

Benefits of a Mentoring Program in Law Enforcement

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Abstract

Mentoring is described as a relationship where the mentor guides the protégé and sharing wisdom gained from his or her career. Some mentoring relationships, particularly in a law enforcement setting, are a relatively new concept. However, mentoring has been proven in current research to be crucial to a new hire's successful transition into an organization and the mentoring relationship benefits the protégé, the mentor, and the organization. A mentoring relationship, established with the right participants, has the potential to form a powerful bond between the mentor and protégé, and has a powerful impact on the future growth of the employee. Initiating a mentoring program in a law enforcement organization is a benefit to the agency as well as to the citizens of the community that we are sworn to protect and serve. Selected Sheriff's Offices and Police Departments in Florida were surveyed to determine if mentor programs are being used.

Introduction

"Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction." John C. Crosby.

The art and concept of mentoring has been in existence for many centuries. Through research, this paper will reflect on the history of mentoring, the benefits of mentoring as well as the creation of mentoring programs. Mentoring is described as a "developmental partnership through which one person shares knowledge, skills, information and perspective to foster the personal and professional growth of someone else" (Stone, 2011).

We all have a need for insight of our current situation, both personal and professional, that is outside of our normal life and educational experience. The power of the mentoring process creates a "one-of-a-kind" opportunity for collaboration, goal achievement, and problem-solving. A great deal of commitment, both personal and of time and resources, is needed in the mentoring process, in which the mentor not only needs to be sensitive of the mentee's needs, but have a positive attitude towards the mentee and of the mentoring process as well. Fulfilling these needs will be beneficial to the mentee to achieve leadership positions and promotions. As new mentoring programs are implemented within law enforcement organizations; mentoring will be provided to new recruits, current employees, and applied to upper management personnel as well.

It is my intention that the data and research collected for this report will provide a better understanding of the mentoring processes, as well as an overview of mentoring programs in place in various law enforcement agencies in Florida. This data will be received by utilizing a survey of certified law enforcement personnel assigned to

various agencies in Florida. By analyzing the data collected from the survey, I will be able to provide a snapshot of the level of acceptance and the utilization of the mentoring process in law enforcement.

Literature Review

History of Mentoring Programs

The concept of Mentoring harkens back to early Greek history, and the story of Odysseus the King of Ithaca, and a hero of the Trojan War. While Odysseus was away at war, he had asked a friend, Minerva, also known as "Mentor," to watch over his young son, Telemachus. Over time, Mentor had developed a close relationship with Telemachus. Mentor taught Telemachus patience, courage, modesty and simplicity; qualities he would need to become the future King of Ithaca (Kem, 2003).

Every mentoring relationship will be unique in its own particular way. As in the story of Telemachus and Minerva, a mutual trust must be developed in order to form a strong relationship. This growing relationship will take time and patience to form the bond between the two, which also may evolve into long term friendships.

Various research programs conducted in the 1950's and 1960's concentrated on the motivational factors of individuals wanting to become police officers. Results of early research studies revealed that these individuals are looking for authoritarian power and control; however, most of the research revealed that these individuals were also interested in job security and pay. In 1983, further research revealed that these very motivations i.e. job security and to help people, were factors that led people to become police officers (White, 2007).

In the 1970's structured mentoring became an important measure in business organizations among young men. Organizations would select mentors to assist with a younger person's career. The younger employee would commonly be referred to as a protégé. As this concept spread throughout Europe, a pivotal change took place. The individuals were now authorized to set their own career goals, and career development. This method of mentoring was based on the experience of an individual and the knowledge he had gained as an employee throughout time. This experience and knowledge provided the foundation for the new or younger employee to start building his career. In this method the new or younger employee was known as a mentee (Farhan, 2008).

Benefits of Mentoring Programs

A successful mentoring relationship can promote professional growth, inspire personal motivation and enhance police service. There are two distinct mentoring processes; informal and formal. During an informal mentoring process, veteran officers can help to encourage friends and/or acquaintances to apply for positions. This also provides an advantage to new employees as the veteran will help with information about hiring and during training periods (Sprafka & Kranda, 2008).

A more formal mentoring approach can promote loyalty within an organization. Can create structure, provide goals and define roles and responsibilities, which will even enhance leadership qualities of a Mentee. This form of mentoring can give a feeling that the agency is a great place to work (Sprafka & Kranda, 2008).

In the armed forces, the mentoring process has become an ever expanding topic of discussion. The military has instilled a firm principle in its ranks that mentoring will “enhance recruitment and retention efforts, help bring new hires up to speed, support diversity initiatives, enhance employee satisfaction and promotion success, support strategic succession planning, and improve communication and knowledge transfer within organizations” (Johnson & Anderson, 2001). The military recently implemented new initiatives including establishing an on-line e-mentoring as well as a formal mentoring program.

The authors conducted interviews and reviewed literature available, outlining the benefits of a formal and informal mentoring program in the United States military. An analysis of findings of the research concluded that mentoring outcomes in civilian and military organizations foster career success. Also, that “individuals that had a mentor enjoy more rapid promotions, greater productivity, better professional confidence, higher competence, lower levels of job-related stress, more positive attitudes toward work, more career satisfaction, and even a greater perceived chance of becoming eminent in their fields” (Johnson & Anderson, 2001).

“Mentors benefit every employee of an organization. The enthusiasm, camaraderie, and professionalism mentoring programs achieve affect the entire culture of an organization. Mentors provide both practical and emotional support, both knowledge and understanding. A mentor and protégé can also have one of the most professional relationships” (Williams, 2000).

Mentors simply “fill the roles as teachers, guides, coaches, confidantes, role models, advisors, facilitators, sponsors, promoters, and protectors (Williams, 2000). As a mentor you can have such a positive impact on the protégé, they can assist in career advancement and/or career mobility. This will even assist in lowering the turnover rate within an agency if the mentee has a sense of belonging” (Williams, 2000).

Several studies have been conducted by the armed forces. Two studies conducted at the Naval Academy with sample sizes of 568 and 576, revealed between 40 and 45 percent of midshipmen have mentoring relationships at the academy. The study also showed that 63 percent of female midshipmen were more likely to be mentored than 45 percent of the men. A survey conducted with senior noncommissioned officers and commissioned officers in the army revealed 84 percent had at least one mentor through their careers (Johnson & Anderson, 2001).

Creating a Mentoring Program

Mentoring starts with the simplest bond between two people, which continues to develop into a more, deeper and compound relationship. A selection of mentors will have to be determined and sought out. Human Resource divisions will play an important role in the development of future leaders, and should be an instrumental element in the creation of a successful mentoring program, and should assist in the selection of well qualified and willing mentors (Murphy, 2005).

When hiring new officers, this can be a tense time, adjusting to their new roles as a police officer. The mentor will need to not only establish a rapport with the new employee, but become a person they can turn to for questions and guidance. It is important that the mentor tell the mentee a little about themselves, which gives the mentee some understanding about who their mentors are.

“There are three primary goals of a mentoring relationship: to promote professional growth, to inspire personal motivation, and to enhance effectiveness of police service” (Sprafka & Kranda, 2008). As law enforcement agencies create Mentoring Programs, the agencies have to realize, the program will require a lot of commitment, time and skill. Mentors will have to think about what they will have to give in a mentoring relationship.

The mentor will have to be sensitive to the mentee’s needs. When developing a mentoring partnership, make sure you have clear boundaries of what you can and cannot do for the mentee. The mentor will have to project him or herself in a positive way. The mentor will have to make themselves available for the mentee and set goals and rules to a standard they can achieve (Charlotte County Sheriff's Office, 2009).

The mentor should always communicate with the mentee, especially at times when they are busy. Do not leave a mentee hanging with no one to talk with or ask questions to. The mentor always needs to remember that the mentee is going through a tough transition and must remain supportive so as not to discourage the mentee (Stone, 2011). The mentor should focus on his/her expertise and experience. If anything is beyond the mentor’s skills and abilities, refer the mentee to another expert (Charlotte County Sheriff's Office, 2009).

