effective deployment and management of talent absolutely critical. Availability of key skills is the most pressing concern for industry CEOs, PwC reports.

And, according to DJ Mitsch, president of The Pyramid Resource Group, since the life sciences make up 25% of the workforce, it is important to maintain and retain valuable talent.

“That’s one in four people,” Ms. Mitsch says. “And if they aren’t getting career development at one company, they will migrate to a place where they will have developmental opportunities and programs.”

While advocates say mentoring is a cost-effective way — certainly cheaper than having to recruit and train new hires frequently — to increase employee engagement and improve skills, creating a program can be difficult.

One of the biggest challenges is often getting the program off the ground. According to Carol Yamartino, principal of the Yamartino Group, building an effective program takes time and effort; a company can’t expect to flip a switch and have a well-run mentoring program in place.

“It takes time to build trust and to design



**“Mentoring programs often fall apart because of lack of execution and commitment of the sponsors.”**

**DJ MITSCH / The Pyramid Resource Group**

a sustainable environment with accountability that connects back to the business,” Ms. Yamartino says. “If a company views mentoring as a nice-to-have or as a peripheral item to check off a box, the program is not going to be successful.”

Implementation is the most difficult step for companies to take, and some companies may be hesitant to invest if their employees appear uncertain about participating.



“For a mentoring program to work, everyone needs to take it seriously and make a complete commitment.”

**DENISE DUCA** / Acorda Therapeutics

“Mentoring programs often fall apart because of a lack of execution and commitment,” Ms. Mitsch says. “There needs to be full-on engagement from every level of the organization, and the top layer of leaders should be concerned if they don’t have people raising their hands or lining up for mentoring sessions.”

### What’s Driving the Mentoring Trend?

Reports show that the life-sciences industry is realizing the benefits of mentoring by building on key talent within the organization.

Many companies have launched internal programs, while others encourage external opportunities. Some programs focus on underserved populations, such as women and other minorities; others have created innovative programs for transferring the benefits of senior leadership to junior members of the team through more informal opportunities.

“Ensuring high levels of engagement is a critical success driver for our organization,” says Cathy Rongione, director, learning and development at Millennium: The Takeda Oncology Company. “Maintaining a culture where mentoring is fostered allows our employees to build internal and external relationships that broaden their thinking, open their minds to new possibilities, and build relationships that ultimately support them in realizing our vision of aspiring to cure cancer.”

At Acorda Therapeutics, the driver behind implementing a mentoring program was to identify the future leadership in the company and give individuals an opportunity to learn about other areas of the company that they would not normally be exposed to.

For example, an employee at a senior-management level might sit in on an audit com-

### Industry Poised to Mentor, Invest in Employees

According to PwC, 90% of pharmaceutical and life-sciences CEOs are planning to increase their investments in creating and developing a skilled workforce. Almost 75% of pharmaceutical and life-sciences CEOs say they are making changes to the ways they manage talent.

▼ Source: PwC. For more information, visit [pwc.com](http://pwc.com).

mittee call and experience a learning opportunity at a very high level or noncommercial mentees are encouraged to attend and present at national sales meetings.

“For employees in clinical operations or finance to get a glimpse into sales and marketing and learn more about these functions provides them with a more global view of how a company operates,” says Denise Duca, senior VP of human resources, at Acorda Therapeutics.

Sometimes cost-cutting measures within a company can prompt a mentoring program as a way to offer career development benefits when other incentives may not be feasible.

Alternatively, rapid growth can forge the need for mentoring as well, as is the case with Regeneron, which has doubled in size, twice, in the last several years.

“Growth brings opportunity,” says Fred Polirer, associate director, learning and organizational development, at Regeneron.


“It is no longer possible to fit all of our scientists in a room for a fierce but friendly debate,” he says. “Although we still hold monthly Friday afternoon B&B meetings where a packed house listens to talks on the latest scientific topics and participates in



“Companies can’t expect to flip a switch and have a well-run mentoring program in place, because they take time to build.”

**CAROL YAMARTINO** / Yamartino Group





“Mentoring has proven to be an absolute necessity for developing leaders.”

SANDRA SIMS-WILLIAMS / Publicis Groupe



“We are all competing for top talent in this industry and the very best want to be where they will learn, grow, and maximize their potential.”

