MENTORING@MIT

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To nurture a community of learners by developing a culture of mentoring as a mechanism for sharing wisdom and experience.

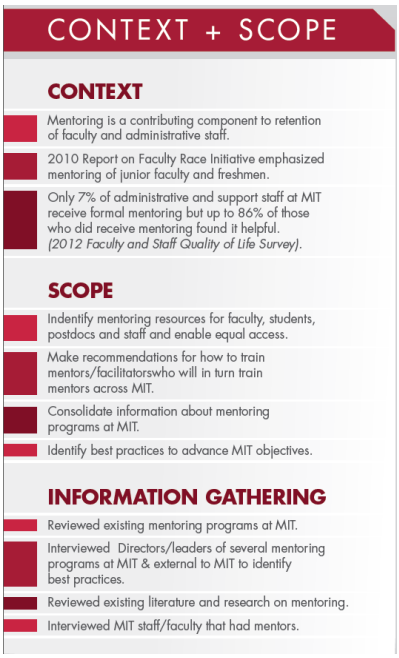
Context and Scope

Mentoring @ MIT

Project Sponsors: *DiOnetta Jones Crayton, David J Hosmer, Alyce Johnson, Julie B. Norman*
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Organizations responding to a changing workforce and a desire by employees to seeking a flexible work environment and these organizations are now developing and implementing strategic mentoring programs to ensure:

- Recruitment
- Retention
- Professional development/Capacity building
- Development of a multicultural, multi-generational workforce



Mentoring is an enabling relationship that can either emerge organically between two professionals or sought out by choice. The relationship within a university setting may range from a focus on career advancement to personal support.

The mentor-mentee relationship tends to exist outside of line-manager employee relationship [though not exclusive too] and has mutual consent between both parties. Mentoring is a contributing component to retention of faculty and administrative staff at various institutions.

The recognition that workplace demographics have evolved over the years with the increase of women and minorities in workforce. Proven methodology that enables individuals to grow and become more effective in their roles.

A robust culture of mentoring for advancement for faculty and students via faculty, students, alumni and private sector leaders exists at MIT and there are many resources to draw upon to understand its benefits. A 2012 Faculty and Staff Quality of Life Survey shows that only 7% of MIT's administrative and support staff receive formal mentoring and up to 86% of those who did receive mentoring found it helpful.

It is a commonly held view that mentoring is a contributing component to retention of faculty and administrative staff and there is a strong desire to have a mentoring resources available for MIT's staff.

The Value Proposition of a Mentoring Program

Mentoring, as an applied concept for enabling professional advancement and success, is not new to MIT. In fact there is a robust culture of mentoring available that not only connects MIT faculty and students to others within MIT but also seeks to find the best match for each individual, which may include alumni or industry professionals.



At MIT one can be a woman in science, an emerging business leader, a budding venture capitalist, launching a start up or on the verge of a pioneering innovation.

In all of these cases, related to the academic and research portfolio of the institute, one can find a mentor. The inherent value proposition for each of these programs varies by theme but the underlying purpose and framing can be transferred to the creation of a new program at MIT that targets an essential part of the population, the administration and staff.

Emerging research from business schools enforce that those who have access to and receive mentoring tend to perform better, experience greater salary increases and are granted more promotions. Equally, the employees on both sides of the relationship assert to have greater job satisfaction, increased loyalty and lower turnover. According to one study, mentoring "... helps organizations retain a qualified workforce that might otherwise go elsewhere"[1].

Beyond the walls of MIT, mentor programs have been developed, applied and analyzed across many disciplines.[2] Accordingly, mentoring tends to be associated with four desired outcomes:

1. Increasing retention and positive engagement within the work place
2. Increasing positive inter-personal relationships
3. Increasing positive motivational outcomes
4. Increasing the advancement of careers

[1] Broder-Singer, R. "Why mentoring matters in an increasingly complex business world, mentoring proves to be win-win for all parties involved."

[2] Eby et al. [2008]. *Does mentoring matter? A multi-disciplinary meta analysis comparing mentored and non-mentored individuals.* Journal of Vocational Behavior. V.72.n.2. p.254-267.

