

Robert Half's Leadership Exchange Mentor Program Increases Engagement, Leadership Ability

Robert Half and River Mentoring Software Best Advance in Coaching and Mentoring September 2020



Company Background

Robert Half®

Company-at-a-Glance	Robert Half
Headquarters	Menlo Park, CA
Year Founded	1948
Revenue	\$6.074 Billion (2019)
Employees	Approximately 16,000
Global Scale	North America: U.S.A and Canada; APAC: Australia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore and New Zealand; EMEA: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom; LATAM: Brazil and Chile.
Customers/Output, etc.	Robert Half International Inc. provides specialized staffing and risk consulting services.
Industry	Staffing Services
Stock Symbol	RHI
Website	www.roberthalf.com



Company Background



Company-at-a-Glance	River Mentoring Software
Headquarters	Denver, CO
Year Founded	1994
Employees	9
Global Scale	Worldwide
Customers/Output, etc. (Key customers and services offered)	River Mentoring Software offers mentoring software to large and mid-sized businesses, federal government agencies and professional associations.
Industry	Software
Website	www.riversoftware.com

Budget and Timeframe

Number of (HR, Learning, Talent) employees involved with the implementation?	Three
Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert employees involved with the implementation?	Four
Number of contractors involved \with implementation	None
Timeframe to implement	One year
Start date of the program	Pilot session, 2012; launch; Q4 2014



Business Conditions and Business Needs

Robert Half's greatest influencers to business outcomes, employee experience and customer satisfaction are its Division Director (DD) and Branch Manager (BMG) leaders who support hiring, onboarding, training and the development of staffing professionals worldwide. These front-line leaders — who are also responsible for growing the business as staffing consultants — have historically high turnover rates. The demands of their operational tasks and management responsibilities were creating significant strain on these leaders across the organization. In examining these challenges, a gap in how the organization supported behavior-based development for its newly promoted and hired leaders was discovered. Specifically, the training for tactical responsibilities required to meet performance standards was robust and consistently articulated by senior leadership, but how the organization responded to the unique and individualized development needs remained inconsistent and at times, insufficient. Furthermore, the company's global, decentralized footprint with more than 380 office locations presented additional challenges to creating a scalable solution. While Robert Half has always had a collaborative culture of sharing information, experiences and best practices, its mentoring programs before 2012 were inconsistent and limited to state boundaries, and they lacked credibility due to spotty execution.

To address these key findings, company executives established five business pillars in 2012, with one pillar dedicated to leadership development. An executive sponsor was identified to promote the business strategy for leadership development and advocate the importance and value of mentoring to support new and transitional DDs and BMGs among executives and senior leaders companywide. With the key stakeholders identified, Robert Half committed to launching a global mentoring program that would provide newly promoted and hired DDs and BMGs the opportunity to select a peer-leader mentor to support their critical career transition.

Overview

The Robert Half United Leadership Exchange provides mentoring partnerships to newly promoted and hired DDs and BMGs — who are managers that oversee the greatest employee population — to support their individual development needs at the beginning stage of their new position. The program helps deliver on Robert Half's commitment to elevating the employee experience. This supports a more engaged workforce, which leads to greater performance and empowers employees to make more significant contributions to the company. With direct managers being the most influential person to an employee's experience, Robert Half targeted these new leaders for this mentoring experience.



Against this backdrop, the program was established with four key goals:

- 1. Create a consistent mentoring experience on a global scale
- 2. Empower the mentee in the mentor selection process
- 3. Develop all participants' individual leadership competence
- 4. Engage a minimum of 25% of the DD and BMG leadership population to serve as future mentors to sustain the program.

The program was piloted in 2012 and formally launched in Q4 2014. Since then, all the key goals have been achieved.

