GLOBAL MENTORING CIRCLE PROGRAM (GMCP) FACTORS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GMCP: THE CASE OF DELL TECHNOLOGIES

TAN YOKE CHING

ASIA e UNIVERSITY
2023

GLOBAL MENTORING CIRCLE PROGRAM (GMCP) FACTORS ON
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GMCP: THE CASE OF DELL
TECHNOLOGIES

TAN YOKE CHING

A Thesis Submitted to Asia e University in
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Doctor of Business Administration

November 2023

ABSTRACT

Technology is advancing exponentially, and those who can adapt quickly and successfully will prosper in this uncertain world. Studies have shown that investing in people development will increase performance and productivity, increase engagement and retention and increase in innovation and creativity. This research will be a case study on understanding an internal program called Global Mentoring Circle Program (GMCP) in Dell Technologies. GMCP was launched 2 years ago and there is no sufficient evidence data to determine what factors have a significant relationship to the effectiveness of the program. GMCP is a group mentoring program where there are 7-8 mentees to a mentor. When the program ends, the mentees will be invited to take the survey to so that the writer can provide a recommendation to the President. A pilot was conducted by inviting 140 managers to join, 127 managers accepted, and 81 managers responded to the survey. The 4 independent variables were tested, which are structure, content, mentor, and mentee. Based on the statistical data, the results show that the data sets were reliable.   Using Pearson's Correlation Analysis, the results show that the structure, mentor and mentee have a strong correlation with the effectiveness whereas the content has a weaker correlation with the effectiveness of the program. Multiple regression analysis reveals that the mentor has the strongest relationship, followed by mentees and structure factors. It is also concluded that the content has little bearing on the GMCP's effectiveness. On the effectiveness of the GMCP in their development, 92% of the participants "agree" and "strongly agree" that the program was effective to their development. In summary, the pilot is very successful, and the writer will recommend to the President to go ahead with the program at the global level. Besides that, the framework can be used in any industry and any organization globally. In this regard, this research can be a piece of valuable information to the organization as well as to future researchers in similar areas.

Keywords: Group mentoring, framework for group mentoring, employee development

APPROVAL

This is to certify that this thesis conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in quality and scope, for the fulfilment of the requirements for the Doctor of Business Administration.

The student has been supervised by: **Professor Dr. Juhary Ali**

The thesis has been examined and endorsed by:

Professor Dr. Mohamad Hanapi Mohamed
Professor
Universiti Utara Malaysia
Examiner 1

Dr. Zukimie Mat Junoh
Senior Lecturer
Universiti Malaysia Perlis
Examiner 2

This thesis was submitted to Asia e University and is accepted as fulfilment of the requirements for the Doctor of Business Administration.

Oo Yu Hock

……………………………
Associate Professor Dr. Oo Yu Hock
Asia e University
Chairman, Examination Committee
15 November 2023

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis submitted in fulfilment of the DBA degree is my own work and that all contributions from any other persons or sources are properly and duly cited. I further declare that the material has not been submitted either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university. In making this declaration, I understand and acknowledge any breaches in this declaration constitute academic misconduct, which may result in my expulsion from the programme and/or exclusion from the award of the degree.

Name: Tan Yoke Ching

Corina Tan

Signature of Candidate: **Date**: 15 November 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to begin by sincerely thanking Prof. Dr. Juhary Ali for all of his guidance and support throughout this research effort. I sincerely appreciate his ongoing support and advice in enabling me to improve my report for this research assignment. I also want to appreciate my family, who I adore, for their support while I completed this DBA program and wrote this research. It was not easy for them as I had to attend classes during the weekends and spend months and months on writing this thesis. Without their help, this study would not have been feasible at all.

In addition, I want to thank all my DBA lecturers who have helped me learn and grow in my understanding of business and management by imparting their wisdom and sharing their personal experiences.