Desired Outcome #1 - Increasing retention and positive engagement within the work place

Today's workforce reflects four generations, each with varying skill set, experience and needs. Fifty percent of today's workforce is made up of millennials [born between 1977-1997]. The needs of this population will be different than that of the baby boomers and the generation X members, which are now outnumbered by the millennials.

Purpose

- *To* increase productivity of MIT's workforce in a manner that leads to job satisfaction, greater retention and improved outcomes.

Challenge:

- To build a robust and engaged mentor program for members of the MIT staff that span generational needs and differences.

Desired Outcome #2 - Increasing positive inter-personal relationships

A strong mentor relationship can benefit the individual, the people that surround this individual via positive interactions and thus the organization. Some organizations have implemented a mentor program in an effort to support the creation of a multicultural workforce by enabling relationships among diverse employees and allowing equal access to mentoring. Elevating knowledge transfer from just getting information to retaining the practical experience and wisdom gained from long-term employees.

Purpose:

- To breakdown any barriers within the MIT workforce that hinders cooperation among institute departments or divisions.

Challenge:

- To develop a multi-purpose program at MIT that benefits not only the goals of the individual but has cross-purpose impact to the institute.

Desired Outcome #3 - Increasing positive motivational outcomes

At MIT there is a tremendous base of untapped knowledge and understanding within our own staff. By encouraging mentor-mentee relationships, the institute can also foster peer-peer relationships in an effort to strengthen the social ecosystem in which we function. Research has demonstrated the importance of these work-based relationships in enabling individual development and growth throughout ones career. Strong peer relationships can compliment a mentor relationship as they may offer a range of developmental and career development supports.

Purpose:

- To tap into MIT employees, instead of outside consultants, as internal experts for professional development [where feasible].
- To link employees with valuable knowledge and information to other employees in need of such information.

Challenge:

- To assess and figure out how to tap into the existing knowledge of MIT employees in a manner that advances the mission of the institute and leverages a team based approach to problem solving both within and across divisions.

Desired Outcome #4 – Increasing the advancement of careers

Studies have demonstrated that both career advancement and job satisfaction can be affiliated with a strong mentor-mentee relationship particularly for those at early and mid-career stages.[3]

Purpose:

- To create a mentoring culture, that continuously promotes individual employee growth and development.

Challenge:

- To leverage a match between individuals who meet each others career and developmental stage.

At MIT we need to clearly identify and define what our desired outcomes are, who the audience is and how best to develop a program that responds to the various needs of the individuals. In some cases, a formal mentor relationship is needed where as in others it may be providing space and time for the development of an informal mentor relationship that has been established. In the end, an effective mentor is wise, compassionate, demonstrates great interest in the mentee and willing to share his or her knowledge and experiences in order to help one succeed.

[3] Kram, K.; Isabella, L. [1985]. *Mentoring Alternatives: The Role of Peer Relationships in Career Development*. The Academy of Management Journal. Vol. 28, No. 1. pp. 110-132

Outcomes of Successful Mentoring Programs

Although mentoring programs in the workplace have shown to be associated with many positive outcomes including retention, promotions and job satisfaction there is a paucity of data proving a causal relationship. Since mentoring programs generally have a selection process it is possible that mentor and mentees chosen to participate are selected for the very same characteristics that would lead to better retention, promotion and job satisfaction anyway.



Accurate assessment of the economic value of mentoring programs would necessitate a trial of equally qualified and interested mentors/mentees randomized to participate in a mentoring program. There is however generally accepted perceived value in mentoring that can be monitored and evaluated.

Monitoring of outcomes of mentoring programs can be designed based on the *four component framework* described by Kirkpatrick (Kirkpatrick, D. 1994. *Evaluating training programs: The four levels*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.)

1) Reactions to mentoring.

   Since a mentoring relationship goes beyond that of training or coaching it is important to assess the fuller outcomes of mentoring beyond the instrumental outcomes (promotions, salary etc.) Reactions to mentoring should be assessed in a) surveys of both mentee and mentor participants in mentoring programs at certain intervals and b) workplace surveys that assess quality of work/life.

2) Learning that resulted from mentoring.

   Through the use of surveys participants, mentors and mentees, should be evaluated for what knowledge was learned, what skills were developed or improved and what attitudes were changed from the mentoring relationship.