JOSHUA MITCHELL / Regeneron Pharmaceuticals

Q&A sessions over beer and pizza, we have implemented additional programs to make sure we are developing our people in a rigorous manner.”

For example, this past year Regeneron implemented an after work-hours program guided by Senior VP of Research and Development Sciences Neil Stahl, Ph.D., and Senior VP of Research Drew Murphy, Ph.D., at Regeneron Laboratories. The two senior-level scientists committed themselves to a 12-week, after-hours program mentoring 50 emerging leaders on the topic of critical decision-making.

“These two and a half-hour sessions were very challenging, and all participants were pushed to improve their thinking,” Mr. Polirer says. “They explored how to become more aware of their own assumptions and biases and improved their ability to evaluate arguments and draw more accurate conclusions. Many of our executives from our clinical and R&D groups supported this initiative as guest lecturers and facilitators, which demonstrated their commitment to growing our internal talent.”

Publicis Groupe was driven by its high percentage of female employees (55% of

57,500 people worldwide) to create a women’s network focused on attracting, retaining, and developing women.

“Across all industries, we know for sure that women need and desire mentoring, and so VivaWomen! was born out of both necessity and demand,” says Sandra Sims-Williams, chief diversity officer, Publicis Groupe. “Historically, women haven’t held leadership roles in many industries until recently, and we wanted to give women a forum to advise and share stories of challenge and reward, as well as motivate and inspire others.”


Publicis has found that when women don’t develop relationships internally their chance of progressing in their career is limited.

“Mentoring has proven to be an absolute necessity for developing leaders,” Ms. Sims-Williams says.

### Mentoring Effectively

To overcome the preconception that mentoring is a “waste of time,” companies need to fully support the program and design it thoughtfully, making sure it includes accountability, feedback, monitoring, and the flexibility and ability to make changes along the way.

“The real key to effective mentoring in any format is to instill a little bit of formality into the experience,” Dr. Kamens says. “Just get-



“Mentoring allows us to continue to develop our talent to challenge themselves and the organization to be the best that it can be.”

CATHY RONGIONE / Millennium:  
The Takeda Oncology Company

ting together and having coffee doesn’t cut it; you can do that with a friend and it may feel good to get stuff off your chest, but that is not growing through mentoring. The key to a strong mentoring experience is to set goals, meet regularly, and create an accountability mechanism for both mentors and mentees that enables them to reach their goals.”

At Acorda Therapeutics, program leaders try to balance the format to provide both structure and flexibility.

“Some structure at the beginning is important to get everyone started, but flexibility is key so that mentees and mentors can develop appropriate learning opportunities specific for them,” Ms. Duca says.

According to Ms. Yamartino, it is important to design an internal mentoring program that has tools, structure, and accountability.

“Companies can’t just throw people together with no direction,” she says. “Whether it’s a mentor circle or a one-to-one program, it must be clear what the roles and expectations are and what success will look like.”

This creates a safe environment for rich conversation to take place both in and outside of the mentoring environment.

“For a program to be successful, a company can’t just set it up and walk away,” Dr. Kamens adds. “Programs that are run well develop employees who grow in their career and develop new skills, which shows the company that mentoring is worth it.”

However, structured programs don’t work for everyone or every company. Vitae Pharmaceuticals, voted one of the best places to work by The Scientist magazine, strives to keep its mentoring program unstructured and infor-

mal because that best fits the corporate culture and the needs of its scientists.

“Mentoring is about individual learning and growth, which means participant needs will vary,” says CEO Jeff Hatfield. “By following a personal, flexible approach, we find a less formal program works best for our open, team-based environment.”

Mr. Hatfield says the informal approach used at Vitae allows mentoring across functions. For example, a master’s level biologist was very interested in expanding his skill set and learning more in the area of business development.

“He was paired with our chief business officer,” Mr. Hatfield says. “He was given the opportunity to shadow her and attend various internal as well as external meetings. He attended the International BIO meeting where he participated in a workshop specifically designed for those new to business development. He also sat through and observed meetings with potential partners.”