- To create a consistent experience, Robert Half invites new leaders to participate
 after they have been in their role for 90-120 days. Additionally, this was achieved
 through executive leadership support, key internal business technology partners,
 the investment in a robust system to streamline processes, and a team of
 dedicated program managers with professional certifications and education in
 the field of leadership development.
- 2. Mentees receive a personal consultation and two or three options for mentors who best align with their development goals.
- 3. Partners engage in structured 12-week mentoring relationships although many mentee/mentor pairs continue to support one another well beyond the duration of the program. Certified program managers provide coaching on team dynamics and interpersonal relationships, offer guidance on stylistic differences, consult on the alignment of mentoring with other global initiatives and confirm consistent execution of mentoring best practices. Feedback from the participants demonstrates how both mentees and mentors have learned from each other and expanded their leadership competence and confidence.
- 4. To date, more than 2,600 managers from around the world have participated in the program. Robert Half has continued to enhance the program by providing meaningful recognition to mentors, encouraging participation during instructor-led leadership training and updating program stakeholders regularly about the positive impact on retention rates and employee engagement among those who have participated. The mentor pool comprises 32% of Robert Half's leadership population and continues to grow each quarter as mentee alumni express interest in serving as mentors.

Integration of the program globally continues to be a commitment and focus each year. Since 2014, leaders across North America, Asia Pacific and Continental Europe have



participated. In 2018, Robert Half expanded the program to its administrative leadership, which represents a diverse group in nine countries.

Design and Delivery of the Program

The Robert Half United Leadership Exchange supports the transfer of leadership knowledge and helps enhance leaders' career development. Participation is completely voluntary and new leaders are invited to opt-in and express their commitment to the mentee participation conditions. Mentors are nominated by senior leaders and can opt-in after learning about the program.

The matching process is designed to mirror Robert Half's consultative approach of offering its clients and candidates choice in finding the right fit. Using River's proprietary mentoring software, mentees and mentors provide background information including work history, education, languages spoken, leadership motto, work-style preferences and community involvement. They can also share fun facts about their hobbies, the sporting teams they follow, or their family and friends. Mentees identify leadership competencies and key skills they wish to further develop with a mentor. Mentors, likewise, share the leadership competencies and key skills that they are open to discussing with a new leader. A strong consideration in the matching information collected is to offer visibility to a mentor's unique leadership experiences and insights beyond their team's revenue creation. With this information, program managers conduct a personalized search leveraging the algorithms carefully designed in the River mentoring system to identify two to three mentor options for each mentee. The program managers then conduct individual discussions with each mentee, empowering them to select the right mentor for them. This discussion also gives the mentee an opportunity to speak candidly with an objective third party who can support critical examination of the business conditions driving the leadership competencies they seek to develop. Once the partners are matched, they engage in 30-minute weekly discussions via video conference for 12 weeks.

By design, mentors and mentees must be from different reporting structures. This allows mentees to experience a global organizational perspective through their exposure to mentors whom they likely would not have encountered without the program. Given the significant time and emotional investments mentoring relationships require, River's system also allows mentors and program managers to note if mentors are active or inactive, which helps reduce mentor fatigue.

Communication and feedback supports the ongoing delivery of the program, and the program managers interact with participants at three specific milestones of the partnership: during the second week to confirm the partners have connected, at the midpoint to explore the value gained through weekly discussions and at the close to



measure the impact of the relationship. The results of the first two milestones are measured with River's mentoring survey system, and Robert Half's response rate is 70% — the highest of River's clients. This gives program managers the capacity to prioritize direct interactions with participants who are non-responsive or express concerns. Capturing feedback in this way positions program managers as resources that offer meaningful guidance and mitigate predictable roadblocks some partnerships may encounter. A post-experience survey is distributed and reinforced through calls with each mentee to gain a more in-depth understanding of the individual's experience. In addition, program managers provide participants articles, podcasts, videos, conversation starters and other resources throughout the duration of the program. Finally, feedback is shared with mentors and their leaders to recognize the impact they have made on the transitioning leader.

The Leadership Exchange provides the organization the ability to share knowledge untethered by the boundaries of a local office. Mentors and mentees consistently describe their participation in the program as mutually beneficial. Specific benefits that are frequently noted include the broader understanding of leadership approaches and more contextual awareness of Robert Half's global footprint. This social learning extends beyond the matched partners with insights and best practices cascading down through participants' teams and through the various organizational structures within Robert Half. There are countless examples of knowledge sharing between partners and it often continues beyond the 12-week mentoring partnership. Teams that never would have met are holding joint meetings over video conference. Formerly matched participants, while serving on an executive global task force together, can accelerate idea generation and speak candidly due to their foundation of trust. Many partners continue to keep in touch years beyond their initial partnership. As a decentralized, global organization the positive impact this type of collaboration has had on business results and the employee experience is the ultimate return on investment.