3) Behavior or performance change.

   Participants who undergo standardized annual review process (e.g. Performance and Development Review web-based tool) will have new skills and knowledge assessed regularly. Results and scores could be compared and benchmarked to staff at similar employee levels who are not participating in mentoring.

4) Business results for the organization.

   Three outcomes should be assessed regularly:

   - Turnover/retention rates - *Is participation in mentoring associated with greater employee retention?*
   - Career progress - *Are participants more likely to advance as measured by promotion, compensation etc.?*
   - Engagement of underrepresented groups

In order to address the issue of whether mentoring programs for administrative and support staff are associated with improved outcomes or if in fact there is indeed a causal relationship an ambitious project to consider would be to conduct a bold experiment to scientifically assess the effect of mentoring programs. Before a mentoring program scales up there will presumably be more individuals interested in participating than the program can accommodate. Potential mentoring participants who are selected for the program could be randomized to begin immediately or be deferred to start at a later date. Trials could also be conducted to compare blended models of mentoring with more traditional models.

Enabling Mentoring @ MIT

There is clear interest and clear demand at MIT for an institute appropriate administrative/staff mentor program. For this to be successful we recommend that the proposed system must:

- Reward participants and incentivize them to seek out such relationships [either informal or formal] as a 'mentor'
- Director and supervisors must actively demonstrate support of a mentor-mentee relationships to ensure participation



In the end, successful mentoring pairings must be reciprocal in nature. A successful mentor-mentee relationship is only as successful as its reciprocity. The bottom line is that positive relationships that inspire growth and learning have positive outcomes.[4] Research from Allen and Eby suggest that individuals at the most basic level possess a universal and fundamental "need to belong". It is believed that one way to respond to this fundamental need is via a mentor program to provide one access point [of many] and to foster these essential and long lasting relationships.

At a complex institute such as MIT, this holds true. Moreover, this is even more vital within an institute that has a clear divide between the role and power of the faculty and that of the staff and administration. A mentor program, in whatever form is selected, must be developed as one of a series of arrangements in a complex social ecosystem that enhances job satisfaction and performance, encourages growth and learning, and contributes to the overall success and advancement of the institute at large. Organizations such as MIT value having individuals within the institute who are loyal, committed, seek long-term investment, and can provide new perspectives on old problems.

Recommendations for Mentoring at MIT

There is a strong foundation of programs that already exists at MIT and Lincoln lab that can be built upon. There has also been work done arena by our sponsors, Alyce Johnson and David Hosmer, that can be built upon.

One of the biggest challenges we considered was the issue of scalability and how that will impact every aspect of the process. Beyond identifying best practices, the big question is how to go from ten pairs in a pilot to hundreds of mentoring pairs across the Institute. The following are some recommendations on how to achieve this.

[4] Eby et al.

Recommendations

1. **Apply MIT's blended learning approach to Mentoring@MIT**
    - Establish a Mentoring Resource Center and online mentoring portal co-sponsored by the Community and Equity Office and Human Resources
    - Hire a dedicated Mentoring Coordinator
    - Develop a blended approach to the matching process
    - Create training modules on MITx
2. **Commit to an Institutional culture of mentoring**
    - Convene a steering committee to provide guidance and connect institute leadership to the program
    - Develop robust communications plan to promote the value of mentoring, launch the program, and recruit mentors and mentees
    - Connect mentoring opportunities with current administrative processes, such as the PDR
    - Link mentoring resources through Atlas by using an online portal (mentoring.mit.edu)
    - Commit resources to make this an institutional value
3. **Develop a vision for the future of Mentoring@MIT**
    - Become a leader in the space by conducting bold experiments related to mentoring (cross-silo, mentoring circles, etc.)
    - Continue to leverage technology (MITx, mentoring.mit.edu) to further mentoring practices at MIT
    - Build mechanisms to monitor the outcomes of mentoring



Other Findings – Six Keys

The L2L Mentoring@MIT Project Group discussed many approaches to ensure success. There are six additional keys that can be used to enable success with Mentoring @ MIT. They are:

1. Hold the matching/training sessions 2x/year.
2. Have a committee of experienced MIT staff make the matches
3. Offer circle mentoring for support staff
4. Special outreach to underrepresented minorities to ensure diversity
5. Enable Institutionalization
    - Commit to two-year position

- Check in after each cohort finishes
- Add questions to the 2016 work life survey to see how people feel it's working

6. Understand scalability. For the purpose for this report, we found:
    - There is a total of 1450 Admin staff (0-10 years)
    - Assuming that 50% of the N,O,P want mentoring, this will mean the target number is 450 people (~900 people * 50% = 450 people)
    - Demographics from HR shows a total of 900 people have been here 11-20+ years (440 of them are classified as Q,R,S)
    - Assuming 50% of the 440 would be willing to mentor, that would mean there are 220 potential mentors

Assuming matching two sessions per year with 100 pairs each, it would take 2-3 years for 450 people to participate in Mentoring@MIT.

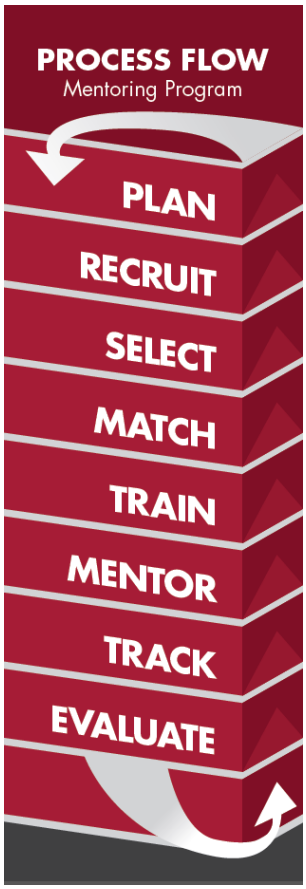
Recommended Process for a Sustainable Mentoring Program

In reviewing formal mentoring programs, our research showed that successful mentoring programs follow a fairly standard process flow, which is:

Plan -->Recruit -->Select -->Match -->Train -->
Mentor --> Check-ins --> Adjust --> Evaluate --> Plan

Each cycle should start with a planning phase. An advisory board, including members of the MIT community, should participate in the planning phase, as this will help to keep the pulse on community interest and needs.
In order to launch and maintain a successful mentoring program, there are some one-time activities that should occur before the program commences. These actions are listed below under "Initial Planning".

PLAN: Initial Planning

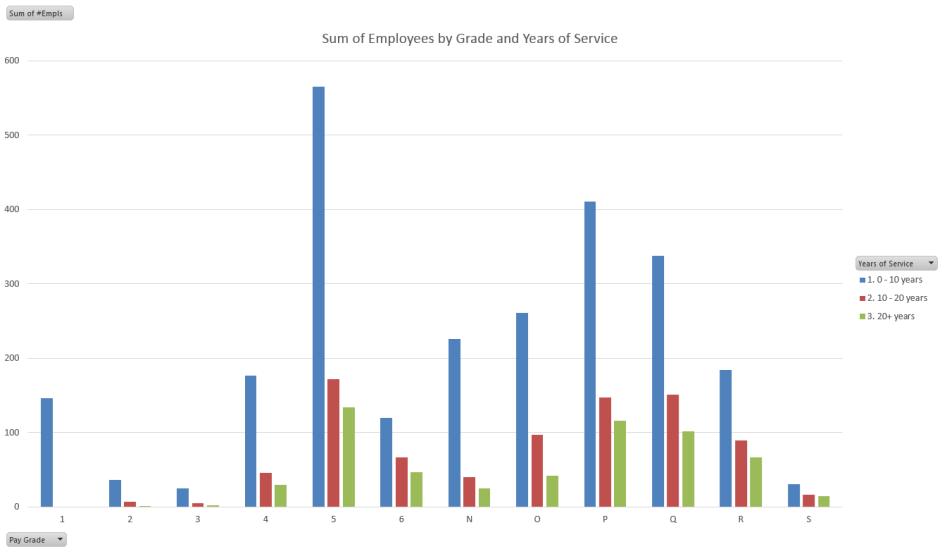


It is critical to get visible senior leadership support for the creation of the mentoring center from the outset. For example, at Lincoln Lab, Eric Evans made the initial announcement about the program, and also serves as a mentor himself each year. We would expect that the EVPT and the Provost, among others, would stand behind the creation of the MIT Mentoring Center, by supplying resources (including their own time) to this effort.

