

MENTORING PROGRAM FOR WOMEN

Company name : PWC

Activity sector : Activités de services administratifs et de soutien

Company category : Grande Entreprise

Description of the action

The women's mentoring program, initiated by our "Women and men" employee resource group, aims to retain and advance female talent, especially at senior levels. By addressing challenges such as male-dominated environments and limited role models, the program provides targeted support and development opportunities. As mentoring is a proven tool for talent growth, this initiative promotes equal representation and inclusion within our organization.

Context

Using data analysis, the team identified that while women and men start their careers in similar numbers, female representation declines at senior levels; currently, 25.5% of Partners and 34% of Directors at PwC Luxembourg are women. This highlighted the need for a targeted program to address gender inequality by expanding women's networks and visibility.

Objectives

The pilot aimed to advance women's professional development (guidance for promotion readiness, goal setting, strategic thinking), broaden their visibility within the firm (recommend for important events, introduce to wider network, etc.), and support during transitions, if needed. As PwC's first formal mentoring initiative, it served as a foundation for future efforts to support the retention and growth of senior female talent.

Approach

A pilot was launched across all PwC business lines with approximately 20 mentees and 20 mentors. Mentee selection was done collaboratively with HR and DEI, ensuring inclusivity and equity. Mentor-mentee pairs lasted 12 months, with project team check-ins and feedback surveys at 6 and 12 months. We held a kickoff meeting for both mentors and mentees explaining why a female mentorship program is of value, what the expectations are of the mentors and mentees as well as how the journey will look like. The structures of

The meetings varied: some planned monthly 1-hour coffee chats, others spontaneous after-work catchups; from the feedback received, the most successful relationships had a set schedule and goals set at the beginning. Furthermore, some mentees mentioned that they initially preferred women mentors but later acknowledged the value of diverse perspectives.

Impact

The pilot concluded successfully with a mentor-mentee gathering and received highly positive feedback from both groups (85% said the objectives were met and the collaboration was fruitful), highlighting its benefits for mentee growth at PwC. Mentees shared that they appreciated and benefited from long term career-perspectives and to be able to choose from a selection of mentors; the mentors appreciated being able to increase women's participation into leadership at PwC. The insights from the pilot have been incorporated into a broader women in leadership initiative launching at PwC at the end of 2025.

« To do »

- Base the decision to launch the initiative on data, including gender representation, promotion, and retention metrics.
- Secure leadership support and ensure understanding of why mentorship does advance women's careers.
- Provide clear documentation outlining expectations for mentors and mentees.
- Conduct regular follow-ups throughout the initiative.
- Establish a process to address situations where mentor-mentee relationships are not effective

« Not to do »

- Avoid overstructuring the initiative; provide guidance but allow mentors and mentees flexibility to shape their interactions.
- Include all genders to be mentors, don't have only women mentor women.
- Conclude the initiative with a formal closing and outline next steps, encouraging mentor-mentee relationships to continue beyond the program.