Finally, I'd like to thank all of colleagues and staffs of Dell Technologies that has participated in this research and without them, I will not be able to successfully complete the research. They have contributed so much by providing me inputs and sharing their valuable knowledge with me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

GMCP	Global Mentoring Circles Program
GBS	Global Business Services
DT	Dell Technologies
CSB	Consumer Small Business
PGM	Peer Group Mentoring
OTMM	One-To-Many Mentoring
MTOM	Many-To-One Mentoring
MTMM	Many-To-Many Mentoring
SLT	Social Learning Theory
WTH	Work from home
APJC	Asia Pacific & Japan & China
EMEA	European countries
US	United States
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Science

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As businesses around the world postpone and cancel in-person meetings in response to the novel coronavirus (or SARS-CoV-2), which causes the COVID-19 disease, workplace learning is emerging as one of the earliest and hardest-hit business activities. Based on the studies from McKinsey on changing workplace education in the era of the coronavirus and it was mentioned that digital learning becomes critical, how to ensure connecting with people while working from home and ensure that employees continue to learn and also maintain the mental health and overall health (Kshirsagar et al., 2020).

Mentoring and coaching arose in recent decades to assist the leaders for continual learning and development. Executive coaching is a form of development-oriented relationships, which began to be implemented in the 1990s as organizations recognized the changing culture required an increased need for changing executive behavior to be effective (Kombarakaran et al., 2008). The goals for the process of mentoring are to counsel the executive on work-related issues and offer an element of a 360-degree feedback by articulating observed strengths and weaknesses of the executive, thus purposing to increase the executive's effectiveness in their organizational context (Kombarakaran et al., 2008).

Based on the research, compared to their non-mentored coworkers, mentored individuals are said to have superior managerial abilities, more productivity, increased professionalism, and higher job satisfaction.

(Dansky, 1996).

Companies are embarking mentorship in a much larger scale as the environment is changing much faster and more challenging in the global environment. A mentor

plays a crucial role in helping a mentee improve both personally and professionally by offering support, advice, and guidance (Kram, 1985). Through this connection, the mentee gains a positive impression of the company as a nurturing environment for personal growth. The mentor's investment will assist the mentee grow in value to the company. According to Short (2013), mentoring allegedly helps workers handle organizational change, complexity, and work-related stress. A few of the numerous experiences that might affect employee engagement include improved job performance, productivity, task efficiency, work quality, and mentoring (Lee, 2018).

Mentoring that gives psychosocial backing can be useful to representatives. Mentees frequently esteem the psychosocial parts of mentoring. Researchers have notice that mentoring offers psychosocial backing to lighten business related pressure (Craig et al., 2013). Employees who experience less pressure are more engaged with their work. Subsequently, presenting mentoring that gives psychosocial backing to representative commitment might deliver positive social change for the work culture and the company. Managers may strengthen their relationships with employees by interacting with them and getting involved personally.

As per the traditional way of mentoring, which is one to one concept, the group mentoring appears to be the new construct. At times, it is possible that individuals will experience interpersonal mentoring which participating in group activities, group-level mentoring emerges from the dynamics of the group, relatively compared to one specific individuals. These challenges may include communications, social networks, cultural differences, experience differences and some researches have confirmed theoretical relationship between social networks and career mobility, laying the groundwork for testing the impact of groups on individual career outcomes (Dansky, 1996).

People development being one of the critical successes in business environment, organizations tend to have different programs to develop their employees using different methods such as training, coaching, 1x1 mentoring and group mentoring. Based on the studies from Russell, 2012, he indicate that his group mentoring as mentees more than two people in which the interactions were simultaneous and collaborative (Huizing, 2012). The word, group mentoring, is used throughout Russell's work as a general term to represent all the different types of group mentoring including peer group mentoring (PGM), one-to-many mentoring (OTMM), many-to-one mentoring (MTOM), and many-to-many mentoring (MTMM). Utilizing almost 20 years of research materials, he reviewed group mentoring theories that were developed since the mid-1990s. The progress of these theories placed on attempts to take the strengths of one-to-one mentoring (OTOM) and combine it with the benefits of group learning (Huizing, 2012). In this case study, it will be tie to the one-to-many mentoring (OTMM) which is called as Global Mentoring Circles (GMC) program.