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) has also organized a new mentoring program for new chiefs of police. This program is designated for new chiefs with smaller agencies and who also serve 25,000 or fewer residences in their communities. This program is designed to assist the new chief with his professional development and to strengthen the beliefs, not only between the new chief and the community, but between the chief and the agency as well. This mentoring process begins after the new chief contacts IACP. A personal profile is provided by the chief and he is matched with the profile of a more experienced chief (Deck & Juhl, 2004).

While creating a formal Mentoring Program, agencies will determine what focus the mentorship shall be, who will be a mentor and what type of training will be conducted or attended. The IACP has a class to assist in developing a mentoring process titled, “Mentoring for Retention.” Most formal mentoring programs are pretty direct and forward on how an organization would like their program conducted. The organization’s concerns are pointed more towards mutual goals, as in mixing new employees in with an organization’s cultural, planning for success, and lowering the amount of disgruntled employees, or even hiring or maintaining more minority employees (Johnson & Anderson, 2001).

In addition to a formal Mentoring Program there is also, an informal mentoring process. You could look at this process as being more of a friendship type of atmosphere. These are the types of relationships, which last for long periods of time. The mentee will look to the mentor for successful guidance to bolster his/her relationship and find ways to enhance their confidence. This will lead them to enhance

their careers in order to become better leaders within an organization and become mentors themselves.

Some researchers even believe implementing a mentoring program prior to a new employee attending the academy will ease the stress and anxiety of the transition to their new job. As these new members are introduced to their new organization veteran officers will need to help in making the mentee comfortable not only in the agency and their members, but in the community as well. This will help the mentee reduce or even remove their fears, concerns or any distractions the new member may face (Edmundson, 1999).

According to W. Brad Johnson and Gene R. Anderson, paving the way to a successful Mentoring Program should consist of some certain building blocks:

“Developing a Master Strategy Implementing Mentoring Programs”- In other words, putting an outline or plan together. Narrowing down the frame work of the program, from the ever changing organization like, culture, structure, traditions, and resources to the mentoring objectives (Johnson & Anderson, 2001).

“Avoid Mandatory Programs: Facilitate a Sense of Choice” - Pairing up an individual, as a mentor, without a choice is haphazard. If the individual is not a volunteer of the program, this could set the mentee for failure and reflect poorly on the organization (Johnson & Anderson, 2001).

“Demonstrate Top-Down Support for Mentoring” - When there is support from the command, it shows a sense of commitment not only to the mentee, but the mentor as well. This will provide the individuals to building a quality relationship, which will also grow (Johnson & Anderson, 2001).

“Develop a Mentoring Continuum” - This is a philosophy in the military, which is believed to simplify and strengthen career and personal growth. Even though there has to be some flexibility, there will be some soft-sell approaches like programs for career-development and sponsorships at one end of the continuum. At the other end there are more complex mentoring programs, which mentors and mentees are paired for some time. The programs may be personalized due to culture, timetables, or preferences of the individual (Johnson & Anderson, 2001).

“Select Mentors Carefully”- It may appear effective in technical roles, but selecting members to certain jobs or locations will not be so effective in social roles. A formal mentor will be best to carry on these roles as they have a better capability to interact with mentees. They have the skills to communicate and listen (Johnson & Anderson, 2001).

“Develop High-Quality Training Programs for Mentors” -It is very important to have Quality training for mentors, in order to have individuals who have high expectations of themselves and the development of new members (Johnson & Anderson, 2001).

As a mentor, you can become the mentee's confidante and adviser. You may be called upon to be a "sounding board" for all sorts of issues and concerns. So you have to know in advance how you're going to deal with difficult situations and avoid getting "off subject" (Charlotte County Sheriff's Office, 2009).

Methods

It is my intention to utilize an Internet survey method, using Survey Monkey as a provider. With the assistance of the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office secretary, an email notification and request to the various law enforcement agencies to ask for participation in the survey. The Internet survey will be distributed to every Sheriff's Office throughout the State of Florida (67), and a few police departments throughout Florida, utilizing a contact through the International Association of Chiefs of Police. There was no particular pattern or reasoning for choosing police departments, other than availability.

The various agencies recipient will be asked to participate in the survey. The goal of the Internet survey will be to attempt to gain information about mentoring programs from within these agencies. The results that I wish to find include: If the agencies have an active mentoring program, if the agencies have had formal leadership training and if it is provided by their agency. I am also asking if supervisors within their agencies utilize and/or support a mentoring philosophy.

I will attempt to gain information as to the benefits of a mentoring program, for not only the employee, but the employer as well. I will attempt to determine if having a mentoring program would or would not affect the retention of employees and turnover rate within these agencies. This survey will also break down the sizes of these law enforcement agencies as well. I included the fact that the survey responses are confidential, and I am not asking for any identification of the agency that is providing the answers. In addition, I will analyze all responses, and remove any mention of individual agencies. The date the surveys will become available will be April 23rd, 2012, and I will stop collecting responses on May 11th, 2012.

Results

The results of my survey are based on the overwhelming response I received from the law enforcement agencies that participated. With the assistance of the Sheriff's secretary from my agency, the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office, the survey resulted in a more favorable response from the individuals who participated. The survey consisted of 21 total questions. Responses were given in both multiple choices and free- text formats. Of the total surveys that were sent out, ninety-one responses were received as a result. Surveys were sent out to all 67 sheriff's offices in Florida, and additionally, a source forwarded the survey to Florida Chiefs of Police, via the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). Because of this, it is undetermined exactly how many surveys were sent out. Due to confidentiality that was promised in

return for participation to the survey, I am not able to identify what counties and various agencies specifically responded to or participated in the survey.

Survey participants were asked if they have had a mentoring relationship within their career; of which 52.7% indicated they did. 63.3% of the participants indicated that they were a Mentor, and 64% of the participants indicated they had some formal leadership and/or mentoring training and further, 44.9% indicated their agency provides the training.

Survey participants were also asked if their current supervisor utilizes/supports a mentoring philosophy, of which 73% indicated, yes. The participants were asked if they had ever worked for another employer which had or has a mentoring program, and 75.9% of the participants indicated they had not, 24.1% had indicated they had. In support of my hypothesis, of the 24.1% who indicated that they had, 100% of them indicated the mentoring program was beneficial not only to the employee, but to the employer as well.

Within the various law enforcement agencies that had responded, 32.5% had 1-50 employees, 19.3% had 51-150 employees, 9.6% had 151-250 employees, 6% had 251-400 employees and 33.7% had more than 400 employees. Eight participants skipped the question, which is unknown to why. The participants were asked if their agency has a mentoring program, and 34.9% responded "yes", 65.1% responded "no". The agencies, which responded indicating they presently have a mentoring program, 58.6% indicated they have had a mentoring program for 1-5 years, 13.8% 6-10 years and 27.6% more than 10 years. 51.7% of the agencies with a mentoring program assign mentors to mentees. 93.1% of these agencies believe the mentoring program is beneficial to the employees, and 96.6% believe a mentoring program is a benefit to the agency.

65.1% of the participants in the survey indicated their agency does not currently have a mentoring program, and 60.4% believe a mentoring program would result in lower turnover rates and improve retention rates of employees. 73.1% of the participants indicated that their current agency has no plans to implement a mentoring program. Although 86.5% believe a mentoring program would benefit the employees, 88.5% believe a mentoring program would benefit the agency as well.

Discussion

In this survey I found that while law enforcement agencies, on average, do not have a formal mentor program, they worked under a general mentoring philosophy or had received some level of informal mentoring during their career. 44.9% of the agencies replying to the survey were provided formal leadership or mentoring training by their agencies. Surprisingly, 55.1% of those surveyed indicated their agencies did not provide them with any leadership or mentoring training at all.

Question #5, "Does your current supervisor utilize/support a mentoring philosophy? Explain?" A large number of the participants 73% or (65) responded "yes", and in 27% or (24) responded "no" and (2) agencies skipped the question. I was really impressed with the over whelming response in which the supervisors use a mentoring philosophy. This will provide both practical and emotional support through the career of

the mentee. Question #6 allowed the survey participant to explain their response to Question #5. Several text responses were given, and some of these responses indicated, "No mentoring program in place for their agency", "It is up to the individual", and "All supervisors receive leadership training if they apply for it".

