

Intervening & Mentoring CEW mentoring program

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What is CEW

- Chief Executive Women (CEW) is an organisation of women leaders from corporate Australia, the professions, academia, and the public and not-for-profit sectors.
- Established in 1985 as an active network, the organisation encourages and promotes the effective use of women's leadership talents
- CEW seeks to ensure talented women reach important leadership roles in Australia
- www.cew.org.au

Catalyst on Mentoring & Networking

- Workplace relationships are among the keys to a successful career. They become increasingly important as one advances to senior levels in business. Catalyst research consistently demonstrates that having influential mentors and access to key networks are critical factors in advancement. At the same time, lack of access to mentors and exclusion from informal networks are barriers to getting ahead.
- www.catalystwomen.org

EOWA on Mentoring

- Mentoring can improve the self-confidence and the job-competitiveness of the women involved, resulting in an increase in the number of women in key positions in an organisation (ODEOPE)
- Mentoring is an effective method for the transference of professional, technical and management skills. (ODEOPE)
- Mentoring increases the skills, flexibility and knowledge of participating employees. This results in many benefits to the organisation, mentees, mentors and other employees. (ODEOPE)
- www.eowa.gov.au
- www.equity.unsw.edu.au/odeope01rpt.html

Why did CEW initiate the program?

- To support organisations in their goals to increase the retention and promotion of senior female talent
- To raise the profile of the CEW with organisations and senior female talent
- To develop action plans to address those factors affecting retention and promotion of senior female talent
- To raise the understanding that mentoring and networks are acknowledged as keys to success

What is the program?

- Sixteen female participants from four organisations were brought together over a year to network, to leverage CEW members as mentors and to have the opportunity to discuss the major factors affecting female retention and promotion in Australia
- Individual coaches were appointed to each participant

Desired Outcomes

- Recognition at CEO level that without specific action plans, the attrition of women managers will continue
- The development of specific action plans within each organisation to improve female retention
- The establishment of a supportive, constructive and encouraging network for the nominated program participants

Outcomes for the Organisation

- Increased awareness and recognition of the value of diversity and the need for gender specific programs to achieve it
- Feedback on the issues faced by women in the workplace and energy and focus from the program participants to help the CEO address them
- The development of measurement tools to track female retention & promotion

Outcomes for the Participants

- An opportunity to learn about retention strategies
- Time to build networks with other senior women both inside and outside their organisation
- To provide space to reflect on their careers and support their own development

Pilot year - 2004

- The CEO and HR heads of each of the organisations were engaged on the issues affecting female retention
- During 2004 there were eight meetings with the participants which supported networking within and across the participating organisations
- Research articles relating to female retention and promotion were identified and discussed
- Feedback from all stakeholders was positive and encouraging

Observations from 2004

- Focus on gender diversity needs to be supported from the top
 - HR is a partner but CEO support clearly makes the difference
 - Women are concerned about being seen to drive the female agenda

Observations from 2004

- What gets measured gets done!
 - What gender based data is available and what is needed to better track success of female talent?
 - Who tracks the data and who knows of its existence?
 - How often is it reviewed?
 - What happens with exit interview material? Why did they leave? Did they move to a promotion? Was there a gender difference?
 - Does the gender split in the “talent” pool reflect the organisation gender split?
 - Who gets promoted and why?

Observations from 2004

- Women are often seen to lack ambition
 - Is there a gender difference
 - Why do women hesitate to put themselves forward?
 - Do women lack ambition?
 - Is there a gender difference in approach to career
- Do women lack ambition? (excellent article from HBR)
 - For men, ambition is considered a necessary and desirable part of life. Most women, however, associate ambition with egotism, self-aggrandizement, or manipulation.

Observations from 2004

- Flexible workplaces
 - The need for more flexibility in workplaces is important for all
 - Generation Y is demanding more flexibility
 - Employees are starting to vote with their feet
 - Availability 7x24 needs review

Observations from 2004

- How can networking and mentoring be facilitated within an organisation
 - Why do women feel less supported in the workplace
 - Why do women place less priority on developing networks

The 2005 Program

- Plan to retain the same organisations with a number of new participants
- Increase the number of organisations involved
- Encourage greater sharing of quantitative data on the retention of women
- Develop action plans that can be shared with organisations outside the program

Women constitute half of the world's population, perform nearly two thirds of its work hours, receive one-tenth of the world's income and own less than one-hundredth of the world's property.

United Nations Report