



AMD's Path to Fellow Program Triples Women's Technical Leadership Promotions

AMD and MentorcliQ
Best High Potential Development
January 2025



Company Background



Company-at-a-Glance	
Headquarters	Santa Clara, CA
Year Founded	1969
Revenue	22.7 billion USD (2023)
Employees	26,000
Global Scale	90+ AMD locations around the world
Customers/Output, etc. (Key customers and services offered)	AMD designs and delivers leadership high-performance and adaptive computing solutions – the infrastructure of the digital services and experiences that power the daily lives of billions. AMD products are everywhere, from the cloud services that support video conferencing and the PCs we use every day to work or play, to the safety and infotainment systems in cars and the supercomputers researchers are using to solve the world’s most important challenges, and even the Mars Rover.
Industry	Semiconductor manufacturing
Stock Symbol	AMD (Nasdaq)
Website	https://www.amd.com/en.html



Company Background



Company-at-a-Glance	
Headquarters	Columbus, OH
Year Founded	2012
Revenue	Privately held company; revenue data is not public
Employees	110
Global Scale (Regions that you operate in or provide services to)	US, EMEA, and APAC
Customers/Output, etc. (Key customers and services offered)	MentorcliQ is a leader in employee mentoring software. Their enterprise platform and mobile app leverages scientific matching and an award-winning approach to consistently deliver 20X ROI to global clients. MentorcliQ powers innovative talent strategies for global Fortune 1000 and DiversityInc Top 50 organizations who are helping to build inclusive cultures and deliver strong employee engagement, development, and retention through mentoring. With a proven track record of delivering high-quality program experiences, MentorcliQ’s results-driven approach combines cutting-edge technology with mentoring best-practice expertise to help improve employee engagement and increase employee retention by as much as 75 percent, allowing clients to fulfill their global talent strategies.
Industry	Software development
Stock Symbol	N/A
Website	https://www.mentorcliq.com/



Budget and Timeframe

Budget and Timeframe	
Overall budget	\$8,000
Number of (HR, Learning, Talent) employees involved with the implementation?	2
Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert employees involved with the implementation?	2
Number of contractors involved with implementation	0
Timeframe to implement	4 months
Start date of the program	October 2022

Identification

At AMD, the company's culture statement reads: "We push the limits of innovation to solve the world's most important challenges. We strive for execution excellence, while being direct, humble, collaborative and inclusive of diverse perspectives." It's that call for diverse perspectives that led to the creation of the Path to Fellow Mentoring Program.

The semiconductor company faced a similar situation as other technology organizations: A lack of female representation among technical engineers. Industry-wide, women generally make up less than 20% of technical staff. For Dr. Lisa Su, CEO of AMD, this marked an opportunity to address the lack of representation through a targeted program for High Potential Female Engineers. Although higher than peers in non-manufacturing semiconductor organizations,

Fellows are the top of the technical ladder at AMD. The role of Fellows consists of these traits:

- They play a significant role in making technical decisions that have an impact on business direction.
- They are active in industry forums.
- They focus on driving changes in technology and business contacts versus day-to-day execution.



- Their business and technical time horizon is generally two years or more.
- They generate a body of publications for their area of expertise.
- They have demonstrated a record of innovation, ability to influence, and technology thought leadership.
- They possess a broad and deep knowledge of technologies, global technology, and commercial trends.
- They are considered subject matter experts.

