

Reciprocal Mentorship Program – Organizational Readiness Checklist

Focus: Trust, Culture, and Conditions for Success

This checklist is designed to help organizations determine whether they have the foundational conditions for a successful reciprocal mentorship program. These items reflect practical, observable signals of trust, psychological safety, and operational support—all of which are necessary for the program to thrive.

How to use this checklist:

- Review each item and confirm whether it is fully in place within your organization.
- Only proceed with launching the program if all items can be checked. Missing elements may compromise trust, participation, and long-term impact.
- If any items are not yet in place, use the checklist to identify specific areas to strengthen before starting.

1. Leadership Modeling & Behavior

- ☐ Leaders have participated in at least one initiative that involved receiving feedback from junior staff or peers.
- ☐ Leaders are visible in forums where employees can ask questions or raise concerns (town halls, office hours, roundtables).
- ☐ Instances exist where leadership has acted on employee feedback and communicated the changes back to staff.

2. Organizational Trust Signals

- ☐ Employee surveys or pulse checks show at least moderate participation (indicating willingness to share feedback).
- ☐ Whistleblower, grievance, or feedback channels exist and are used without retaliation.
- ☐ Cross-level collaboration has occurred successfully in the past (e.g., cross-functional projects, innovation challenges).

3. Psychological Safety in Practice

- ☐ Teams have regular forums for open discussion where junior employees speak without managers dominating.
- ☐ Recent performance reviews or feedback cycles have included upward or 360-degree feedback elements.
- ☐ Conflict or disagreement is handled without punitive measures—examples can be cited.

4. Operational Readiness

- ☐ Time can be allocated for participants without creating workload conflicts.
- ☐ A clear process exists to match mentor pairs and track participation.
- ☐ A neutral facilitator or program owner is available to address issues if trust breaks down.

5. Program Support & Sustainability

- ☐ Orientation/training can be provided to set expectations and confidentiality norms.
- ☐ A feedback loop (surveys, check-ins, or reflection sessions) can be run without risk to anonymity.
- ☐ Leadership has agreed to review and communicate learnings from the program, not just collect them.