

Abbott Laboratories – Evaluation and Process Improvement

About Abbott Laboratories

Headquartered in north suburban Chicago, Abbott Laboratories ranks number 80 on the *FORTUNE 500* and has more than 72,000 employees worldwide in more than 130 countries. Abbott discovers new medicines, new technologies and new ways to manage health, including nutritional products, laboratory diagnostics and pharmaceutical therapies.

Problem

New to the company, the Manager of Professional Development in the Human Resources Department knew of the mentoring program for professional development of engineers, but had no idea how effective it was.

Solution

TNI Consultants conducted original research and evaluated the program over four months. A custom-designed 12-page questionnaire requested demographic information, including length of time in the mentoring relationship and whether the boss was included in the process.

The questionnaire contained three mutually exclusive lists of potential benefits from the mentoring relationship -- to the organization, protégé and mentor. Participants selected and ranked the three items they perceived as being *most* beneficial and the three items they perceived as being *least* beneficial -- to the organization, protégé and mentor.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with nine functions of the mentoring relationship, any dissatisfaction and assign an overall value to the mentoring relationship.

Results

Ninety-five percent of participants responded to the questionnaire. Mentors, protégés and protégés' bosses perceived benefits of the mentoring program in significantly different ways base on their role, or lack thereof, in the mentoring relationship. Recommendations included:

- Establish formal role of mentor program coordinator
- Establish feedback loop between mentor, protégé and protégé's boss
- Conduct orientation and training to the mentoring program
- Conduct self-assessment of career or life skills
- Share personal values, needs and interests
- Create support system for the mentoring program

Testimonial

"Terrie gathered information we could never have collected ourselves. She was efficient, professional and instructive as she worked with corporate executives who, while experts in engineering, knew nothing about evaluation! Terrie's recommendations definitely strengthened our program." *Mark Nadicz, Manager of Professional Development, Human Resources, Abbott Laboratories, Inc.*