### Benefits of Effective Mentoring

At Regeneron, the company has already



“MassCONNECT is a mentoring platform that helps entrepreneurs define the market opportunity and provides life-science veterans with a chance to give back.”

JOHN HALLINAN  
MassBIO

### HBA Identifies Six Key Principles for Career Development



Laurie Cooke, CEO of the Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association (HBA), offers six clear principles based on recent research to identify best practices for career development.

“We asked women what helpful

programs their companies offer now and what is missing in their organization. In addition we asked what could have been offered earlier in their career to make it easier for them to advance and be the best leader they could,” Ms. Cooke says.

**1. Find your passion.** If you are early in your career, stop and think about what you are passionate about and try to build your career around those interests.

“Having an internal women’s network or external organization such as the HBA to serve as a helpful guide to you along your career is important,” Ms. Cooke says. “Please remember what you need today may not be what you need tomorrow.”

According to the HBA’s survey, senior women reported that as they moved up in their careers they needed more breadth and flexibility.

“Early in one’s career there is a tendency to become an expert and have a deep and narrow view,” she says. “As leaders become more senior, they recognize they need to have the breadth and the flexibility to deal with change and see

ahead and help other people along. All of which links back to finding one’s passion.”

**2. Get exposure.** Build a network of colleagues who you can tap as a resource. Ms. Cooke advises that it’s important that the people in your network know what your interests are and what capabilities you have.

“Networking is not just about trading business cards or having lunch with someone, it’s really about understanding people’s capabilities and what they do,” she explains. “The HBA encourages women and men to build their network before they need it. Building that network provides exposure, internally and externally. Associations like the HBA can help people get to know who you are and what you can do so when opportunities come up, they think of you.”

**3. Enroll sponsors and mentors.** Sponsors and mentors are incredibly important.

“Having someone who sits at the decision table bring forward your name is a true career booster,” Ms. Cooke says. “A mentor helps you navigate your career and a sponsor is willing to put his or her political capital on the line and speak about you.”

**4. Be proactive.** According to Ms. Cooke, so much about accelerated career progression is not sitting back and waiting for someone to tap you on the shoulder.

“If you know where your passion is, have created a network, and have sponsors and mentors, you’re doing all the right things,” she says. “Now you need to speak up and be proactive. Let the people who can help you know where your passions are and what you’re good at. It’s only fair to them that they know what it is that you want. So if you think that a potential promotion or

opportunity is something that you’d be good at and would be good for the company, you should put your hand up and put yourself forward.”

Organizations, such as the HBA, provide great opportunities for individuals to put their hand up, step in, lean in, and get additional experience and expertise to build one’s portfolio.

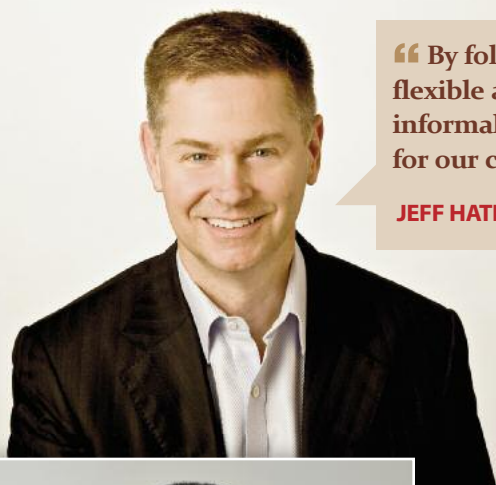
“The skills you gain from volunteering with organizations such as the HBA give you the essential experiences needed to secure whatever it is you put your hand up for,” Ms. Cooke says.

**5. Be flexible.** “You need to be flexible so you can navigate around new challenges, which allows you to learn and benefit from the new experience,” Ms. Cooke says. “My personal piece of advice is fail fast. In the HBA, we have a very creative and collaborative environment where we are always trying new things. And if something doesn’t work, we try and fail fast so it allows us to move more quickly to the next opportunity. Many of us have been conditioned to avoid failure but my perspective is to embrace it and I would challenge you to consider that if you’re not failing enough, you’re not innovating enough.”