In an interesting parallel, Question #13, "Do you have a mentoring program within your agency?", 34.9% or (29) of the survey participants responding, indicating that they did have a mentoring program within their agency, with 65.1% or (54) survey participants, responding "no". Eight participants skipped the question. Of the participants who indicated they have a mentoring program within their agency, Question #16 asked the survey participant, "Do you believe the mentoring program is beneficial to your employee?" To which, 93.1% or (27) of the participants believed a mentoring program was beneficial to the agency's employees, and 6.9% or (2) of the participants did not believe it was beneficial. In Question # 17 the participants were asked, "Do you believe the mentoring program is beneficial to the agency?" 96.6% or (28) participants believed it was, and 3.4% or one (1) did not believe the program was beneficial to the agency.

Looking at the response of the individuals who answered "no" to Question #13, "Do you have a mentoring program in your agency?" Question #20 asked, "Do you believe a mentoring program would be beneficial to your employees?". 86.5% or (45) survey participants indicated that they felt a mentoring program would be beneficial to the employees, and 13.5% or (7) participants did not believe it was not beneficial to the employee. Question #21 then asked the participant, "Do you believe a mentoring program would be beneficial to your agency?" 88.5% or (46) participants in the survey believe a mentoring program would be beneficial to the employer and 11.5% or (6) participants did not believe a mentoring program was beneficial to the agency.

As shown through my research many of the survey participants feel that a mentoring philosophy or mentoring program would be beneficial, not only to the employee, but to their agency as well. Over half of the survey participants have been mentored sometime during their career or are currently being mentored. I believe a mentoring program, formal or informal will always benefit both the employee and agency. In order to have a positive impact on our employees and agency, a mentoring program will not only foster a person's success in their career, but will inspire personal motivation. I feel by having a mentoring program in place within an agency would also decrease the turnover rate and help in the retention of employees as shown in Question #18 of my survey.

Question #18, "Would having a mentoring program assist with the turnover rate/retention of employees in your agency?" Of the 65.1% or (54) participants responding, "No" to Question #13, "Do you have a mentoring program within your agency?" 60.4% or (32) survey participants believe a mentoring program would help in retention of employees.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the survey, it is my recommendation that mentoring programs remain a priority, and that efforts be made to promote the positive effects of mentoring. It is important to retain good professional leaders and personnel, by inspiring our employees will give them motivation to work hard and mentor others one day.

Lieutenant Darrell Caparo has served the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office since 1989. Darrell started as a patrol officer, served six years as a detective; two years as a Corporal, and six years as a Sergeant. Darrell currently is a Lieutenant supervising several units within the Special Operations Division. Darrell has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminology from Saint Leo University.

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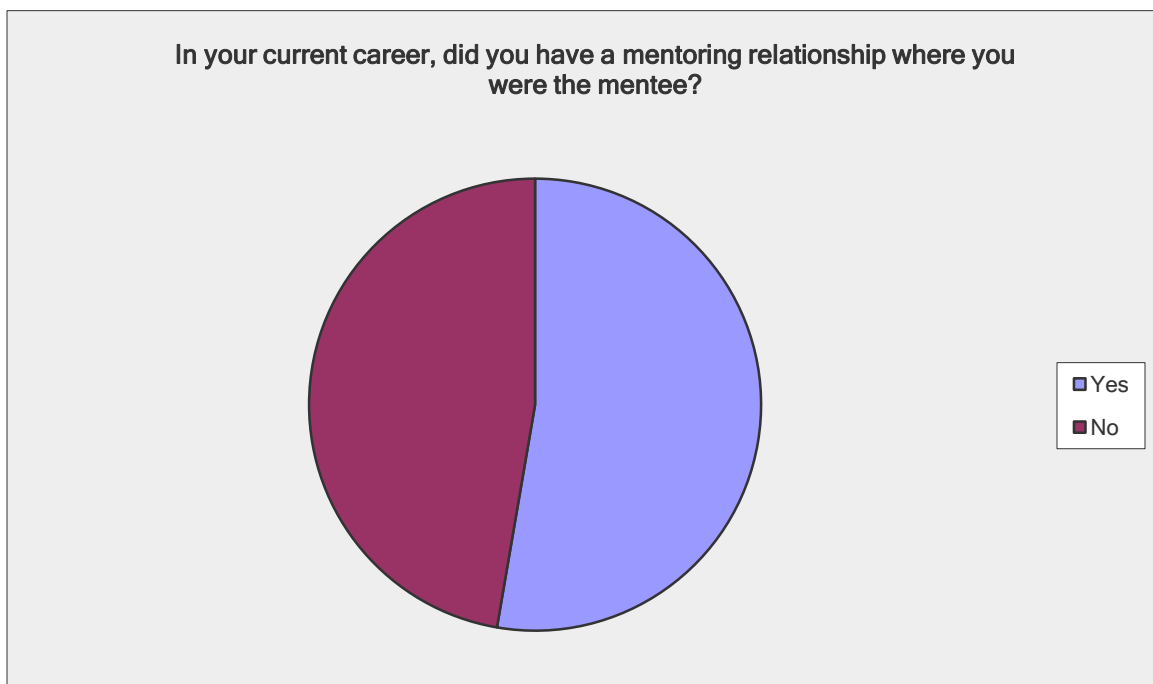
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Appendix

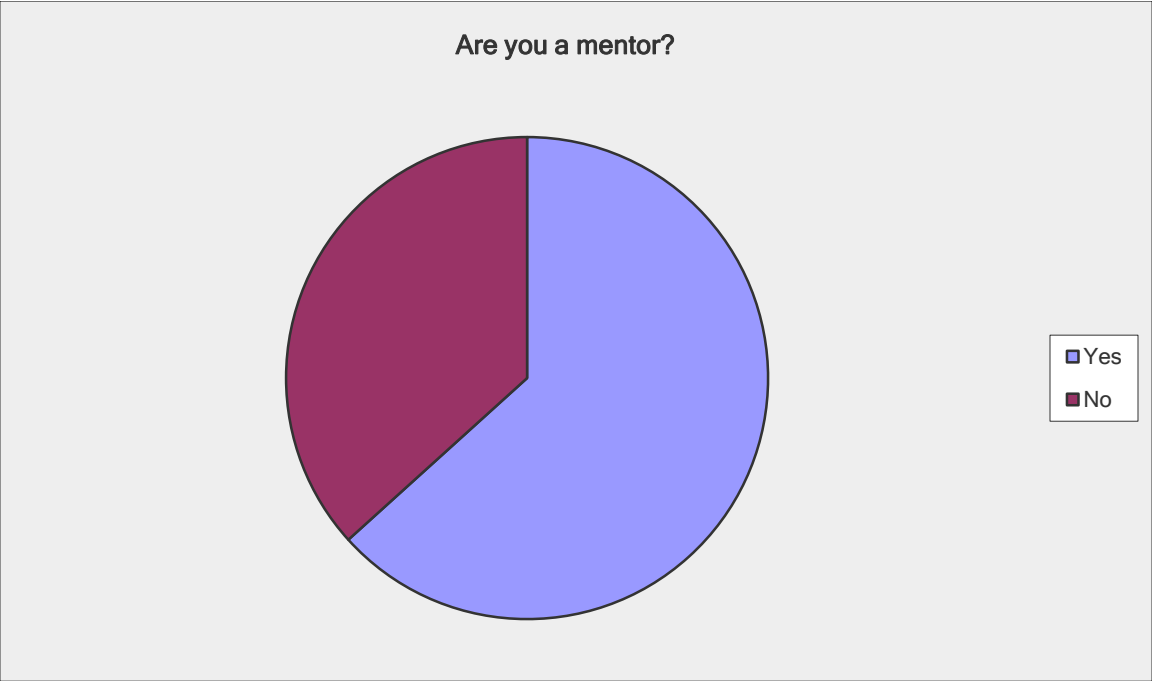
Survey Questions and Graphs

Survey Question #1:



In your current career, did you have a mentoring relationship where you were the mentee?			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Yes	52.7%	48	
No	47.3%	43	
<i>answered question</i>			91
<i>skipped question</i>			0

Survey Question #2:



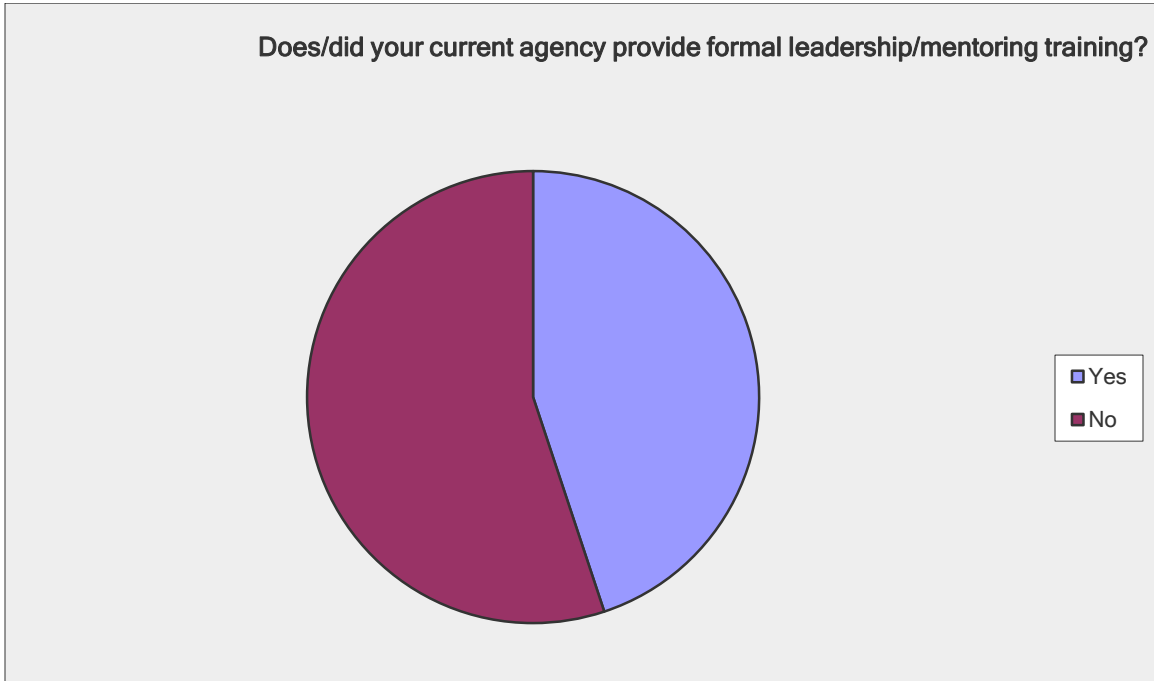
Are you a mentor?			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Yes	63.3%	57	
No	36.7%	33	
<i>answered question</i>			90
<i>skipped question</i>			1

Survey Question #3:



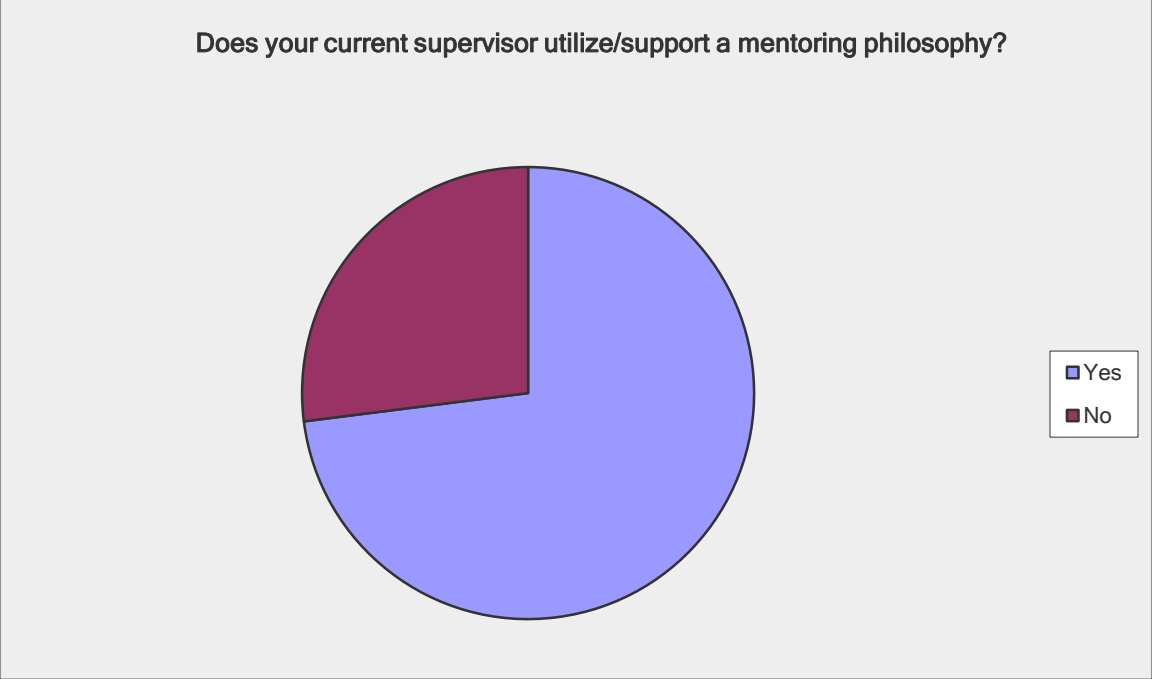
Did you have any formal leadership and/or mentoring training?			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Yes	64.0%	57	
No	36.0%	32	
<i>answered question</i>			89
<i>skipped question</i>			2

Survey Question #4:



Does/did your current agency provide formal leadership/mentoring training?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	44.9%	40
No	55.1%	49
<i>answered question</i>		89
<i>skipped question</i>		2

Survey Question #5:



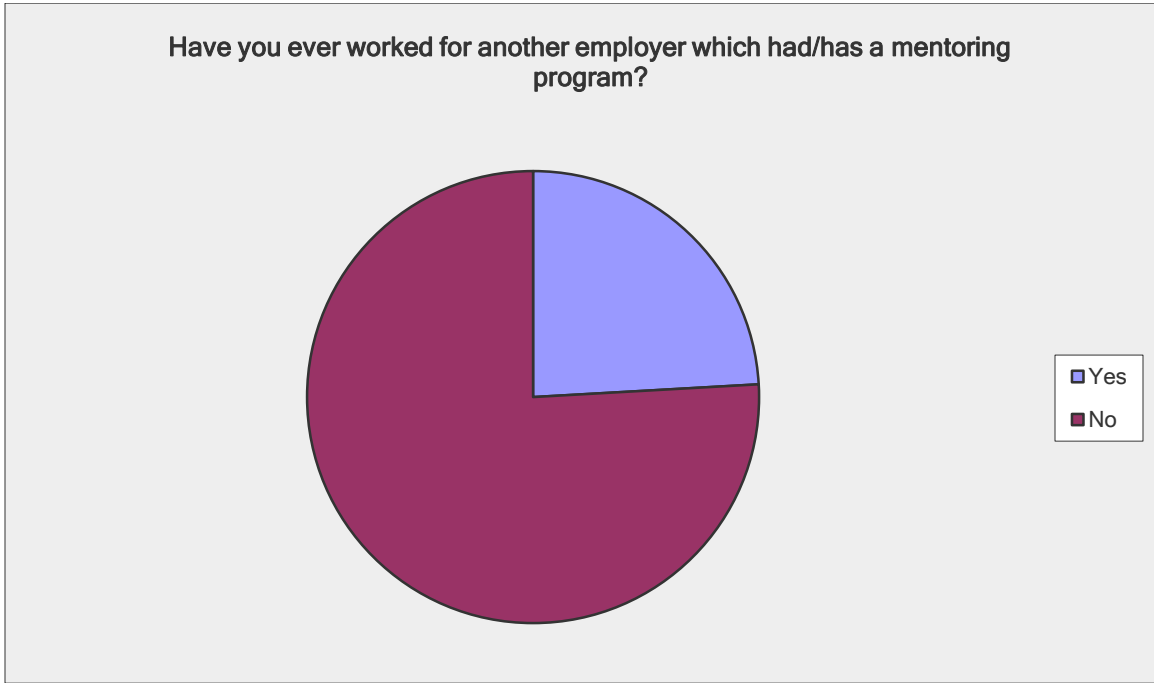
Does your current supervisor utilize/support a mentoring philosophy?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	73.0%	65
No	27.0%	24
<i>answered question</i>		89
<i>skipped question</i>		2