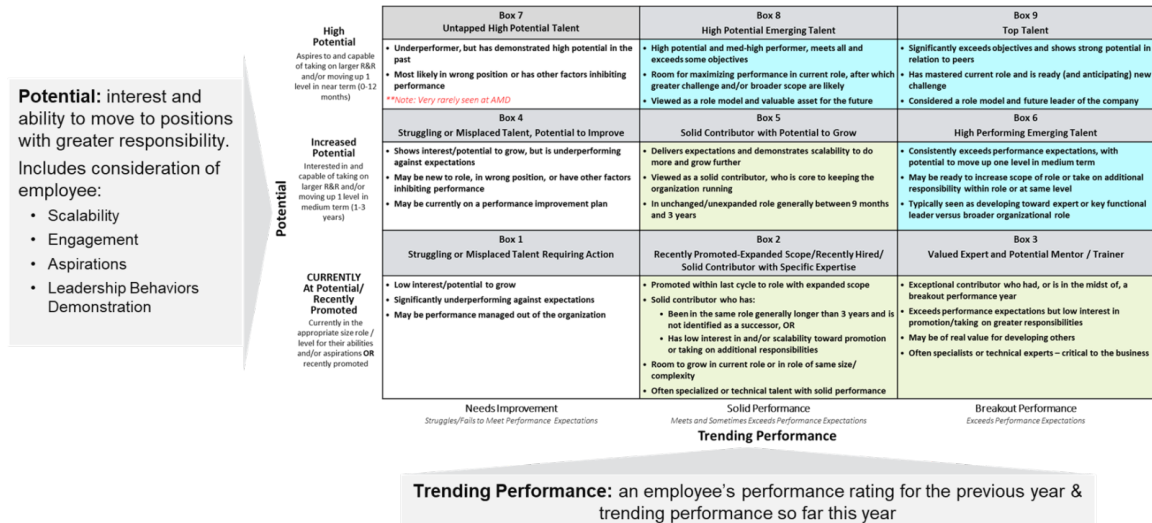
The Fellows at AMD represent the best and brightest of technical experts at the organization.

Growing the number of women promoted into the ranks of Fellow exemplifies AMD’s diversity, belonging and inclusion (DB&I) focus and is a goal Dr. Su is personally passionate about. AMD believes that having many as different voices at the table as possible is critical to success. This drives greater innovation, as well as better communication with a diverse set of customers - both key to the company’s growth.

Overview

AMD identifies high potential employees via their Organizational HR Planning (OHRP) process. They utilize the 9-box grid methodology, which divides employees into nine groups according to their performance (the x-axis) and growth potential (the y-axis).

AMD 9-Box Grid



A few areas to note:

- Box 9 in the upper right-hand corner represents the high potential employees at AMD.



- Box 8 represents emerging talent who are at highest potential and are a strong performer.
- Box 6 represents emerging talent who are at potential and are exceptional performers.

Selection of the female talent that will participate in the Path to Fellow Mentoring Program happens during OHRP. Senior executives review female Principal Members of Technical Staff (PMTS) for performance and potential and identify the top and emerging talent (boxes 6, 8, and 9) and those women who are tracking to Fellow during the next 1-3 years. These women are then invited to participate in the program as mentees.

The general structure for technical talent at AMD follows this path (percent of total technical population is in parentheses):

- Engineer I (1.9%)
- Engineer II (12.9%)
- Senior Engineer (24.6%)
- MTS - Member of Technical Staff (24.8%)
- Senior MTS (21.5%)
- Principal MTS (11.3%)

Promotions from Engineer I to Engineer II and from Engineer II to Senior Engineer are mostly tenure based, given good performance. For promotions into MTS, SMTS, and PMTS levels, the process is more rigorous, requiring review by technical promotion committees. There is no guarantee that someone will move into an MTS position or above.

The Fellow+ roles are most prestigious and are only filled by exceptionally talented engineers who met exceedingly high standards; they are not based on tenure.

A Fellow promotion requires that the high potential individuals be nominated by their manager and the nomination must be approved at the senior executive level in the organization. Managers then complete a promotion packet that demonstrates the high potential employee's impact, creativity, and expertise. The packet includes information on:

- Who they are
- Their performance rating history
- Their educational history
- Time in grade and time in industry
- Patents they have filed and/or been awarded
- Publications they have written
- Presentations and talks they have given
- The scope of their role and the impact they have made to the business



- Their technical expertise
- Innovations they have created
- Who their mentor(s) are and who they are mentoring
- Letters of recommendation from internal and external experts in the field

Being promoted to a Fellow is a momentous occasion that requires incredible knowledge, dedication, and creativity. It is recognition of engineers who have distinguished themselves through innovation, business impact, and technical expertise.

AMD leadership wanted to increase the number of women within the Fellows ranks. Weaving this DB&I aspect of increased female representation into the high potential process and mentoring program allows AMD to continue to innovate in ways that other companies are not. Additionally, it is important to note that these promotions are not a tenure-based entitlement; they are recognition of the individual's incredible talent and domain expertise.

The Path to Fellow Mentoring Program met their goal for promoting women to Fellow positions following the inaugural mentoring program in 2023. (See Judging Criteria 5 for results and details.)