**6. Lead change.** “If you really want to move ahead in your career, you need to be seen as a leader,” Ms. Cooke says. “Change is happening all around us, so whenever you have the opportunity to step into a team or to lead a team that’s going through change, you start to be seen as a person who can lead others and that’s an incredible addition to one’s toolkit. This also drives your exposure, your network, and shapes how people think about you.”

▼ For more information about the HBA and its mission — to further the advancement and impact of women and healthcare worldwide — go to [hbanet.org](http://hbanet.org).





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JEFF HATFIELD / Vitae Pharmaceuticals



“Regeneron has implemented programs to make sure we are developing our people in a rigorous manner.”

FRED POLIRER / Regeneron Pharmaceuticals



“The key to a strong mentoring experience is to set goals, meet regularly, and create accountability.”

DR. JOANNE KAMENS / Addgene  
@jkamens

experienced the benefits of implementing a mentoring program.

“The company wins because it enjoys an increase in both organizational capability and employee commitment and engagement,” says Joshua Mitchell, manager, learning and organizational development, at Regeneron. “We are all competing for top talent in this industry and the very best want to be where they will learn, grow, and maximize their potential.”

Within the last 18 months, Regeneron developed a custom Bio-Pharma Business Simulation course, which was supported by the entire executive leadership team.

“Almost 100 of our emerging leaders have attended the three-day course where they collaborated with others across the company in running a business very similar to Regeneron,” Mr. Polirer says. “They competed in teams making decisions from discovery through manufacturing and commercialization. The biggest benefit of this program was that each attendee gained a deep appreciation for the contribution of the various interdependent parts of the drug development process. This is such a complex and challenging business, anything we can do to increase communication and collaboration is well worth the investment.”

Publicis found that its mentoring program for women brought new vitality and an increased motivation for learning into the corporation.

“Women who participated in our Viva-Women! program created a new energy among both mentors and mentees,” Ms. Sims-Williams says. “Additionally, they expressed enthusiasm and interest for more programming, which involves not only mentoring, but professional development sessions, and a speaker series held in three regions of the United States.”

Publicis places a high value on having a woman’s point of view in making decisions, which affects both the agency’s clients and the company’s outcomes.

“Harnessing this power works for all of us,” Ms. Sims-Williams says. “Mentoring is a proven way to help women grow, develop, and succeed.”

MassConnect, an external mentoring program that links entrepreneurs with seasoned biotechnology professionals, was established to provide early-stage and entrepreneurial support that would result in continued growth of life-sciences innovation in Massachusetts.

Established by MassBio, a not-for-profit organization committed to advancing the development of critical new science, technology, and medicines, the program was created to provide industry expertise, evaluation, and guidance as a means to help commercialize new ideas.

“Mentoring of this type helps the industry as a whole, as well as the mentors and mentees,” says John Hallinan, chief business officer, MassBio. “The entrepreneurs universally note that they couldn’t assemble a mentoring team on their own or afford to pay for the contributions of the mentor. The program helps them define market opportunities and strategies. The mentors offer that it represents a way to give back, provides an opportunity to interact with early-stage entrepreneurs/innovation, and provides the opportunity to network with other mentors.”

Millennium encourages its employees to own their development and its strategy is to provide leaders, managers, and employees with skills, resources, and tools that support their professional growth and enable individuals to align their goals with the needs of the business.


“This approach creates a win-win for both the organization and the business,” says Ms. Rongione. “A key engagement driver for our employees is the opportunity to grow and develop and to be involved in challenging work, which includes bringing innovative medicines to cancer patients around the world. Mentoring allows us to continue to develop our talent to challenge themselves and the organization to be the best that they can be.”

For Millennium, and for all life-sciences companies, maintaining a sound commitment to career development ensures a strong future for individual businesses as well as the entire industry. **PV**



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# Setting the Groundwork for a Mentoring Program

Successful mentoring programs define objectives and provide mentors and mentees with the tools they need to accomplish their goals.

**A** first step in preparing both mentors and mentees is helping them develop their objectives and providing them with the tools they need to accomplish them.

“The challenge is that no two employees want the exact same thing in their career,” says Joshua Mitchell, manager, learning and organizational development at Regeneron.

“We have to first provide each employee with the tools and time to gain personal clarity with regard to their career goals, personal values, and skill sets,” he says. “We provide an opportunity for our employees to become clearer about what they want from their current and future opportunities at Regeneron.”

