

Table 3. Step 3: Design the Program

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<p>In this step, you will design your mentoring program. Use your mentoring program goal statement and the resources and constraints identified earlier to guide key decisions on program design.</p> <p>Although this tool highlights some of the key decisions you will need to make, it is not intended to be comprehensive. There are excellent resources available to assist you with the specifics of program design. We have highlighted several of these in the Additional Resources section.</p>	
Key Decision	Special Considerations
PARTICIPANTS	
<p>How will participants be selected?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational level • Organizational tenure • Level of job performance • Previous mentoring experience • Willingness to participate • Demographic factors 	<p>If you limit participation, consider the impact on individuals who are neither invited nor selected to participate. <i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Men in the case of mentoring programs for women. - Long-term volunteers in the case of mentoring programs for paid staff in nonprofits.
<p>Is participation optional or mandatory?</p>	<p>Consider if participation will be seen as an honor or an obligation.</p>
<p>Will you include participants from other organizations?</p>	<p>When there is a lack of qualified participants within a single organization, inter-organizational mentoring may be a good option.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> Small businesses, family businesses, startups, and nonprofits</p>
<p>How will the program be promoted?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted vs. general • What person or department solicits participants? 	<p>An invitation from top management or pilot program participants will be viewed differently from an invitation delivered by HR or a direct supervisor.</p>
PROGRAM PARAMETERS	
<p>What is the scale of your mentoring program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited group vs. entire organization 	<p>Consider pilot testing your program with a small group.</p>
<p>What is your preferred level of formality?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal/Highly-structured • Informal/Loosely-structured 	<p>Make a choice consistent with your organizational culture and resources.</p>
<p>Will you use a traditional or alternate approach?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dyads, groups, reverse-mentoring, e-mentoring, etc. 	<p>Group approaches may be beneficial when you wish to avoid hierarchical issues, encourage peer mentoring, or if you have a shortage of qualified mentors.</p>
<p>What is the duration of the program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed duration vs. ongoing 	<p>Plan fixed program dates with your business cycle in mind.</p>
<p>How will mentors be matched to mentees?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigned by program director or supervisor • Matched through an application process • Paired through informal networking 	<p>Method of matching should align with your objective.</p>
<p>Where will mentoring occur?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical (on-site vs. off-site) • Virtual (e-mail, videoconference, phone, etc.) • Hybrid 	<p>Consider unique formats and/or locations for mentoring encounters.</p>
<p>Will there be rewards provided for participation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Examples:</i> recognition, promotion, skill development, monetary rewards (higher compensation, gift cards, contests, etc.). 	<p>Some individuals will be intrinsically motivated to participate, others will be motivated by external rewards.</p>
<p>Will you have launch/landing events?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening reception or mixer • Retreat • Closing celebration or special event 	<p>Consider organizing special events at program start and finish.</p>
<p>Do you require specific software or IT resources for program administration and delivery?</p>	<p>Commercial mentoring software and apps are available.</p>
TRAINING	
<p>What training will be provided? How long will it last?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for mentors • Orientation for mentees 	<p>Type of training should align with the program format.</p>
<p>Who will lead the training?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal vs. external 	<p>Outside training staff may provide an unique or objective viewpoint.</p>
<p>Will you create written materials for participants?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program guides • Participant agreements 	<p>Consult the additional resources section for examples.</p>

PROBLEMS

What will you do if problems occur?

- Personality or relationship conflict
- Poor communication
- Scheduling or availability issues
- Harassment
- Conflict with supervisor

Consider how problems will be addressed *before* launching your program.

Create Your Mentoring Program

Use your key decisions to create your mentoring program.

Example 1 – Software Company

Key Elements

Participation mandatory for junior women programmers, group format, 6 month program duration, in person, lunch provided once a month, ½ day training at program launch, opening speaker (female tech leader), creation of short program guide, and monthly check-in via the company’s internal communication app

Example 2 – Nonprofit Healthcare Organization

Key Elements

Participation encouraged for high potential junior managers, one-on-one format between senior leaders and junior managers, mentors receive incentive bonus if mentees are promoted to key positions, one year program duration, monthly meetings scheduled by mentor, off-site retreat at program launch, mentors and mentee pairs draft an agreement outlining mentoring goals.