Preparation and Expectations

Launched in 2023 via the MentorcliQ platform, the Path to Fellow Mentoring Program played a part in the overarching talent strategy at AMD, particularly in increasing female representation with the technical staff and leadership. The talent development team at AMD used the 9-box grid to identify potential participants for the Path to Fellow Mentoring Program.

Program Design

The mentoring relationships in this program were designed to be:

- 9-months long
- 1:1
- Paired based on focus areas for learning and development

Focus areas included:

- Specific Technical Areas of expertise
- Career development
- Communication and leadership skills
- Dealing with challenging work relationships
- Delegation of work
- Executive presence
- Presentation skills and opportunities



Enrollment Process

The Program lead, who is an AMD Corporate Vice President, invited current Fellows, Senior Fellows, and Corporate Fellows to be mentors in the program. The mentees were the high potential female employees from technical staff who were on the cusp of a promotion within the next 1-3 years. All of the participants created profiles in the MentorcliQ platform, whereby mentors indicated what focus areas they could help someone with, and the mentees identified which focus areas they wanted to work on during the relationship.

Matching

Once enrolled, the mentees and mentors were then paired via the MentorcliQ platform using a proprietary SMART match algorithm. The talent development team then reviewed and published the matches, and the mentoring pairs began their relationships.

Communications and Support

The team sent automated and custom communications via MentorcliQ throughout the duration of the program. In addition, occasional communications from the Program Lead were sent out to participants to encourage them in their mentoring relationships and to provide helpful support.

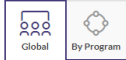
The team also took advantage of two features in MentorcliQ: Milestones and a Custom Resource Library.

- Administrators set Milestones for participants to complete throughout the duration of their relationships, which helped each mentoring pair keep on track with their learning and development.
- The team also curated a custom-built Resource Library containing documents and training materials (such as a mentoring partnership agreement and mid-cycle check-in document), creating a relevant content repository for participants that they could access on demand.



Resource Library Example

Resource Library



Library Filters: No filters applied.

Accessible

Mentoring Benefits



How Mentoring Programs Help Your Business



What's in it for Me (Mentee)? Benefits of Being Mentored



What's in it for Me (Mentor)? Benefits of Being a Mentor



How Formal Mentoring Programs Encourage Informal Mentoring



Getting Started for Mentees



Getting Started for Mentors

Managing Your Mentoring Relationships



Strategies for Landing a Good Mentoring Match



First Contact - Connecting with a New Mentoring Partner



Mentoring Action Plan



3 Tips for Building a Successful Mentoring Relationship



What Should We Talk About? Broad Topics and Deep Dives



Safety Valves - The Art of the Mid-Cycle Check-In



Mid-Point Evaluation Form



Onward and Upward - Transitioning from Your Mentoring



Relationships Closure Review



Assessments

The mentoring pairs completed assessments throughout the duration of their relationships. These occurred in two ways:

1. Monthly pulse surveys via the MentorcliQ platform called QuickcliQs, where participants indicate how many hours they spent mentoring that month and what focus areas they worked on.
2. Satisfaction surveys sent via the platform at the end of their relationships that ask people to rate how satisfied they were with the relationship and with the mentoring program.

For the Path to Fellow Mentoring Program, the AMD team determined that successful completion of the program would mean that:

- >90% of mentoring pairs stayed engaged with one another throughout the entire 9 months
- Satisfaction surveys would show 3.5 stars or higher
- More women would be promoted to Fellow following their participation in the program than had occurred in previous years.

Participation

The following people were involved in the AMD Path to Fellow Mentoring Program.

Suzanne Plummer

Suzanne Plummer is Corporate Vice President at AMD and head of the Fellows Committee and the Advancing Women in Tech program. She is also a Fellow herself. She led the team that was responsible for the development and release of the “Zen” architecture, which was a grounds-up redesign of AMD’s core silicon architecture for its server and PC processor lines and instrumental in the company’s return to growth. Suzanne has a great deal of passion around increasing the representation of women in engineering, being a woman in engineering herself. After her career triumph with the “Zen” architecture, she changed her focus to increasing female representation within the technical field at AMD.

Suzanne played a critical role as executive sponsor for the program, as well as the administrator. AMD CEO Lisa Su serves as her mentor, which helped Suzanne gain buy-in for the Path to Fellow Mentoring Program. Suzanne also identified the current Fellows, Sr Fellows, and Corporate Fellows to invite into the



program as mentors. Having a personal connection and an invitation from a high-level executive proved successful in creating excitement for the program and engagement of the participants. Suzanne has such a positive and strong reputation within AMD, that simply by being the person championing the Path to Fellow Mentoring Program created cachet for the initiative.