Adoption of the Program

Since the formal rollout, Robert Half United Leadership Exchange has demonstrated the value mentoring provides for a leader's development and the direct impact it has on employee engagement and retention.

Knowing inconsistency and spotty execution had contributed previously to challenges with the mentoring experience, the program managers work hard to build strong relationships with senior leaders and advocate the value and impact mentoring provides the organization. Supportive measures to promote adoption include offering senior leaders word tracks to speak impactfully about program participation, providing access to



quantitative and qualitative benefits of the program and distributing regular communications highlighting program participants to global leadership teams. These measures how allowed program managers to develop a highly valued consultative partnership with senior leaders seeking guidance on how to further promote mentoring in support of the employee experience.

Robert Half is proud of the mentoring culture it has cultivated across the organization and regularly shares about the value of mentoring in external publications, blogs, internal recruiting resources and in its annual Corporate Citizenship Report. In addition, individual experiences are showcased on the company's intranet year-round. A number of senior leaders served as mentors at Mentoring Monday events across the U.S. in February 2020 in partnership with the American City Business Journals. Robert Half mentors proudly display mentor medallions on their email signatures, an outward recognition for their contributions and efforts. The program has been prominently featured twice in Robert Half's internal publications magazine, Half Times, to highlight what mentees and mentors have gained from their experience in the program. During International Mentoring Month, celebrations take place across the organization to bolster awareness and appreciation for its mentoring culture. Social media posts are encouraged, allowing for personal testimonies to be shared internally through Yammer chat boards and across professional networks on LinkedIn. A notable addition to the 2020 celebration was a customized electronic greeting card allowing individuals to send notes of appreciation to any person who had contributed to their professional or personal growth.

The strong adoption and credibility of the Leadership Exchange have led to greater visibility and recognition of the program's impact. Senior leaders regularly share testimonials with their teams of the wins the program has helped facilitate. Since 2015, Robert Half has recognized mentors at the annual Reach for the Stars event which honors top leaders and staffing professionals around the globe. Additionally, Robert Half contributes a financial donation each year on behalf of its mentors to Dress for Success, a nonprofit supporting the development and mentorship of women.

The program's success has generated enthusiasm to expand the program. This has required program managers to address new challenges to adoption, including:

- 1. Persuading resistant and passive senior leaders
- 2. Better differentiating mentoring from performance management
- 3. Evolving administrative processes including the integration of new technology

Senior leaders help drive participation at the local level, which is why resistant and passive leaders present a significant challenge. Senior leaders are personally notified when their new DDs and BMGs are eligible for the program and the senior leader's approval is



required. When leaders failed to respond, entire geographic regions missed out on the opportunity to benefit from this valuable developmental experience. To address this, program managers launched a campaign to raise awareness among senior leaders. As a result, non-response rates have dropped to 12%.

Another challenge to adoption were senior leaders' requests to change foundational aspects of the program for their geography, particularly with the mentor-mentee matching process. Not only did these requests contradict one of the program's key goals, it resulted in hundreds of eligible leaders not having the opportunity to participate while program managers worked with senior leaders to find a solution. As challenging as this time was, Robert Half overcame resistance by reorienting and re-educating senior leaders, mentors and eligible mentees. In addition, program managers identified specific opportunities for key stakeholders to express the value the program provides, which led to the creation of a second testimonial video showcasing mentees and mentors describing their experiences. Program Managers also refreshed every mentor how to conduct effective mentoring discussions. With time, these geographies slowly came back into the fold. As a result, participation is at an all-time high.

The passion, excitement and success of mentoring resulted in program managers being inundated with mentoring requests for a variety of needs outside the Leadership Exchange's targeted audience. Helping Robert Half's leaders understand why mentoring is an ineffective tool for behavioral patterns related to performance management or performance problems has been essential.

As the program grew, the team managing the program faced capacity challenges. Administrative processes and technology needed to evolve. Recognizing the value and impact mentoring has on the organization, Robert Half hired an additional full-time resource dedicated to executing and supporting the program. Program managers also shifted their approach to participant orientations. In addition to providing information on the program, the interactive virtual meeting became a working session where participants could complete their mentoring profile. Program managers can answer questions in real-time and ensure required information is received so they can begin the personalized mentor matching. This working orientation session drastically reduces the amount of time the team previously spent following up with individuals.