Survey Question #6:

Please explain.	
Answer Options	Response Count
	18
<i>answered question</i>	18
<i>skipped question</i>	73

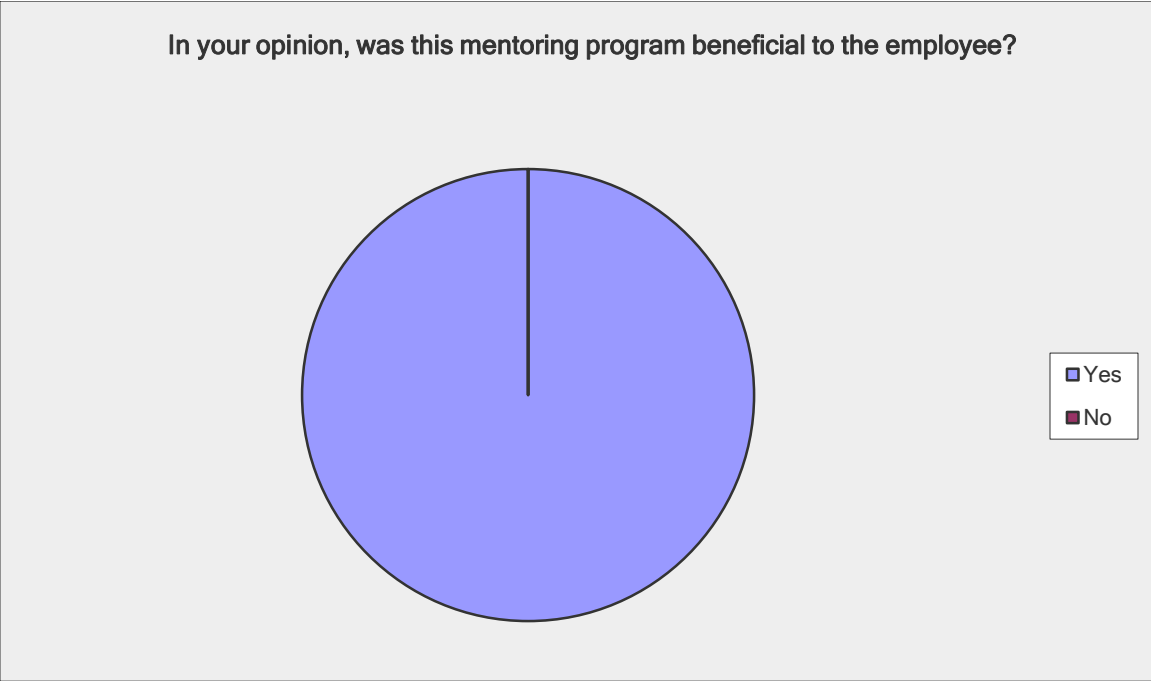
- On the Job Training, and it is not the best way to do things.
- We don't have a mentoring program
- We Currently do not have a mentoring program
- Small agency, don't have resources
- There is no formal mentoring program in place
- None
- City Manager does not mentor
- I am a Captain, and I run the Operations Bureau. My mentors have all left the department, and I have less than 3 years left with the agency.
- Old School
- Mentoring at our agency is up to each individual
- All ranking supervisors are provided with training for their rank, and Lieutenants and above can apply for leadership training.
- Unsure as to why!
- You are expected to do your job, and know your responsibilities
- We have no formal mentorship program in place; however, mentorship does not need to take place formally in order for mentoring to occur. Daily exchange of information, expectations and feedback create and foster mentoring.
- Leadership philosophy is utilized and encouraged, but not really mentoring.
- NA
- NA
- 1

Survey Question #7:



Have you ever worked for another employer which had/has a mentoring program?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	24.1%	20
No	75.9%	63
<i>answered question</i>		83
<i>skipped question</i>		8

Survey Question #8:



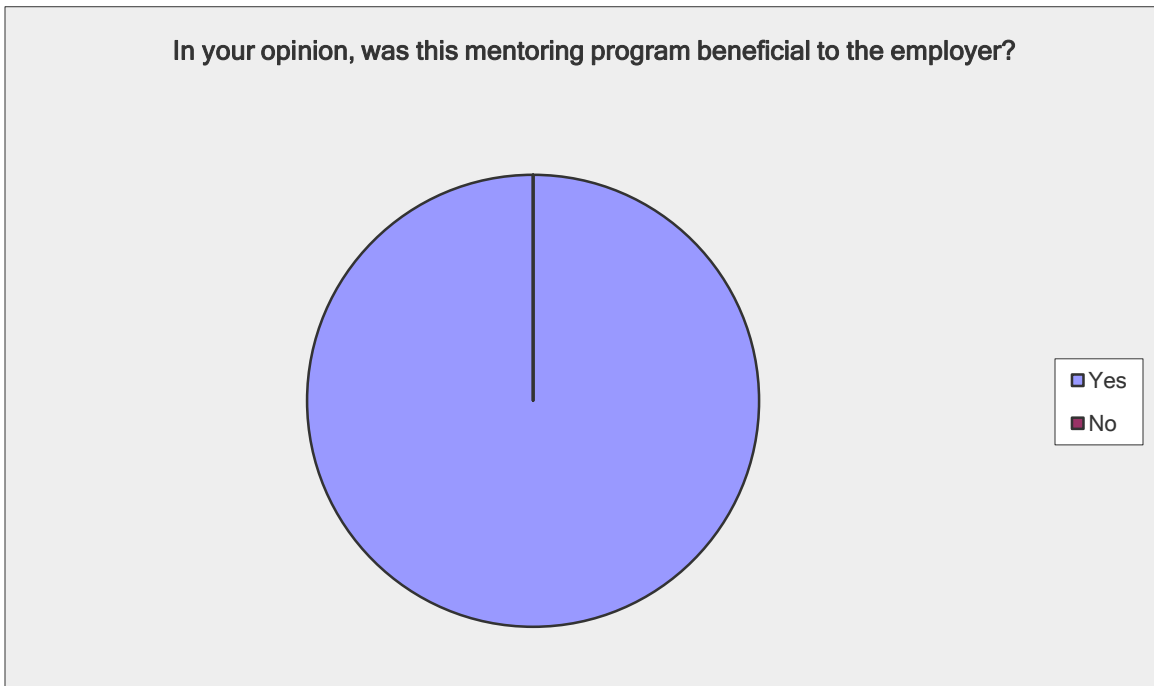
In your opinion, was this mentoring program beneficial to the employee?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	100.0%	20
No	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		20
<i>skipped question</i>		71

Survey Question #9:

Please explain:

All survey participants skipped this question.

