

The Top 7 – Cost Free – Ways to Build Leadership Skills in Your Employees

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Developing your organization's future leaders is one of those "someday" tasks. The two biggest obstacles are the perceived cost and the time it takes to devise a plan of development.

article!

When a task seems insurmountable most of us push it to the back of our minds or the bottom of our to-do list. But developing a leadership pipeline in the A/E/C industry has reached a crisis level and you must act on it for the future survival of your organization.

To get you started, here are seven cost-free ways that you can begin developing leadership knowledge and competencies in



JOB ROTATIONS

Developing up-and-coming leaders through various functions and to have them work with a variety of mentors so that they understand how the business as a whole works before they get slotted into a leadership role.

of what they've read.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is a marvelous way to gain valuable skills that you couldn't offer at your company. By volunteering on the events committee, for instance, they will have a better grasp of planning, scheduling, communication, etc.

Any type of volunteering is good, however volunteering for an industry association chapter is even better for immersing future leaders in the industry. They will get to meet and learn from professionals from other organizations and be able to see possibilities for their own career.

MENTORING

Mentor relationships are used in executive development all the time, but there's no reason they have to be limited to the senior level of the organization. The idea in a mentoring relationship is to impart experience and lessons-learned to help the up-and-coming leader to understand the business in a broader perspective.

Successful mentor relationships require a paternalistic mindset in which the more senior person believes it is their

often best achieved when the mentor is not in the direct line of command with the mentee.

Mentor relationships can also be developed outside the organization, and often these relationships begin due to involvement in professional association chapters.

JOURNALING

Journaling is a private activity that only takes a few minutes

ideas" that have happened that day. What did you achieve? What questions do you have? What are you struggling with? Who do you admire and why? Management guru Peter Drucker

management theories that organizations still rely on today.

During 1:1 meetings with one's manager, an up-and-

accomplishments and ask any questions they are struggling

manager, is it still a useful exercise in marking one's progress as a professional.

PEER GROUPS

weekly or bi-weekly meetings of co-workers in the same role or at the same level of the organization who help one another

facilitating the meeting so that it stays on task; the agenda is very open and intended to address the most pressing issues of the attendees.

are pretty evenly split between interpersonal concerns, such as how to deal with an underperforming direct report, and occupational issues such as how to keep a technical glitch

LUNCH AND LEARNS

A few years ago, we worked with a client that had a lot of well-hidden technical expertise. There were experts in the company

nobody knew who to call for assistance – everyone felt that the

This organization instituted a monthly lunch and learn in which each expert was asked to discuss what they knew, tell some stories to illustrate how their expertise worked in the

not to make those in attendance into experts themselves but

and others in the organization who could help them.

uptick in business development. When PMs or superintendents faced an unusual request or issue they stopped treating it as an anomaly and instead viewed it as an opportunity the company could handle.

About the Author

Dr. Nanette Miner is a leadership development and workplace-learning expert. As [The Training Doctor](#), she has revolutionized the way that individuals are prepared for leadership roles in organizations. This ensures everyone in the company has the skills and business acumen of a leader. This is essential for an organization.

She has written articles for *Harvard Business Review*, *Forbes*, and *MBA World Journal* and is a frequent guest on workplace training and career podcasts and talk radio such as *Entrepreneur* and *Success*.

Nanette regularly speaks at industry conferences and corporate learning events on how to integrate leadership capabilities throughout an organization. An author of eight books, her most recent is *Leadership Development: A Practical Guide to Building a High-Performing Team*.