There were also technological challenges. A legacy system used in combination with Microsoft Excel was leveraged to initially launch the program and it became apparent this approach could not support the program complexities nor sustain it long term. Identifying a dedicated mentoring system with the capability to track and export data, accelerate the matching process with strategic algorithms, and scale across countries and languages was needed. Additionally, the system had to support and conform to organizational and global



governmental regulations, data protection compliance, translation requirements and cultural differences. Robert Half chose to implement the River mentoring software in 2017. In addition to many out-of-the-box features meeting the needs for the Leadership Exchange program, the consultative approach of River's management and technology teams led Robert Half to choose this vendor. River's understanding of what Robert Half was currently achieving, the existing limitations and the desire to expand the mentoring culture have significantly contributed to the collective collaboration between the two companies. With increased participation and new automated processes, the program manager team has been able to maintain the high touch, "white glove" service that makes the mentoring experience unique at Robert Half.

By overcoming the obstacles described above, Robert Half was able to increase capacity and capabilities of the program manager team. This enabled the team to execute pilot sessions of group mentoring approaches for additional audiences. The new employee onboarding program was enhanced with more structure and resources aimed at expanding the new hire's internal network and accelerating acclimation to the organization's workplace culture through a mentoring relationship. Program managers were also able to strengthen mentoring experiences as part of senior manager and director level leadership development programs for back-office corporate employees.

Measurable Benefits

Robert Half prioritized measuring qualitatively and quantitatively participation, retention, and the impact on leadership development during a new leader's transition. Turnover at the participating levels was historically higher than both individual contributors and senior-level leaders. In discussion with key stakeholders, it was determined these areas were most critical in helping to understand the effect on the leader's development journey.

Goals

The four goals established at the beginning of the program continue to be at the very core of its success:

- 1. Create a consistent mentoring experience on a global scale
- 2. Empower the mentee in the mentor selection process
- 3. Develop all participants' individual leadership competence
- 4. Engage a minimum of 25% of the DD and BMG leadership population to serve as future mentors to sustain the program.



Participant Survey Results

Survey results of mentees and mentors show:

- 95% of mentees and mentors stated the mentoring experience has contributed positively to their leadership.
- 86% of mentees and 82% of mentors claim the experience impacted their career development.
- 95% of mentees say they are making regular progress towards their established leadership development goals.
- 98% of mentees learned new skills from this experience.
- 97% of mentees believe the experience was a worthwhile investment in their career.
- 99% of mentees and 98% of mentors would recommend this experience to their colleagues.

The Robert Half program manager team was thrilled with the results, which ties directly to the program goal to support the DDs, BMGs and administrative leaders in their transition into leadership roles. Given the high score among mentees related to their progress on leadership development goals, the program manager team ascertained that mentoring offered positive ways to provide consistent support to mentees as they develop critical skills. Lastly, that virtually all mentees and mentors would recommend the mentoring program shows the program has made an equal impact on employees regardless of the role they play, and highlights the considerable momentum mentoring has generated to drive organic growth throughout Robert Half based on positive experiences and word of mouth.

Mentor Pool Growth

Program managers continue to stay in touch with mentors to make sure Robert Half has up-to-date information and recruits new mentors, even increasing the ideal mentor pool 28% beyond the target goal of a quarter of the leadership population. This adds depth and breadth while meeting program volume demands.

Mentee Participation Trends

The Leadership Exchange was designed to support leaders' transition and enhance engagement and retention. Robert Half continues to monitor these areas closely using a combination of Microsoft Excel, surveys and data exports from the River mentoring system. While participation in the Leadership Exchange remains voluntary, Robert Half continues to see 67% of its new leadership population choosing to participate each year. A notable trend driving participation is the power of choice in the matching process, as



well as the consistent stream of mentee alumni eager contribute to a peer's transition and leadership development.

Over the years, Robert Half has also observed an increase in mentee participation.

- In 2015 (the first year of the program), there were 185 mentees.
- In 2019, there were 436 mentees.
- In 2019, program participation increased 134% year over year.