Following on this support, the Center will need to establish a home that will give the effort a high degree of credibility. Our team felt that this Mentoring Center must be perceived as something more than "just another HR initiative". Therefore, the new Center should report jointly to MIT's Institute Community and Equity Officer (ICEO) and to HR.

In launching a large change initiative in an organization like MIT, it is necessary to create a sense of urgency. There should be a large communication effort to explain the reasons behind the creation of the Mentoring Center (survey results, etc.), the goals and missions and value of mentoring, why we need to do this now, what we hope the outcomes will be, why mentors should invest the time, etc.

Before expanding beyond the pilot run by David Hosmer, more work should be done to determine who the initial mentee population should be. The team felt that MIT could get the most bang for the buck by targeting early- to mid-career staff.



MIT Staff by employment category and years of service

Likewise, a pool of experienced mentors should be identified and recruited to participate in the initial round of mentoring. These mentors could come from the initial pilot, L2L alum, and existing mentoring programs at MIT.

Finally, it is essential to have all of the necessary resources in place at the outset. The fact that MIT is providing adequate resources demonstrates the importance of the larger community. These resources should, at a minimum, include salary for a Mentoring Coordinator, office space for the Mentoring Coordinator, a Business Analyst (for a minimum of 6 months), dedicated time from a web designer to set up the initial web sites (mentoring.mit.edu), and a small budget for the mentors to take the mentees out for coffee, etc.

After the initial planning is completed, the other steps would occur on an ongoing/periodic basis

RECRUIT: Recruiting Mentors

Our research showed that it is important to find mentors who are caring, good listeners, accessible, willing to share life lessons and form personal relationships with their mentees.

In addition to tapping established outreach channels (e.g., through Asst Deans, L2L Alum, existing mentors from David Hosmer's mentoring pilot), the Mentoring Center should run info session to try to identify and recruit mentors. These sessions would serve as

opportunities to explain what mentoring is (versus training or coaching), why mentoring is important, what the expected time commitment is, what the mentors will personally get out of it. These sessions will be an opportunity to get people to sign up to participate as mentors. It will also give the Mentoring Coordinator (and perhaps members of the advisory board) to determine the preparedness and appropriateness of the mentors.

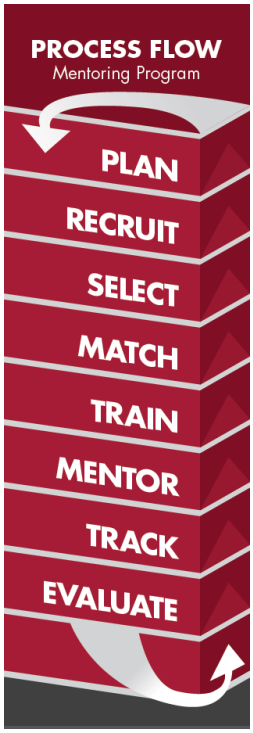
SELECT: Finding Qualified Mentees

Research shows that mentoring is most effective when mentees have clearly articulated goals. These goals can be related to career development or about seeking work-life balance. The important thing is that the mentee knows what they hope to get out of the experience.

Our team felt that the target mentee population should be employees with 1+ years of experience at MIT. The goal is to differentiate mentoring from the onboarding or training process, and having at least a year of grounding at the Institute should help to clarify this.

We would propose running info session, sending email notifications, working with employee resource groups, and asking managers to identify potential mentees as means to recruiting mentees.

MATCH: Matching Mentors and Mentees



Everything the Mentoring Project Team read and the people that were interviewed indicated that the **matching process is the key to success in mentoring programs**. Getting the right chemistry between the pairs is essential.

Successful programs, such as Lincoln's and Harvard's, ask mentors and mentees to complete questionnaires, and use these to help make the match. Lincoln also relies on a committee of managers. The most important point is that the process is not automated, and therefore, we propose that the Mentoring Coordinator would be responsible for this process.