Group mentoring is proving to be an efficient and successful juvenile intervention, according to recent study (Kuperminc, 2016). According to this model, the goal of interactions between one or more mentors and at least two youth is to promote positive development (Kuperminc & Thomason, 2013). Young people can engage in a variety of beneficial relationship interactions with mentors, peers, and the group as a whole through group mentoring (Kuperminc & Thomason, 2013). According to a 2017 study of 1,451 mentoring programs that serve 413,237 kids, 35% of the programs only employ group models, while 12% of them combine group and one-on-one mentoring (Garringer et al., 2017). The group style may provide a more economical use of resources than one-on-one mentoring and may be culturally appropriate for those who lean more toward a learning from others.

Regretfully, as group mentorship programs have proliferated, research has not kept pace. Research-based best practice materials for group mentoring are scarce, but landmark papers for one-to-one mentoring (Kupersmidt et al., 2017; MENTOR National, 2024) detail effective techniques based on data from thousands of matches. The majority of best practices in group mentoring have not yet undergone empirical testing, despite the fact that some theoretical and experiential expertise is starting to surface (Canadian Women's Foundation, 2015; Kuperminc & Thomason, 2013; Sherk, 2006).

Creating mentorship programs and promoting them internally could demonstrate to employees that the organization values their growth on both a personal and professional level. An increasing body of research suggests that companies may help employees manage the stress of working remotely by providing mentorship and other psychosocial support. Mentors can help employees become productive both within and outside of their companies (Lee, 2018).

1.0 Background of the Study

Group mentoring, which is called Mentor Circle (in Dell Technologies) has been in existence for 2 years. This is where the concept of a mentor with few mentees and they come together to discuss on selected topic on an agreed time. Although the program has been carried out in few organizations, there is not enough evidence to determine the effectiveness of the program. The previous program was made mandate to all the managers and no choice of selection on the topics. Although there was survey done, the response rate was only 22% where 95 attended the mentoring and only 21 responded to the survey. The survey response is too low to have a good assessment of the program. Based on the survey results, 19% responded as positive, 38.1% neutral and 42.9% says it is not effective. To summarized it, the program has limited data:

- Too few people responded to the survey, makes it statistically not relevant.
- High % rated neutral and not effective for the previous program.

The program was introduced with the objectives that it will provides platform to guide and empower the professional development of team members, broadens reach and impact beyond the traditional 1:1 approach and promotes best practices among different teams/organizations. In Dell Technologies, developing people is our key focus to ensure that we have continuous flow of strong resources and develop the future ready leaders.

The President of the Consumer, Small Business (CSB) organization has requested to expand the program to a larger group at the global level, but this expansion will require time commitment from the leader and the mentees. Since the previous programs did not have sufficient data points to determine what are the factors that can affect the effectiveness of the program and it was difficult to convince the leaders to participate. There is no data to support the program effectiveness and not enough evidence that the structure of the program is working. Besides that, the mentees may not sign up for the program and not able to get mentors to participate. With that situation, this will not be a successful program to start with.

To move forward on the program, one of the options was to do a pilot on an organization to collect data points to determine what are the factors that can make the program more effective and to be carried out at the larger scale. Instead of launching the program without good date points and support, it will be best to select a group to conduct the pilot. It was discussed at the management level and agreement that to relook at the program framework and select an organization to do the pilot. Upon completion of the pilot and depending on the results, then only we expand the program in a bigger scale.

The organization selected is Global Business Services (GBS) that has about 140 people managers and it is a global organization. The reason why the departnemnt as selected as it has enough managers and managers are quite tenure in Dell. Besides that, it is a global organization that has presence all around the world. The managers are then invited to join the GMCP. Since this is a global organization, all the mentees are based out of different country, and this will provide a good sample to obtain a global view. Besides that, this organization is a very mature organization where it has a long tenure team members and highly experienced.

<u>Company Profile</u>

Dell Technologies (DT) is an American multinational company, headquarters in Texas, Austin, US and business around the world. Dell started in 1984, when Michael Dell created Dell Computer Corporation, in his dorm-room where he was a student of the University of Texas at Austin and the company is named after the founder, Michael Dell. The company size is $91B and served in 180 countries and support 98% of Fortune 500 companies. Dell provides the essential infrastructure for organization to build their digital future, transform IT and protect their most important information.