New Leader and Mentor Retention Rates

Most notably, new leaders who complete the 12-week mentoring partnership are retained at a rate of 84% when measured one year after taking on their new leadership role. This is 12% higher than those who were invited yet did not choose to participate. Additionally, 81% of the 84% were still in leadership roles, some having received another promotion. Robert Half mentors are retained at a rate of 95%.

Participant Feedback

Positive feedback from mentees, mentors and senior leaders is abundant:

- "My mentor valued my opinion, asked thought-provoking questions, and held me accountable. She helped me dissect each problem I was facing, challenging and supporting me each step of the way." — Mentee, Division Director
- "It was the missing link. It has made a huge difference in my career." Mentee, Branch Manager
- "At first, I didn't know what to expect, but this ended up being exactly what I
 needed! It was so nice just having someone who knew my challenges and could
 help me know I'm not alone or crazy! My mentor listened, validated, and
 challenged me, and it was so great working with her." Mentee, Senior Lead
 Admin
- "I always enjoy sharing and helping others grow professionally and succeed in our business, and I learn along the way as well!" Mentor, Division Director
- "My Mentee has been great to collaborate with. We have worked together to brainstorm ideas and solutions, and he has been quick to implement and report success and impact on his team. I continue to look forward to our calls each week." — Mentor, Division Director
- "We have found the Leadership Exchange mentoring program to be an excellent opportunity for our leaders to develop as mentors to people throughout the



Company. Additionally, our newly promoted managers gain valuable insight from leaders in other geographies. I have noticed that in many cases these relationships tend to last longer than the scope of the program itself." — Senior District President

 "I just reviewed the 2019 Session 3 Leadership Exchange Participant List. We have 18 participants from [our area of business] as either mentors or mentees – OUTSTANDING. This can and will continue to have a positive impact on our culture and our staff retention!" — Operational President

Robert Half has also had the honor to serve as a model for other organizations eager to implement mentoring programs. Program managers have built relationships with external organizations and professional associations, such as the CFO Leadership Council, to benchmark programs, offer recommendations, provide resources and serve in a consulting capacity.

Overall

In Q4 2014, Robert Half launched a global mentoring program providing newly promoted and hired DDs and BMGs the opportunity to select a peer leader mentor in support of their critical leadership transition. The successes and growing pains experienced through this program provide insights on mentoring as a part of the Robert Half culture.

Key findings include:

- The organization's appetite and interest to engage in mentoring
- The value in providing consistent experiences across a decentralized organization
- The impact to the employee experience and retaining leaders
- Evolving administrative and technology functionality to sustain offerings
- The opportunity to examine new ways to leverage non-traditional mentoring solutions in support of skill-based learning and business metrics

Robert Half found it critical to have a team of program managers dedicated to the mentoring culture across all Robert Half United mentoring programs. Robert Half recognizes the value the team provides in having consistent and meaningful experiences and expanding offerings to support other organizational initiatives. The team is diligent in educating themselves as well as key stakeholders, on what business conditions or behavioral observations are best served through mentoring. In addition, the team follows consistent practices every step of the way from processes to communication to recognition.



Robert Half quickly realized the key to having consistent experiences lies in the education and structure of the program. Clearly outlining and articulating the target audiences and objectives of the mentoring experience, describing what mentoring is and is not, defining roles and responsibilities, and having resources to support discussions are critical. Having regular communications with senior leaders, participants and other key stakeholders has been essential.

Opportunities for refinement are continually examined. A notable key learning was the timing of participation among mentees. Initially, to be accommodating, the program manager team provided flexibility in timing when business demands or individual circumstances prevented the mentee from engaging in the program at the desired timeline. Through feedback channels, it became clear this flexibility contributed to a less desirable experience because the partnership felt "too little, too late". Other times it was considered "too soon" and became more of a training relationship. This awareness has positioned the program manager team to grow far more assertive in the timing of program participation.

Another important key learning was the inclusion of key business partners and integration with of other programs. Mentoring appeared to some as a stand-alone development project as opposed to being part of a formalized learning path. Through collaborative efforts with several cross-functional teams, the Leadership Exchange is being integrated in readiness, new leader and transition series programs, as well as discussed at instructor-led sessions, geographic area meetings and beyond.