We also learned that the Mentor Advocate Partnership in OME hosts events that allow "speed-dating" between potential mentors and mentees. This allows a group of interested people meet in person and get a sense of the chemistry before committing to the mentoring relationship. Building on that approach for staff, it might be possible to host events like this and hand out bios of the mentors.

TRAIN: Training and During Mentoring

Orientation sessions for both mentors and mentees are standard practice in successful programs. As an example, slides from Lincoln's "Mentee Training" are in Appendix xxx. While these sessions are normally conducted in person, we'd like to suggest that portions

of this could be turned into online video training, so people could orient themselves from the convenience of their office or home and on their own schedule.

TRACK: Training and During Mentoring

Mentors and mentees need to be tracked before, during, and after their mentoring period. This will allow for the development of benchmarks and will allow determinations as to what is works and what needs to be modified for future mentoring initiatives.

EVALUATE: Learning from the experience to improve the next experience

To ensure the success of the Mentoring @ MIT program, the mentor-mentee's feedback need to be collected to determine what worked for the pairs and what could work better. Evaluation criteria needs to be developed during the first phase of this initiative and needs to be used to track the success of mentoring pairing activities. Lessons learned from the program can be used for the next cohort participating in mentoring.

L2L Learnings and Summary

Overall of L2L coursework provided many useful tools for our work. Like many of our colleagues, we applied the three lenses to help us examine the opportunities and challenges this project.

The Three Lenses
No single perspective for solving an issue is adequate and it's easy to get locked into a single point of view. There are three perspectives, or lenses, that fundamentally shape our understanding of thighs and events. They can determine what information see within an organization. It can shape the questions you ask and where your attention should be focused on. We have applied the teachings of John Van Maanen and the "Three Lenses" to the Mentoring @ MIT project.

Cultural Lens – *Organizations are institutions and action comes through habit*

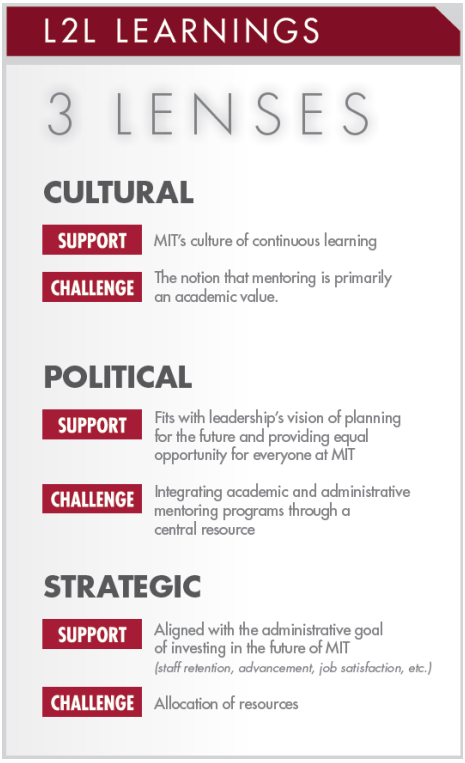
The Challenge: The notion that mentoring is primarily an academic value

The Support: MIT's culture of continuous learning

Political Lens – *Organizations are contests and action comes through power*

The Challenge: Integrating academic and administrative mentoring programs through a central resource

The Support: Fits with leadership's vision of planning for the future and providing equal opportunity for everyone at MIT and cultivate a caring community



Strategic Lens – *Organizations are machines and action comes through planning*

The Challenge: Allocation of resources

The Support: With outcomes related to staff retention, advancement, and job satisfaction, investing in a mentoring program is aligned with the leadership vision of investing in the future of MIT

Other observations enabled through applied L2L lesson:

Linking (integration)

- To Quality of Life survey folks, to DLCs, to HR, to Diversity and Inclusion office, and to Library for online resources, suggested readings

Aligning (internal: rewarding, selecting, information management, etc.) – ensuring that grouping and linking work

- Need to make sure it's perceived as a priority for others who may need to provide assistance to the Mentoring Coordinator
- Need to reward participation in program (for both mentors and mentees)
- Need to build ongoing communication paths between HR/ODI/Mgrs

Fitting (external: with environment)

- Keeping a pulse on the MIT environment…is the mentoring having the desired goals of increased retention/work satisfaction through more opportunities for all to learn and grow?
- Have we created a more caring environment?