The company provides the tools and programs, but it expects the mentees to bring passion and drive to the table in an effort to fuel both their own and the company’s success. Regeneron also invests heavily in the latest tools that allow employees to design and manage individualized development plans. The tools allow them to take the lead in setting themselves up for success in reaching their career goals.

Setting goals is crucial for both mentees and mentors, says Carol Yamartino, principal of the Yamartino Group.

“For mentees, the goals should center around bringing more value to their career by growth and learning,” she says. “For mentors, it’s about realizing what hindsight they can provide, what lessons they have learned that they can pass along, plus all that they have experienced in the industry. We call it sharing some of the things ‘you’ve stepped in.’ A mentor’s hindsight becomes a mentee’s foresight.”

Training is a necessary tool to enable mentors to embody the process of mentoring in everything they do at the company, across all levels of the organization, and in and out of a formal mentoring setting. To choose the best mentors, DJ Mitsch, president, The Pyramid Resource Group, suggests identifying leaders at every level of the organization who are go-getters and rising stars. Train them first in core coaching skills and second in conveying their personal story, which they should outline in the form of a career map, so others can readily see the zigzag career paths most people take.

“For the most success, prepare them to coach and mentor not only individuals at various levels of the organization, but also prepare them to conduct affinity groups to sustain a culture of learning and mentoring as something people come to expect,” she says.

Unfortunately, creating a mentoring program is often not a ‘build it and they will come’ scenario. Many would-be mentors fear a mentoring relationship might take away precious time from their own work, and some need to evaluate their own value before realizing what they have to bring to others.

“A common misperception is being a mentor takes a lot of time and energy, but if a program is structured effectively, and there are



**“To choose the best mentors, identify leaders at every level of the organization who are go-getters and rising stars.”**

**DJ MITSCH / The Pyramid Group**

tools in place and everyone is clear on the roles and expectations, then it is not a lot of work; mentors get so much more out of it than they ever knew they would,” Ms. Yamartino says.

A good leader to choose as a mentor will have a vision of the value gained from participating in a mentoring program, either because they had a mentor and found it worthwhile, or they didn’t have a mentor and wished they





“Our employee development program, mentoring, peer buddy initiative, etc., have had a profound impact on employee retention and engagement.”

**CATHY RONGIONE**

Millennium: The Takeda Oncology Company

had. Good mentors possess talent and skills that the company would like more employees to aspire to, and by taking on the mentor role, that person can connect with and add value to the greater company population, Ms. Yamartino says.

On the mentee side, there are misperceptions regarding the objectives of having a mentor.

“Mentoring isn’t about getting your next job or being given all the answers,” Ms. Yamartino says. “Don’t go in asking a mentor for his or her Rolodex, or say to a mentor ‘just tell me what to do.’ A good mentor will not tell someone what to do; a good mentor will ask thought-provoking questions and get mentees to think and come up with their own answers, and those perspectives and those stories will help guide them.”

Both mentors and mentees may be concerned with the amount of time required, especially in the fast-paced world of pharma.

“At Acorda, the challenge in implementing the program was for both the mentors and the mentees to make the time to meet on a regular basis,” says Denise Duca, senior VP of human resources. “In life sciences, everyone is multitasking. For the program to work, everyone in the program needs to take it seriously and make a complete commitment to it.”

Cathy Rongione, director, learning and de-

velopment at Millennium: The Takeda Oncology Company, agrees.

“An ongoing commitment in time and focus is critical to the success of any mentoring program,” she says. “Ensuring that we have a highly engaged workforce is something we believe is key to maintaining a competitive advantage in oncology. Our approach to mentoring has evolved over time based on trends we have seen in the engagement drivers for our employees as evidenced through the results of employee surveys, direct feedback from employees and managers through focus groups, stay and exit interview results, and best practices we have learned from other organizations.”

At Publicis, where the company has launched a program for mentoring women, the biggest challenge is securing time on the calendars of the executives who serve as mentors and encouraging mentees to seize the opportunity.