Having a true collaborative partner in the mentoring technology space has been instrumental in sustaining the current programs and expanding to support the Robert Half mentoring culture and demands. Great care was taken at implementation to build the profile fields, matching algorithms and data feeds. As time progressed, Robert Half and the River mentoring software team continued to collaborate on enhancements and new features, such as expanding system time-out requirements; adding summary statistics of mentor requests, and pending and confirmed matches; automating the distribution of specific content at designated times; and building robust reporting capabilities.

The future offers great opportunities in both expansion and new initiatives. Furthering the global expansion of the Leadership Exchange requires translations and education for senior leaders and participants. The team also works to refine data feeds in the River mentoring software system to provide more detailed information for each employee, allowing for more effective mentoring matches and reporting. Ongoing collaboration with the River team includes exploring automation of administrative processes.

The Robert Half program manager team sees growth potential for mentoring elsewhere in the organization. Current mentoring programs offered to Robert Half Corporate



Services leadership do not entirely align with the recommended Leadership Exchange timeline and process. Re-aligning these programs is a primary focus to maximize both the mentee experience and enhance the engagement and commitment to this audience. Future initiatives are in development at Robert Half, including the discussion of a pilot session of Robert Half United Advisory Exchange to initiate group mentoring solutions aligning with a key organizational objective measuring customer experience. This is the first mentoring solution, sponsored by an executive director who oversees an entire line of business, to be directly correlated to a business outcome. Robert Half also plans to apply this approach to enhance skill- and behavior-based development.

The future of Robert Half's mentoring programs and culture is very bright. Robert Half is proud of the progress and impact the Leadership Exchange has had on the organization. The excitement and willingness exhibited to expand the organization's mentoring programs has only been possible through the preliminary successes the program has achieved on a global scale.



Appendix

Figure 1: Sample Discussion Guide Resources

Preparing for Your Partnership

Mentoring Best Practices	Building a Strategic Partnership	Action Plan
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Competency Overviews and Discussion Guides

Building Client Relationships	Building Partnerships	Building the Team
Business Acumen	Coaching and Developing Others	Continuous Learning
Critical Thinking	Driving Execution	Driving for Results
Facilitating Change	High-Impact Communication	Inspiring Others

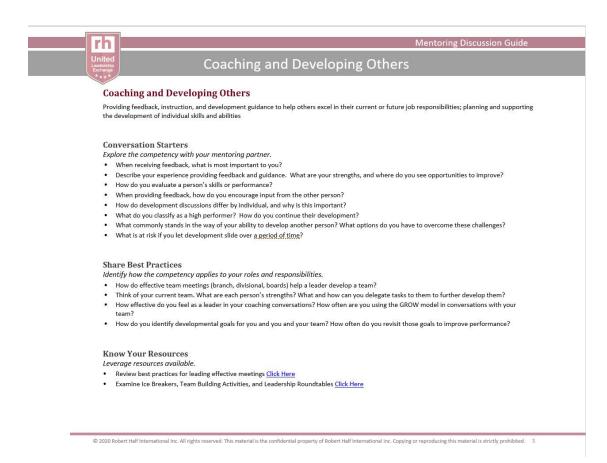




Figure 2: Internal Recruiting Materials



Figure 3: Testimonial Video –People Are Saying About Their Mentoring Experiences

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Mentoring is Contributing Positively to My Development as a Leader 200 150 100 50 0 Strongly Agree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Disagree ■ Mentees ■ Mentors

Figure 4: Mentoring Significantly Contributes to Leadership Development

Source: Robert Half 2020





Annual Mentee Participation

Figure 6: Mentee Participation Over the Years

Source: Robert Half 2020

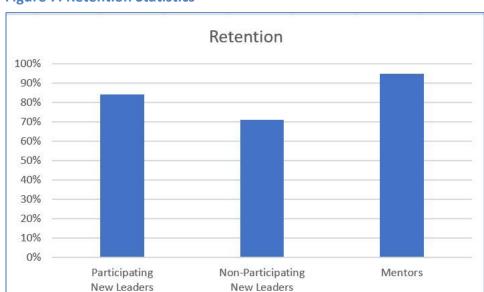


Figure 7: Retention Statistics



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