On September 7, 2016, Dell and EMC joined forces in the largest technology merger in history to become Dell Technologies. Dell Technologies unites technology leaders – Dell, EMC, Secureworks, Virtustream and VMware – in one company with the power to drive digital transformation and generate real results every day for the customers and people who partner with Dell. Dell Technologies is committed to transforming businesses, shaping the future of innovation and developing technologies to drive human progress.

Dell is among the world's leading technology companies helping to transform people's lives with extraordinary capabilities. Their services ranges from hybrid cloud solutions to high-performance computing to ambitious social impact and sustainability initiatives, what dell do impacts everyone and everywhere. Dell Technologies focus is also delivering tomorrow. For Dell, leading is nothing new. Because of this, everything Dell do is infused with the values of promoting sustainability, fostering inclusivity, changing lives, and protecting ethics and privacy. Driven by a team that appreciates and honors diversity, Dell develop solutions that use technology to its fullest potential. We are convinced that technology can play a significant role in addressing intricate societal problems, ranging from healthcare to education to a digital economy.

Dell focusses on commitment to transparency and accountability. Dell Technologies are innovators leading the way in the digital revolution with our individual and collective passions and distinctive viewpoints drive each thought, idea, and solution we develop. Dell leaders cultivate an environment of creativity and inclusivity by celebrating our uniqueness and devoting time to celebrating our diversity. This allows us to develop technology that guarantees broad accessibility and significantly enhances everyday living (Dell, 2024).

Dell has been also focused on developing people and have a strong believe that people will be fundamental in everything that Dell does. Dell provides development programs to enhance the career growth and development of its employees and the programs to empower and inspire team members to personalize their career journey and build the portfolio of value they bring to the table by building skills, gaining experience and learning new things through: mentoring, coaching, training, feedback, opportunities, reward and new opportunities (Dell, 2021).

During this pandemic, the company has requested all employees (besides manufacturing) to work from home and provided all the technologies and management support to be able to operate anywhere in any part of the world. As you can imagine with the size of employees and the business in Dell, the changes that happens can be very frequent and this post challenges to the managers to be effective in managing their employees. They will be learning on the fly and trying to cope with the changes from process, tools and technologies and people stand-point. Thus, they must continue to improve themselves to be able to deal with the fast-moving environment. As the pandemic moved into a more stable environment, the company has moved to a hybrid model where the employees are given the flexibility to work home or go to the office.

Dell has a very strong code of conduct. It sets a very high standard for the employees. The company believes in tangible, positive change is achievable with innovation and action. Dell is committed to equality, trust and advocacy for one another and have zero tolerance for racism, bigotry, misogyny, hate speech or violence in any form. Dell's purpose, strategy and culture drive the team forward to achieve the impossible, all within a safe, inclusive, and productive work environment that empowers team members to be their authentic selves, grow and succeed.

With Dell Technologies, customer's business is always ready to move forward with innovation, how our customers partner with Dell Technologies to secure their digital future and realizing the digital future.

<u>Program details</u>

The program was designed to develop the managers by providing them the platform to share, learn, connect, ability to discuss the real business problems and

determine what could be the potential solutions. The sharing will be very powerful considering that all the mentees and mentors are from different regions and country.

GMCP will be conducted for the duration of 5 months mentoring with selected topics by the mentees and each of the circles will meet once a month for 1.5 hours. Before the program, the managers are invited to join the program and upon acceptance of the program, they will be asked on the referred topic. This is to ensure that they the mentees get a chance to suggest what they would like to learn. The mentors are selected from the same organizations and the mentor are higher level in grade. The mentors are chosen from the director's level as this is to ensure that they have the right experience to share and coach. The mentors are randomly allocated to the circles and the circles will have an average of 8-9 mentees. As for the mentees, the allocation is based on their location and diversity to provide them a wider learning in terms of diversity and culture elements.

