



# Management In Practice

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## Making the Decision to Mentor

### *Abstract*

*For the past two decades, the desirability of formal mentoring programs has gone relatively unchallenged by academics and managers. Recently, however, the concept has been reexamined in light of changes within and outside of corporations and other organizations. The benefits of successful mentoring—faster socialization of employees, better retention and promotion rates, earlier identification of high-potential employees, and stronger employee commitment—are not challenged. Rather, the viability and practicality of formal mentoring programs are coming up against flatter organizational structures (more subordinates to mentor), increased management focus on external environments (less on internal matters), and rising numbers of part-time or flex-time employees (looser ties to the organization), to name a few features of today's business landscape. Mentoring may still provide competitive advantages, but before instituting a program, managers should analyze their own organization and avoid a "one size fits all" approach.*

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