“In the world of the never-ending to-do list, women are constantly putting themselves and their professional development last,” says Sandra Sims-Williams, chief diversity officer at Publicis Groupe. “Men have been encouraged to make this a priority, and women aren’t quite there yet. VivaWomen! aims to change that.”

Another important criteria to a successful mentoring experience is appropriate matching

### Tips for an Effective Mentoring Culture

**1. Listen to employees through change agents.** Select, train, and knight change agents from each division of the company to just listen and capture themes around changing employee needs. Their role is not to solve, but to hear and report back what’s working, what’s not, and what the biggest concerns are for employees.

**2. Find quick wins.** Take action on what can be accomplished immediately, by prioritizing the small items now and creating small agile, change project teams for the bigger items, so each person has a representative in how the solutions will be found. Make a game out of the work being done with points and scoring for attainments in uncovering the blocks to performance and celebrate the accomplishments.

**3. Create together.** Use the high-tech tool called butcher-block paper, wrap it around the most frequented area for one week with instructions for employees to recreate the organization by writing their name and a new title or job position plus one sentence about what that job will allow them to contribute to the world around them.

**4. Employees seek significance.** According to several recent studies, 80% of the U.S. workforce is not satisfied or feels disengaged, and many are simply weary at work. Want to ignite them? Find out what they want to create and see what you can do to integrate their ideas. It might reshape your business, your world, your impact, and your profits.

Source: The Pyramid Resource Group

of mentors and mentees, which can be accomplished through a robust application process.

“Random matching rarely results in effective mentoring pairs or groups,” says Joanne Kamens, Ph.D., executive director, Addgene says. “People need to be matched by interests, so the application process is very important in ensuring teams can work well together. The best programs have an application process that asks participants about their background, ex-



## MENTORING WITHIN THE INDUSTRY ►

Representatives from progressive companies describe their mentoring practices and why they are effective.

### ACORDA THERAPEUTICS MENTORING GROWS EACH YEAR



For the third consecutive year, Acorda was recognized as one of the Best Companies to Work For in New York. Acorda was ranked second among large companies (more than 250 people) in 2013. This ranking reflected feedback from employees about company culture, benefits, and overall job satisfaction. Acorda was among only 50 companies statewide to be recognized for this achievement.

According to Denise Duca, senior VP of human resources at Acorda, the company implemented a pilot mentorship program in July 2011, which started with five mentors and five mentees from various departments and has grown steadily each year.

"The program proved successful and as a result we rolled it out to a broader population, including field-based employees," she says. "For 2012/2013, we added six more mentees to the program and will be adding another five to six in 2014."

The goals of the program are to:

- » Complement the professional development of high-performing employees, ensuring they are prepared for appropriate levels of increased responsibilities and career advancement.
- » Provide practical and appropriate exposure opportunities for the mentee with senior leadership.
- » Encourage a true learning experience between the mentor and mentee.
- » Enhance engagement level and retention rate of these high-performing employees.

After the pairings are complete, two workshops are conducted (one day for the mentee and a half day for the mentor) before the mentee and mentor start to work together. After the workshops are complete, the company hosts a dinner for all of the participants of the program so they start to meet each other on a more social level. The mentee and mentor are then asked to have their first meeting and start to establish goals.

"We provide an outline to get everyone started; however, we have kept the program outline very informal and flexible so the mentee and mentor

can work out their own goals and objectives," Ms. Duca says.

The program runs for 18 months, but the hope is that the mentors and mentees will continue to work together after the formal program is completed. For example, on their own initiative, mentees started meeting at lunch on a monthly basis to discuss articles from Harvard Business Review, as well as their own experiences and challenges around management and leadership.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the program, the company conducts formal written feedback surveys, as well as interviews on a regular basis with both the mentor and mentee.

"We are always asking about the pairing and relationship, as well as for feedback on how we can continuously improve the program," Ms. Duca says.

### SCIENTISTS AND ENTREPRENEURS PARTNER FOR GROWTH



MassBio, a not-for-profit organization committed to advancing the development of critical new science, technology, and medicines, represents more than 600 biotechnology companies, academic institutions, research hospitals, and service organizations, and works to advance policy and promote education, while providing member programs and events, industry information, and services. MassBio created MassConnect to link new entrepreneurs and founders with seasoned biotechnology professionals to provide industry expertise, evaluation, and guidance as a means to help commercialize new ideas.