Barriers: (Inadequate analysis, inadequate information)

- Need a GREAT communication plan – WHY is this important? WIIFM? Why does MIT support this?
- In recruiting mentees, the Mentoring Center should strive to overcome the culture of appearing weak if someone asks for help.

Summary

To meet the challenges of the future, MIT will need to have strong community of leaders that work together. Mentoring is important to retain staff, create positive engagements within the workforce, creating positive inter-personal relationships, and to help advance the careers of MIT"s workforce. Many great mentoring programs MIT and can be built upon to increase the participation for MIT staff. The project team found there is a strong desire for MIT staff to be involved in a formal mentoring program with strong support from leadership. The recommendations the team has outlined in this report will hopefully help in institutionalizing these efforts and as these programs continue to grow, so will the culture of leadership at MIT.

Resources

The following is a list of resources used in the creation of this report.

Books

The Blackwell Handbook of Mentoring: A Multiple Perspectives Approach. Allen TD, Eby LT (editors). Wiley-Blackwell (2007)

Interviews

Lincoln Labs Mentoring Program Interview with Ellen Beachy and Kerry Harrison, by Jennifer Kratochwill (July 2014)

Journals articles and reports

Broder-Singer, R. "Why mentoring matters in an increasingly complex business world, mentoring proves to be win-win for all parties involved."

Harmon, Audry Director of HR Programs and Communications, Harvard Harvard FAS Mentoring Program (June 16, 2014)

Kram, K.; Isabella, L. [1985]. *Mentoring Alternatives: The Role of Peer Relationships in Career Development*. The Academy of Management Journal. Vol. 28

Wanberg CR, Kammeyer J, Marchese M. Mentor and protégé predictors and outcomes of mentoring in a formal mentoring program. J Vocational Behav (2006)60:410-423.

Kram KE, Higgins MC. A new approach to mentoring. MIT Sloan Management Review (9/22/2008)
http://web.mit.edu/cortiz/www/Diversity/SloanReviewSeptember2008.pdf

How to be a smart protégé. Wall Street Journal. 8/17/2009.
http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052970203937504574252141852898888

The Chronicle of Evidence-Based Mentoring
http://chronicle.umbmentoring.org/

International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring
http://ijebcm.brookes.ac.uk/

"Employee Satisfaction Results Related to Work Life Balance Drawn From Recent Quality of Life Surveys for Faculty & Staff" Report, MIT Council on Family and Work, November 13, 2013

"Making Mentoring Work" Sarah Dinolfo and Julie S. Nugent – 2010

"ROI in Mentoring – Myth or Reality?" Articles from International Mentoring Association, Catherine Mossop, FCMC of SageMentors, Inc.

Other resources

American Physical Society Sites, Physics Research Mentor Training Seminar:
http://www.aps.org/programs/education/undergrad/faculty/mentor-info.cfm

"Best Practices Mentoring", U.S. Office of Personnel Management
https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/training-and-development/career-development/bestpractices-mentoring.pdf

Catalyst: Making Mentoring Work
http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/making-mentoring-work

CSDI Draft Guidelines –
Mentoring Guidebook 2010

The Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring (U Mass Boston)
http://www.umbmentoring.org/

International Mentoring Association
http://mentoringassociation.org/

The International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring
http://ijebcm.brookes.ac.uk/

MIT HR Guide to Informal Mentoring
http://hrweb.mit.edu/system/files/Guide+to+Informal+Mentoring_0.pdf

MIT ICEO website
http://diversity.mit.edu/mentoring/

MIT Mentoring Fair 2010 (video)
http://techtv.mit.edu/videos/6859-mit-mentoring-fair-2010

UAAP Mentorship @ MIT website
https://mentorship.mit.edu/

The Wisconsin Program for Scientific Teaching
http://scientificteaching.wisc.edu

"Corporate Mentoring Programs", Valorie Hennigan, ASLA - Women in Landscape Architecter Newsletter, Fall 2003: http://www.asla.org/ppn/article.aspx?id=2260

"Best Practices in Diversity & Inclusion" Panel Report, MIT School of Engineering (Feb 21, 2014)