Current Fellows, Senior Fellows, and Corporate Fellows

Mentors in the program were pulled from the ranks of current Fellows, Senior Fellows, and Corporate Fellows. For clarity:

- Fellow (technical side) is equivalent to Director (people management side)
- Senior Fellow (technical side) is equivalent to Senior Director (people management side)
- Corporate Fellow (technical side) is equivalent to Corporate VP (people management side)

These individuals helped the program be successful by giving their time, insights, and support to the mentees in the program.

High Potential Female Technical Staff Members

Mentees in the program were high potential women who were Principal Members of Technical Staff (PMTS). They helped the program be successful by being active and engaged learners in their mentoring relationships. Those who were promoted to Fellow following their participation in this program have become mentors in the next cohort.

Lisa Graham

Lisa Graham is Senior Manager of Talent Management at AMD and the driving force behind the company's overall mentoring strategy. She provided ongoing support to Suzanne Plummer (as the executive sponsor and administrator), as well as to the mentees and mentors participating in the program. Lisa provided content on items such as: design best practices for the program, communications for the program, mentor and mentee best practices, setting goals, technical questions related to MentorcliQ, and registration questions.



Transition

The Path to Fellow Mentoring Program focuses on the ongoing development and advancement of high potential women in technical fields. Mentoring provides the foundation and core structure of this program. In addition, high potential engineers in the program receive time with senior leaders who take on the role of mentor. Support tools are also built into the program, such as best practice guides and videos.

Many of the mentoring relationships set up with this program continued afterwards because both participants got so much out of them. Following the program, Suzanne Plummer established a series of meetings with all the female Fellows so that they could develop a network and continue with development together.

Each year, AMD hosts a “Fellows Forum” for Fellows to network and participate in internal technical talks. The success of the Path to Fellow Mentoring Program has now spurred an additional day of development solely for the female Fellows at the start of this forum.

Impact

The Path to Fellow Mentoring Program completed its first cycle in 2023 and achieved outstanding results. To recap, the AMD team determined that successful completion of the program would mean that:

- >90% of mentoring pairs stayed engaged with one another throughout the entire 9 months
- More women would be promoted to Fellow following their participation in the program
- Satisfaction surveys would show 3.5 stars or higher

Participation & Engagement Rates

The AMD team determined that 94% of the mentoring pairs stayed engaged with one another throughout the entire 9 months.

Program results show:

- They spent **566 hours** mentoring
- **94% remained engaged** throughout the 9-month relationships

In addition to this, the AMD team analyzed organization-wide employee engagement survey data and reviewed results from the mentee audience. They compared the engagement results from that audience in 2022 (before mentoring)



and in 2023 (after mentoring). They found there was a **4% increase in engagement scores after mentoring** was implemented, going from 84% to 88%.

Year	Engagement %Favorable Scores
2022	84%
2023	88%

Promotion Rates

The AMD team determined that successful completion of the program would mean that more women would be promoted to Fellow following their participation in the program.

Mentoring Satisfaction Rates

The AMD team determined that successful completion of the program would mean that satisfaction surveys would show 3.5 stars or higher. They used the built-in Satisfaction surveys in MentorcliQ to assess mentees' and mentors' satisfaction with their relationships and with the mentoring program.

Overall Relationship Satisfaction Ratings (on a 5-point scale)

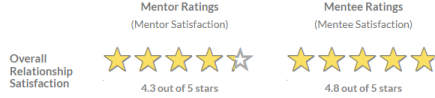
- 4.3 (mentors)
- 4.8 (mentees)



Relationship Satisfaction Report

Overall Relationship Success

How do your participants feel about their mentoring relationships overall? This score is calculated from the following relationship scores.



Open-minded & Supportive

My mentoring partner comes to the table ready to listen and we have comfortable, productive conversations.



Prepared & Knowledgeable

My mentoring partner comes prepared for mentoring sessions and is equipped to engage in thoughtful conversation.



Committed & Accessible

My mentoring partner is available for mentoring activities and we work together to achieve mentoring goals.