The MassBio 2015 report, published in 2009, identified early-stage/entrepreneurial support as an area of increasing importance for the growth and success of life-sciences innovation in Massachusetts, says John Hallinan, chief business officer, MassBio.

"MassConnect leverages the power of distributive networks that exist within the biotechnology ecosystem by connecting seasoned biotechnology professionals with serial entrepreneurs," he says. "The program was launched to bridge the gap between academia and industry, and ensure the future of the biotech industry through successful start-up companies."

MassConnect is structured as a 10-week

program that pairs entrepreneurs with a team of five to seven industry-experienced mentors, including an attorney from a local law firm, and an MBA student from a local university, who acts as project manager.

"The program is effective for myriad reasons — two in particular are that the entrepreneur's objectives are defined at the beginning of the program and that the mentors represent a range of disciplines and the depth and breadth of their experience is unparalleled, so the value of their advice and networks provides an unprecedented catalyst and a high ROI for the entrepreneur's time," Mr. Hallinan says.

Since its inception, the program has received 50 prescreened applications and graduated 36 companies. A total of eight companies have received funding post program.

### MENTORING IS A KEY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AT MILLENNIUM



This year, Millennium: The Takeda Oncology Company was named among the 100 Best Companies to Work For in the United States by Fortune magazine. This is the third consecutive year that the company has been included in the annual ranking. Over the past year, Millennium has also been named a top employer by the Boston Globe and Science magazine.

At Millennium, mentoring is a key development strategy. Rather than establish a formal corporate-driven mentoring program, it has integrated mentoring into its ongoing development practices, including:

- » Establishing a six-month to one-year peer buddy program as part of its onboarding process for every new hire, which includes training peer buddies and managers in the process and setting expectations.
- » Establishing mentoring relationships for leaders who have been identified as successors within the organization.
- » Hosting panel discussions sponsored by the management team members and featuring employees and leaders who share their own

experiences of finding mentors, maintaining mentoring relationships, and being mentors to others.

- » Providing mentoring resources and tools on its internal portal to support employees in finding a mentor and engaging in a mentoring relationship.
- » Sponsoring female employee's participation in the HBA mentoring program by being mentees or mentors.

"We have a very simple approach to our work regarding employee development," says Cathy Rongione, director, learning and development at Millennium. "Our employees own their development and we ask what is important to them and then act on what they tell us. In addition, each learning and development team member is embedded within the business. In doing so, this ensures that the company is able to leverage and implement programs and development strategies that align employees' professional development goals with the needs and direction of the business."

#### MENTORING WOMEN FRONT AND CENTER AT PUBLICIS



More than half (55%) of Publicis' worldwide staff of 57,500 are women, and the company has created a women's network focused on attracting, retaining, and developing women called VivaWomen!, which was inspired by its organizational mantra, "Viva la Difference."

There are four areas of focus — mentoring, career navigation, work/life integration, and leadership development.

"The primary goal was to develop a mentoring program that was organic, so we launched our mentoring programs with an event based on the concept like speed dating mentoring circles," says Sandra Sims-Williams, chief diversity officer, Publicis Groupe. "We chose this approach believing we would serve the most number of people and address a number of different issues over a short period of time."

Research confirms that a person needs more than one type of mentor addressing different needs at different stages of her career. VivaWomen!

provides women of all levels access to multiple mentors. For instance, one mentor can help manage career trajectory, another can discuss how to manage up, and another can provide advice on when to ask for a promotion.

"Mentoring circles such as VivaWomen! specifically meet the unique needs of the agency environment, as they encourage best practice sharing and the exchange of industry intel," she says. "The concept could work just as well for a corporate environment, as long as multiple areas of expertise, talent, and experience are represented."

#### REGENERON PAIRS SENIOR AND JUNIOR SCIENTISTS



Science magazine ranked Regeneron as the No. 1 employer in the global biopharmaceutical industry in 2012 in the journal's annual Top Employers Survey. This was a step up from the previous year's ranking of No. 2. For more than two decades, Regeneron has nurtured young scientists by involving them in intense and wide-ranging scientific discussions and debates with its most senior scientists, says Joshua Mitchell, manager, learning and organizational development, Regeneron.

