

Reuters: Valuing Difference: Global Reverse Mentoring Programme

Roles and responsibilities: A guide for participants.

Introduction

The following guidelines have been developed as part of the launch of Reuters' first Global Reverse Mentoring Programme. They are intended to help learning partners in the reverse mentoring pairs think about and prepare for their mentoring relationship, and serve as a 'checklist' to refer back to from time to time as the programme develops.

Programme Objectives

The Global Reverse Mentoring Programme (RMP) aims to provide a unique opportunity for senior leaders to learn about and explore issues about valuing difference, diversity and inclusion, in the context of Reuters' current and future business. This will be achieved through regular interaction with a mentor/learning partner who is currently at a more junior level in the organisation and whose personal 'make -up' and experience, in diversity terms, is different in some important ways from those of the senior mentee.

Perhaps even more than in the more usual forms of mentoring, a successful reverse mentoring relationship needs a high degree of trust and openness to be built between the participants, and it is very important to clarify roles, responsibilities, goals and expectations at the outset.

The notes that follow are intended as guidelines to help you prepare and get started. The guidelines are not 'set in stone' and may not apply in every situation. The important thing is that each reverse mentoring pair will need to agree for themselves what's going on to be key to making the process a real success.

The programme will start in February 2006, and will run for twelve months. During this time it is expected that each mentoring pair will have a minimum of eight meetings. Ideally, and particularly at the start of the programme, these meetings should be face to face, but participants are free to 'meet' virtually at these times if that helps them manage the logistics. The key thing is that there

should be sufficient contact time to give the participants the opportunity to really get to know one another and work on their chosen learning agenda.

Given the pressure on diaries, it is important that the meeting schedule is planned well in advance and that meetings are given a high priority and not cancelled in favour of other commitments. (Experience from the RAM reverse mentoring programme suggests that scheduling meetings either first thing in the morning or at the end of the day/ over dinner can help).

GSC Members are being briefed individually during January 06, and mentors are attending a workshop in early February to prepare for their roles.

Joint responsibilities

- Invest time in getting to know one another and building trust
- Contract with one another the desired goals, outcomes and expectations (and be realistic and explicit)
- Agree how you are going to track progress
- Plan and commit to meetings, and stick to the commitment
- Be explicit about maintaining and respecting confidentiality
- Give and receive constructive feedback and challenge
- Be prepared to share and respect personal experiences
- Adopt a true 'learning' mindset
- Leave organisational hierarchy outside the door; you're there as equal learning partners

For the Mentor

- Focus on the needs and opportunities of the mentee
- Draw on, and be prepared to share, your personal experiences, insights and perspectives
- Be constructive and assertive. Strike the right balance between advocacy and enquiry; listen, explore, ask questions as well as provide input.
- Be comfortable with disagreement and 'allow for the possibility of a different truth'
- Come to meetings prepared with ideas and suggestions about both content and process. Try to make optimum use of what is a very scarce resource; time together

For the Mentee

- Be an active and appreciative learner, prepared to try to 'see what you don't yet see'
- Prepare for the meetings, and do your part to make them as fruitful as possible.

- Take responsibility for helping your mentor to fulfil his/her role
- Respect your mentor's time.
- Be prepared to experiment and take risks
- Be open, honest and explicit about what you're thinking/feeling