Below is the Global Mentor Circle overview:

Figure 1.1: Global mentor circle overview
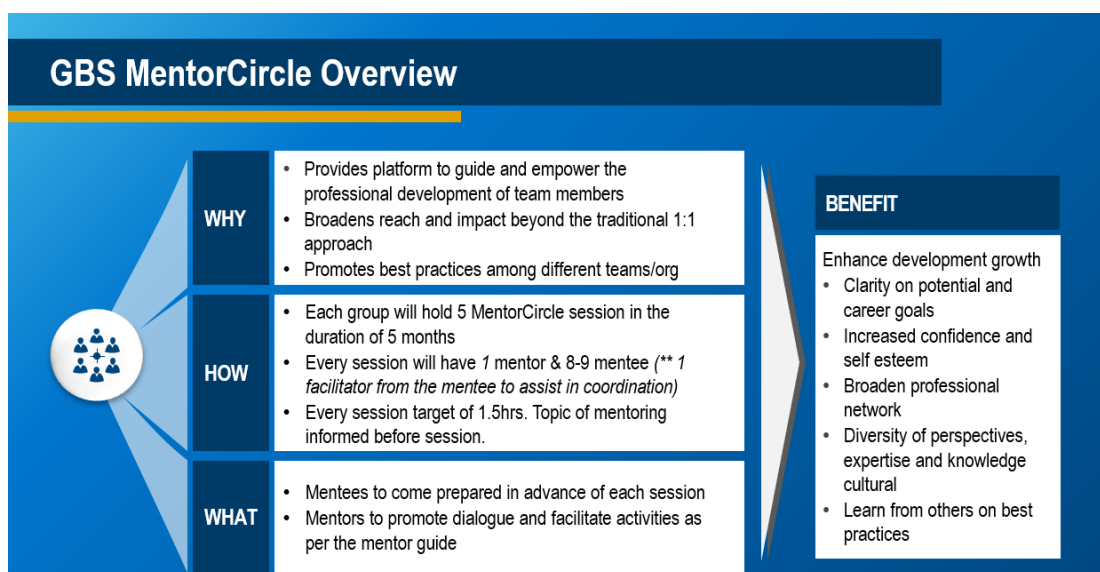
To ensure effective conversations, the mentees are informed few days earlier on the topic of discussion for them to come prepared. Some reading material and links

will be provided to the mentee to read to get them more prepared for the conversation. The mentor will be allocated a set of material to be used for the mentoring sessions. This is to ensure consistency and provide as a guide to the mentor. All the mentors will have to attend a facilitation class before the mentoring takes place. This is to ensure that the mentors have the right skills to conduct an effective session. All the mentoring sessions will be virtual and using zoom and will be recorded.

1.1 Statement of Problem

GMC was launched for the past 2 years in Dell Technologies in Malaysia. The objective of the GMCP was to help the managers in their career development and continue to support their career growth. After running the program for 2 years, from the survey results, (small sample size as only 22% responded), 50% of the respondent rated the program as ineffective and there weren't further details to drill down further. Thus, the management was unsure if they should continue the program or not. There was discussion that the team should continue the program but was not sure what changes to make to ensure that it is effective. Besides that, there were no detailed studies after the program to obtain feedback from the mentees on what factors that can influence the effectiveness of the program. There were four factors in the program (structure, content, mentor, mentee) and the management was not able to which factors has significant relations to the effectiveness of the program.

The details of the previous GMC:

- Mentees and Mentors were selected and mandate to join the program

- 5 months program and using the virtual method.

- 9-10 mentees in one circle and met monthly

- Specific topics identify by management and no material provided

- Program launch only in Dell Malaysia and no global context.

- Survey sent out to mentees and only ask if the program is effective or not without much drill down. 30 participants and only about 6 participants responded to the survey

- Program framework has 4 factors which is the structure, content, mentor, and mentee.

In summary, based on the previous mentoring program, there were not enough evidence that the program was effective to participants, and it is worth spending more time to drill down the details and determine how and what changes to make the program more effective. The previous program did not have sufficient data to adjust the details of the program framework, thus, the leadership was not able to provide a suggestion to the president if this program should be launch in a larger group at the global level. Besides that, the previous program was only conducted in one country, thus, it has been proven if this can be done at the global level.

1.2   Research Questions

The objective of the study is to determine the effectiveness of GMCP to the mentees and what are the factors that has the significant relationship to make the program effective. Based on the results, the management will be able to make an informed decision if they would like to extend the program to a larger Global organization. With the results, the management is also able to make changes to the program to increase the effectiveness. The previous program has not been verified the effectiveness and launching another program to a larger group will require time, money, and effort investment.