"These no-holds barred conversations developed the kind of rigorous thinking required for innovation, which is essential to a robust drug pipeline," he says. "At Regeneron, there is little focus on title, so junior staff who have the intellect and courage to support their ideas have seen their work take center stage."

For example, young scientists have benefitted immensely from having the opportunity to interact with Regeneron's chief scientific officer, George Yancopoulos, M.D., Ph.D. Dr. Yancopoulos was elected to both the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2004 and was the 11th most highly cited scientist in the world during the 1990s, according to the Institute for Scientific Information.

"This type of access to senior leaders is an effective approach to developing people and it shows in our pipeline," says Fred Polirer, associate director, learning and organizational development,

Regeneron. "Regeneron's pipeline is considered to be very rich by industry standards with 14 drugs in development. This does not occur without a rich talent pipeline to support it."

#### TEAM BASED CULTURE AT VITAE ENCOURAGES MENTORING



Earlier this year, Vitae Pharmaceuticals, a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company, ranked second among life-sciences companies in the 11th annual Best Places to Work in Industry survey conducted by the Scientist. Vitae is the highest-ranked U.S. company on the list, which is based on a detailed survey taken by scientists at life-sciences companies and research institutions.

According to CEO Jeff Hatfield, Vitae does not have a formal mentoring program, but its corporate culture supports an informal mentoring environment. It focuses on a team-based approach that allows a new Ph.D., fresh off a post-doctoral program, the opportunity to work alongside a senior scientist with 20-plus years of experience. This team-based culture leads to a stimulating, fast, and uniquely integrated work environment geared toward success.

"Being in a small environment not only allows the entire company to embrace mentoring through such programs as an open-door policy, implementation of skip-level discussions, and CEO roundtables, it allows an individual employee to seek mentoring in a format comfortable for him or her, whether it's in a group setting or one-on-one," Mr. Hatfield says.

Through personal interactions, project team meetings, frequent town hall meetings, and performance reviews, every member of the senior management team is aware of project team assignments, progress on team and individual objectives, and the need, as well as an employee's desire, for development. One of the great benefits of having a flexible program is the strategic value it can bring to the company.

"While we may not have a full-time need for adding to staff in any particular area, such as business development in this case, we can give individuals the opportunity to work in an area where they have interest, and it allows the company to develop a workforce that's ready to step-up when a particular need arises," he says.



## Mentoring

“At Acorda, we select mentors who are seen as successful and respected in the organization and are good listeners.”

**DENISE DUCA** / Acorda Therapeutics



“People need to be matched by interests, so the application process is very important in ensuring teams can work well together.”

**DR. JOANNE KAMENS** / Addgene

perience, interests and areas in which they want to grow.”

Millennium takes the matching process seriously, and tries to ensure that there is a common chemistry between mentor and mentee. In its Peer Buddy Onboarding program, selected Peer Buddies go through a selection screening process and once selected are required to attend a development program before being assigned to a new hire. This ap-



proach does three things: ensures consistency in the process, communicates the importance of the program to the organization, and finally ensures an exceptional employee experience.

“The impact of our employee development program, mentoring, Peer Buddy program, etc., has had a profound impact on employee retention and engagement,” Ms. Rongione says.

Acorda also discovered that the selection and matching process is a critical component of the mentoring program and the relationship.

“It was important for us to select mentors who are seen as successful and respected in the organization; have demonstrated strong interpersonal and development skills; who are good listeners; can provide leadership; committed to helping others grow in their careers; have access to information and people who can assist others in advancement; are nonjudgmental;



“A common misperception is that being a mentor takes a lot of time and energy, but often mentors get more out of it than they ever knew they would.”

**CAROL YAMARTINO** / Yamartino Group

discreet but candid in dealings; tolerant, patient, show respect for others and model Acorda's principles and values,” Ms. Duca says.

Similarly, Acorda selects its mentees from consistently high performers, who are seen as career-oriented vs. job-oriented, have an appropriate level of self-awareness; are eager to learn; ambitious; willing to put forth an effort for self improvement; accountable for self-development; and consistently model Acorda's principles and values. **PV**

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