Overall Program Satisfaction Ratings (on a 5-point scale)

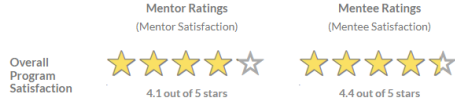
- 4.1 (mentors)
- 4.4 (mentees)



Program Satisfaction Report

Overall Program Satisfaction

How your participants feel about their mentoring program overall. This score is calculated from the categories below.



Resources

I have access to useful content that helps me succeed in this mentoring program.



Program Training

I received the training I needed to help me succeed in the mentoring program. This includes instruction on how to use the software as well as how to be a successful mentor/mentee.



Program Support

My program, relationship, and technological issues were promptly acknowledged and addressed.



Personal Impact: In Their Own Words

Data and numbers are not the only way to view the positive impact this program had on high potential women in the technical areas of AMD—personal testimonies highlight why the program matters as well. Below is feedback the program administrators received from participants.

- "I have never had a mentor before - never had anyone who talked to me about my career before this. Now I had this bright, clever, passionate person who took the time to actually 'see me.' This added someone who knew me and my work to be a contact in the future."



- "The more people you meet like this, the more doors that are available to you. It has provided me with a bigger network within AMD."
- "This was the first time I ever had a female mentor and it was an amazing experience for me. I got solid feedback on whether I was going in the right direction."
- "I had a good connection with my mentor. He was helpful, provided good insight. He was someone I wouldn't talk with normally. He reviewed my Fellow package and provided useful feedback."
- "My mentor was a fantastic person and I got a lot out of it. He helped with practical advice that I continue to use weekly. I appreciated my mentor and this program very much."
- "My mentor helped me to create relationships with other teams that I had not worked with before. I got more clarity on what is the most important/impactful work to be doing."
- "This program added a high-level Sr Fellow who knows who I am and what I am doing. I have gotten so much value in meeting this person who continues to be my contact."

Lessons Learned

The team at AMD learned a few valuable lessons while running the Path to Fellow Mentoring Program with this first cohort. These can be categorized into two buckets.

Lesson #1: Professional Impact

One of the biggest a-ha moments for the team was realizing that even though many of these high potential women have been in their career for 20+ years, **some of them have never had a mentor before.** And some of them would have continued to never have a mentor without this program. But the truth is that everyone (even highest potential female talent) needs a support network and development opportunities.

Mentoring programs like this one increase the visibility of the mentees and provide them with other networking opportunities. It can manifest through a broader network, through introductions to top leaders, and to connections made in professional organizations and societies. All of that can impact the career trajectory of the mentee.



The ripple effect of mentoring allows it to grow and provides the mentee with opportunities outside the one-to-one connection that is made with a mentor. This solidified for the team that they were doing the right type of employee and career development work through this program and for this high potential population.

Lesson #2: Program Design

After running this program for one cohort, the program team uncovered two areas for improvement when it comes to how the program is designed.

- **Program Length:** They realized that 6-month mentoring relationships work better than 9-month, in terms of the formal program. Mentors were more comfortable with that duration of time commitment and could accomplish what they set out to do within that timeframe. Given the limited number of mentors for this high potential population, the team believes this slight adjustment to the program will have big positive outcomes.
- **Expectations and Communications:** Now that they know some participants had never been mentored before, it became clear that these participants would benefit from a kick-off event when launching the mentoring program. This would have helped set clear expectations for participants, given the team an opportunity to share details about what good mentoring looks like, allowed participants to ask questions, and informed the administrators' plans for ongoing communication with the participants. Going forward, the team will look at hosting a kick-off training to make sure everyone has the same understanding of what mentoring is and what to expect. They will also adjust the communications they send to provide more best practices and mentoring tips as the program progresses.

What's Next

The Path to Fellow Mentoring Program began its second cohort in 2024, and administrators adjusted the program based on the lessons they learned.

Some of the women who were mentees in the first cohort and who were promoted to Fellow are participating in the program as mentors in 2024. Other women who have not yet been promoted are continuing to be part of this program. Having female representation at higher levels in AMD will help leverage employee diversity and will help future female Fellows be able to see themselves in leadership roles at AMD.

The Talent Development team at AMD also plans to take the opportunity to review the number of women who are identified at Principal Members of Technical Staff (PMTS), which feeds the high potential pipeline. Analyzing that



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data will inform them on any shifts they need to make in their strategy for nurturing a pipeline that is representative of the inclusive culture they aim to create.



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