Survey Question #10:



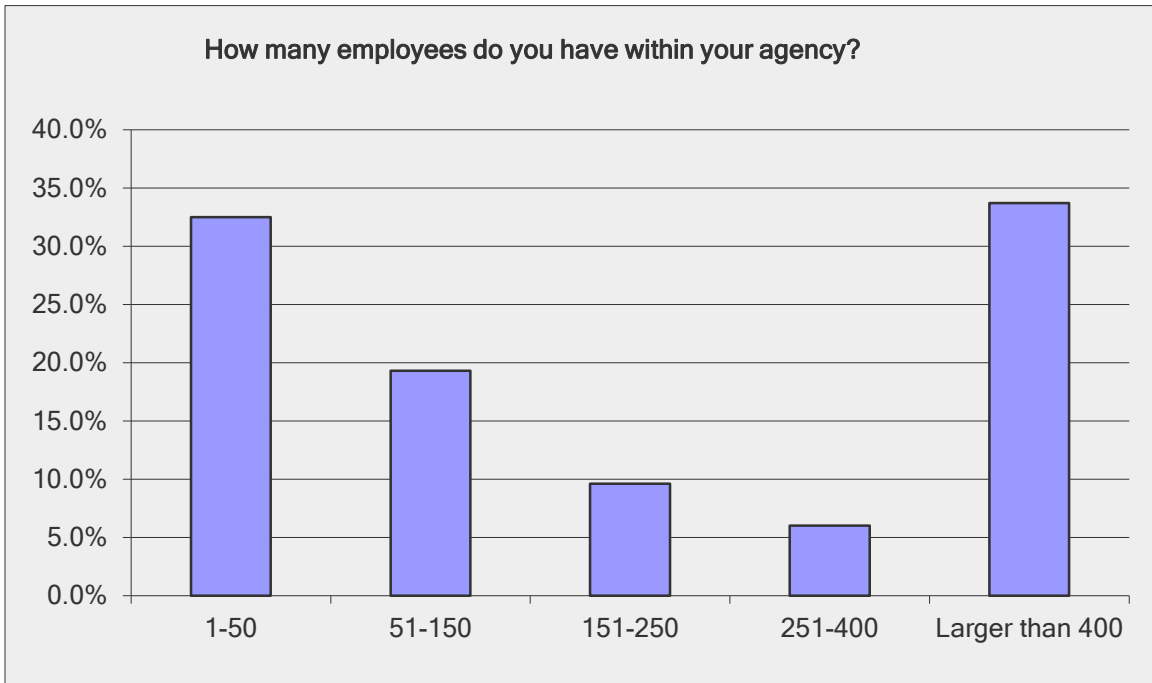
In your opinion, was this mentoring program beneficial to the employer?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	100.0%	20
No	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		20
<i>skipped question</i>		71

Survey Question #11:

Please explain:

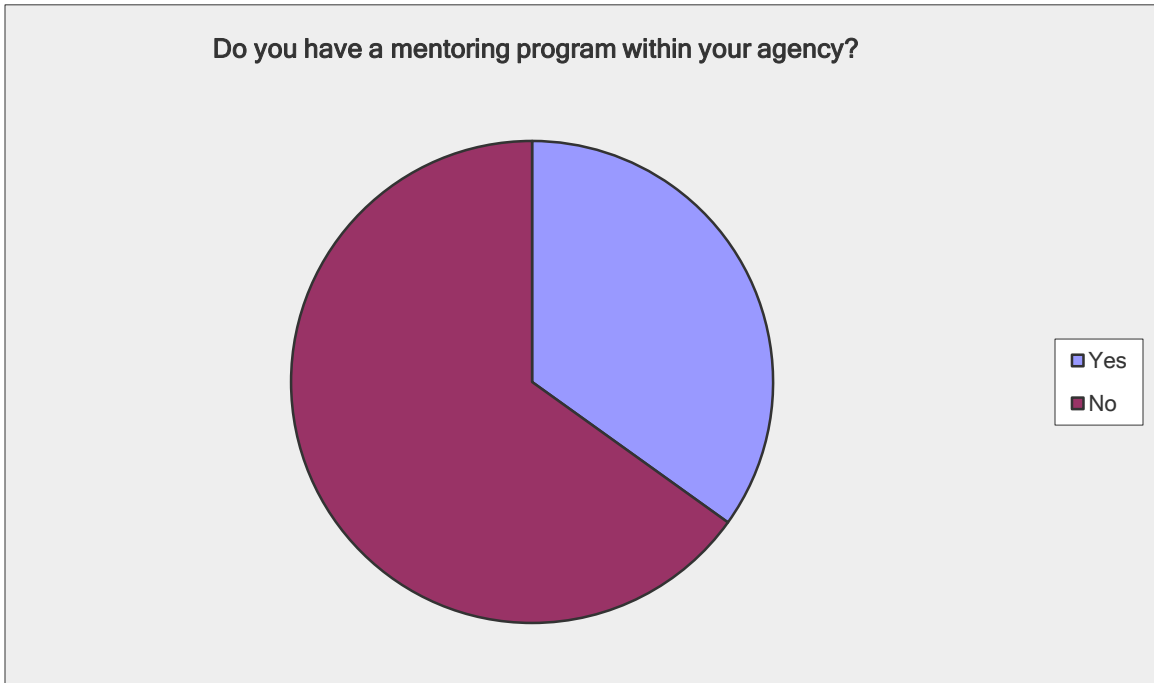
All survey participants skipped this question.

Survey Question #12



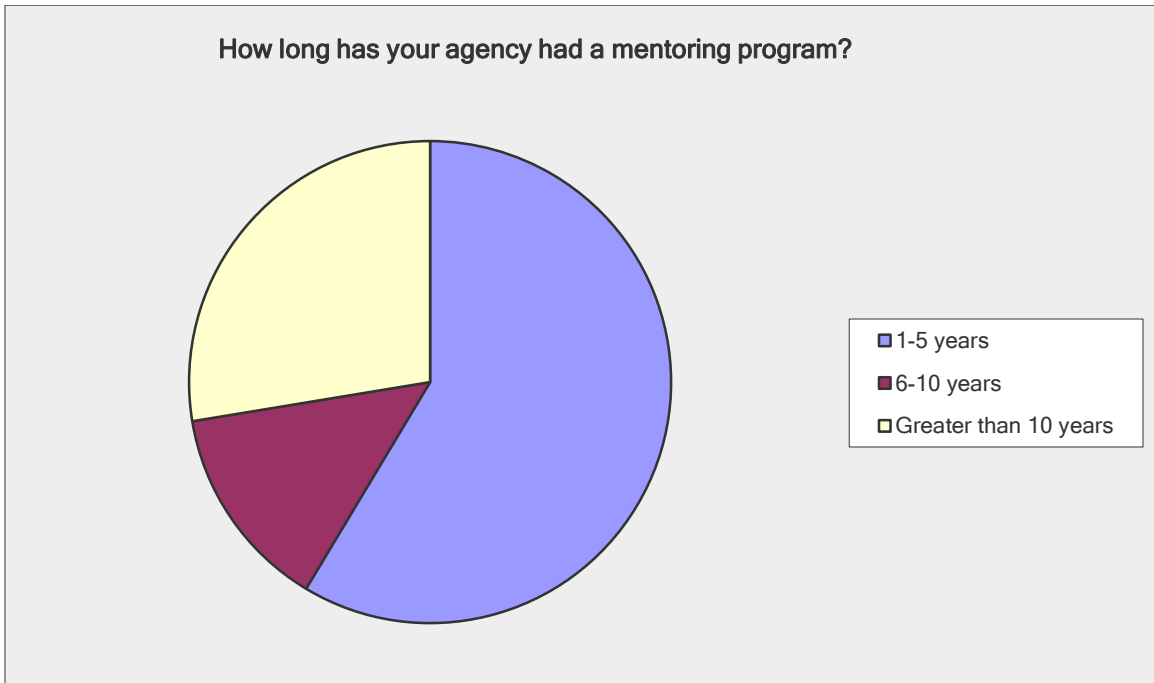
How many employees do you have within your agency?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1-50	32.5%	27
51-150	19.3%	16
151-250	9.6%	8
251-400	6.0%	5
Larger than 400	33.7%	28
<i>answered question</i>		83
<i>skipped question</i>		8

Survey Question #13:



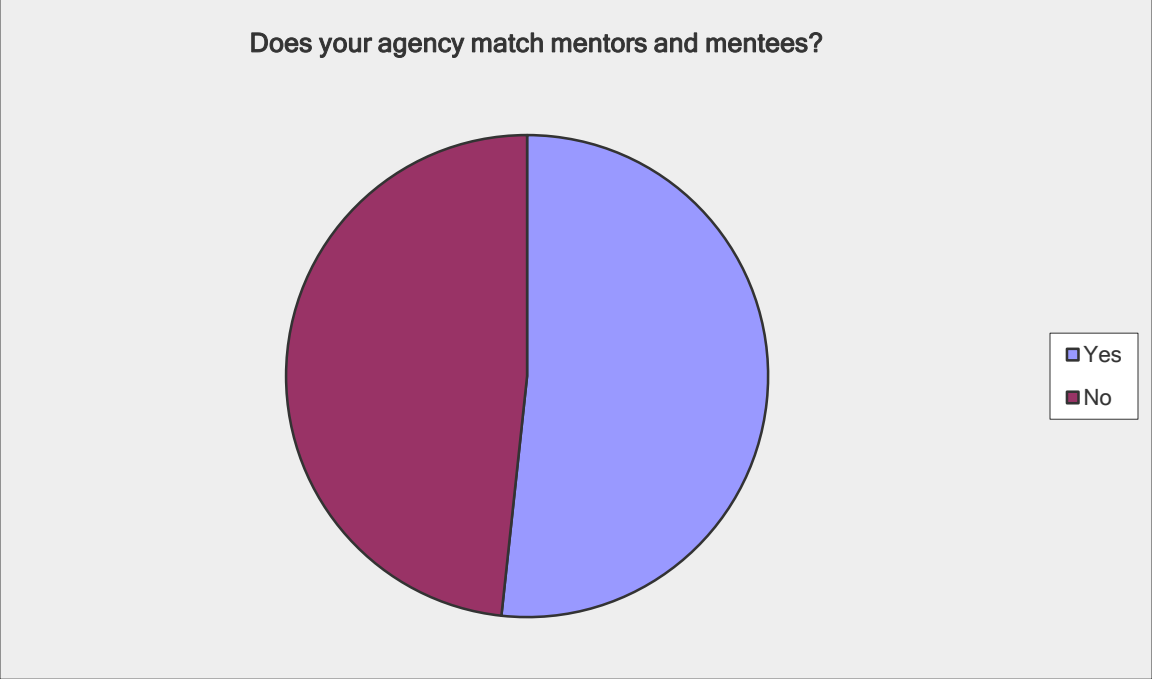
Do you have a mentoring program within your agency?			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Yes	34.9%	29	
No	65.1%	54	
<i>answered question</i>			83
<i>skipped question</i>			8

Survey Question #14:



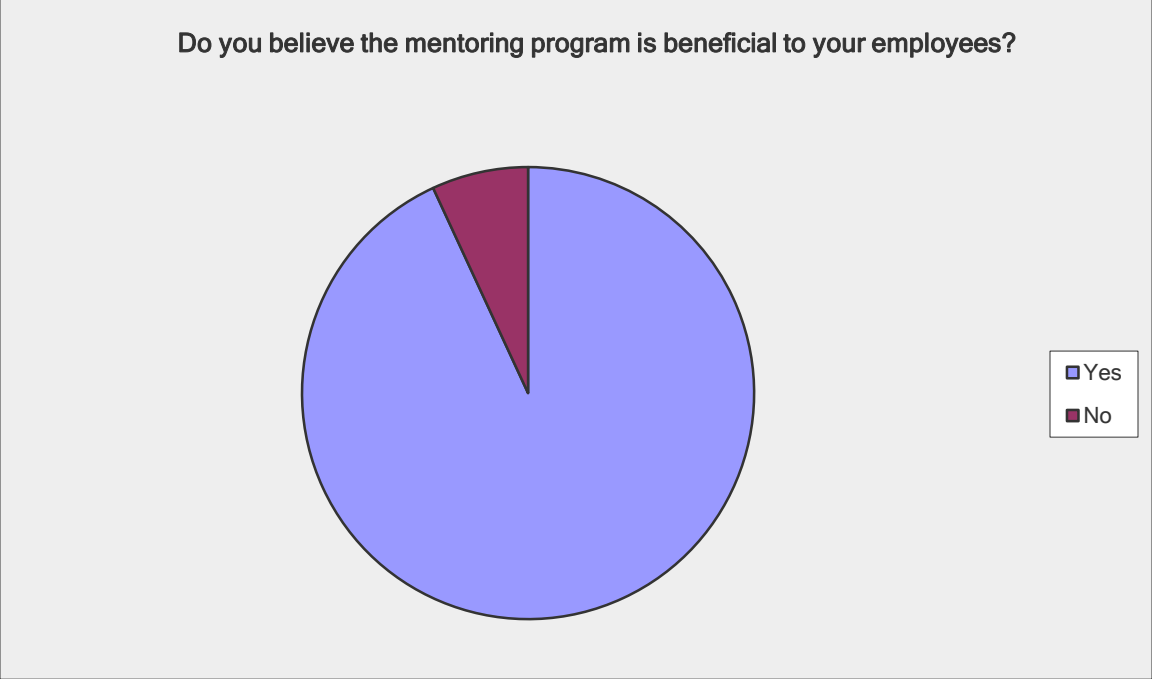
How long has your agency had a mentoring program?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1-5 years	58.6%	17
6-10 years	13.8%	4
Greater than 10 years	27.6%	8
<i>answered question</i>		29
<i>skipped question</i>		62

Survey Question #15:



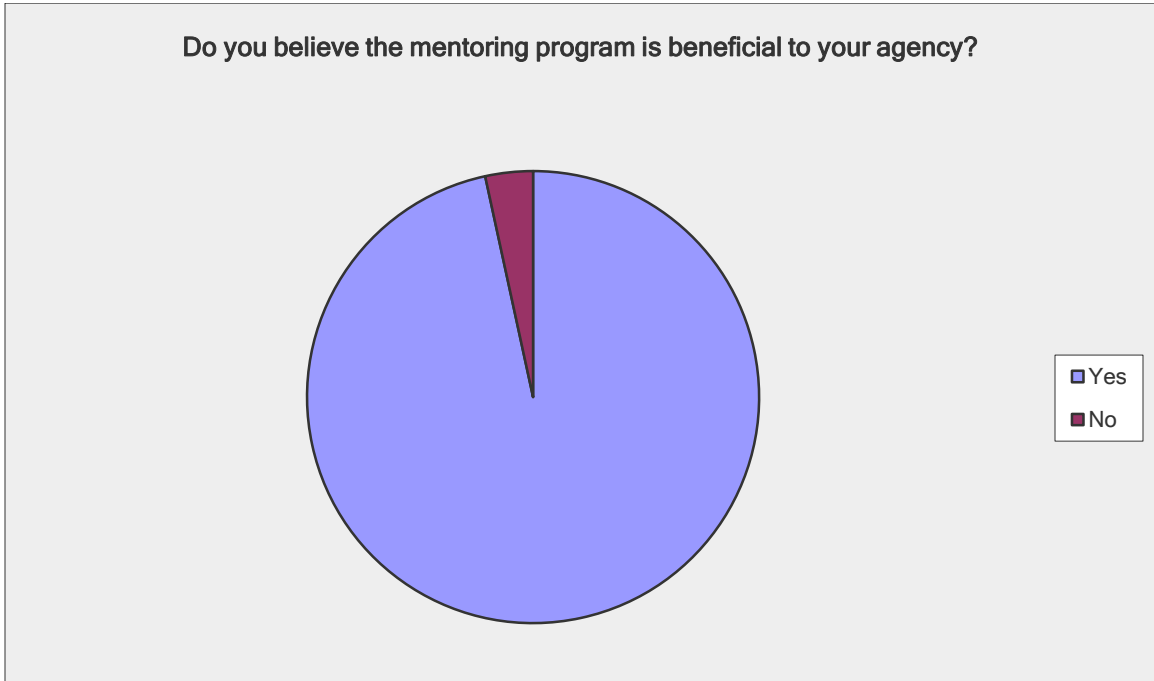
Does your agency match mentors and mentees?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	51.7%	15
No	48.3%	14
<i>answered question</i>		29
<i>skipped question</i>		62

Survey Question #16:



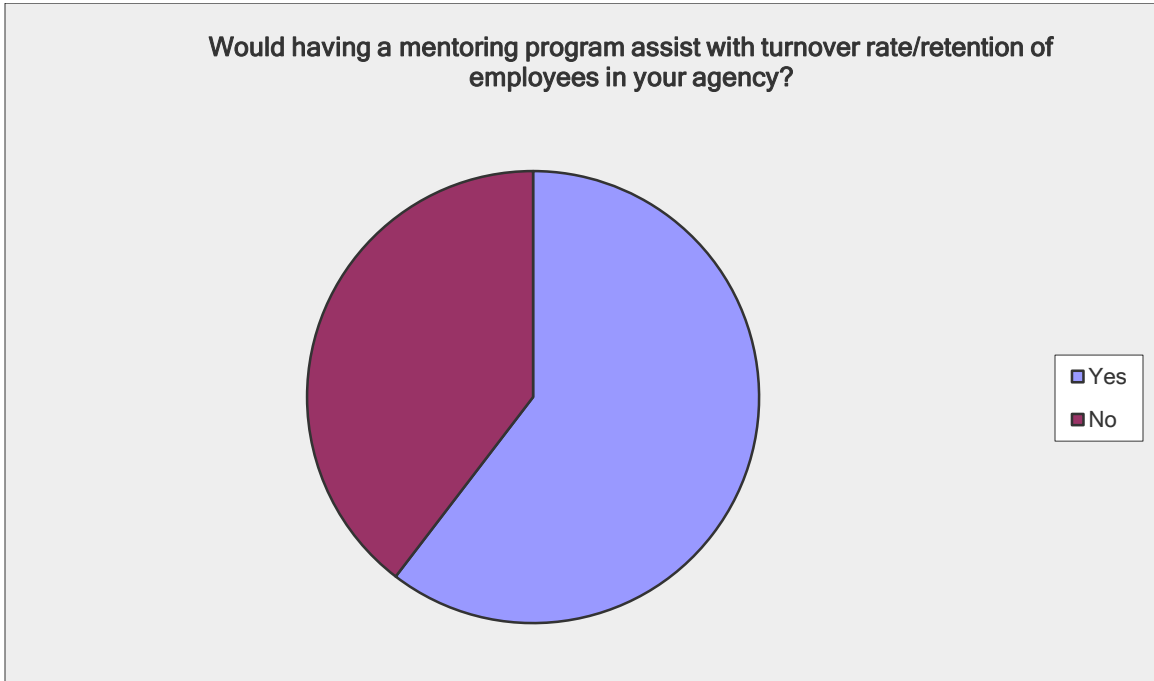
Do you believe the mentoring program is beneficial to your employees?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	93.1%	27
No	6.9%	2
<i>answered question</i>		29
<i>skipped question</i>		62

Survey Question #17:



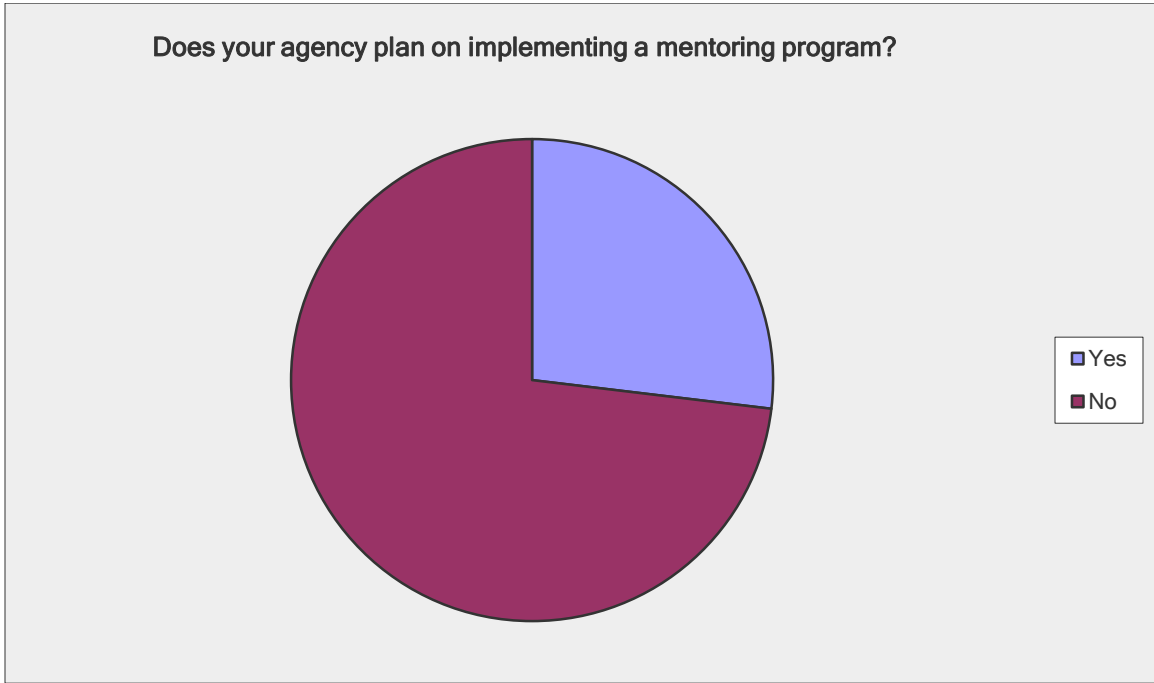
Do you believe the mentoring program is beneficial to your agency?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	96.6%	28
No	3.4%	1
<i>answered question</i>		29
<i>skipped question</i>		62

Survey Question #18:



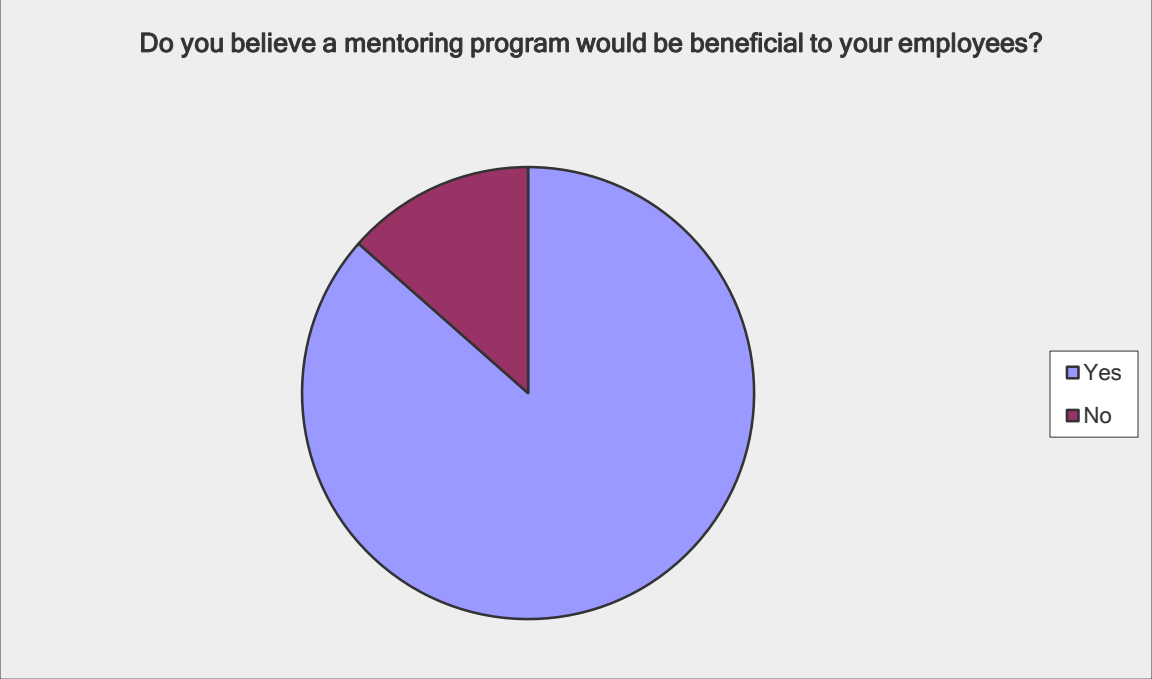
Would having a mentoring program assist with turnover rate/retention of employees in your agency?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	60.4%	32
No	39.6%	21
<i>answered question</i>		53
<i>skipped question</i>		38

Survey Question #19:



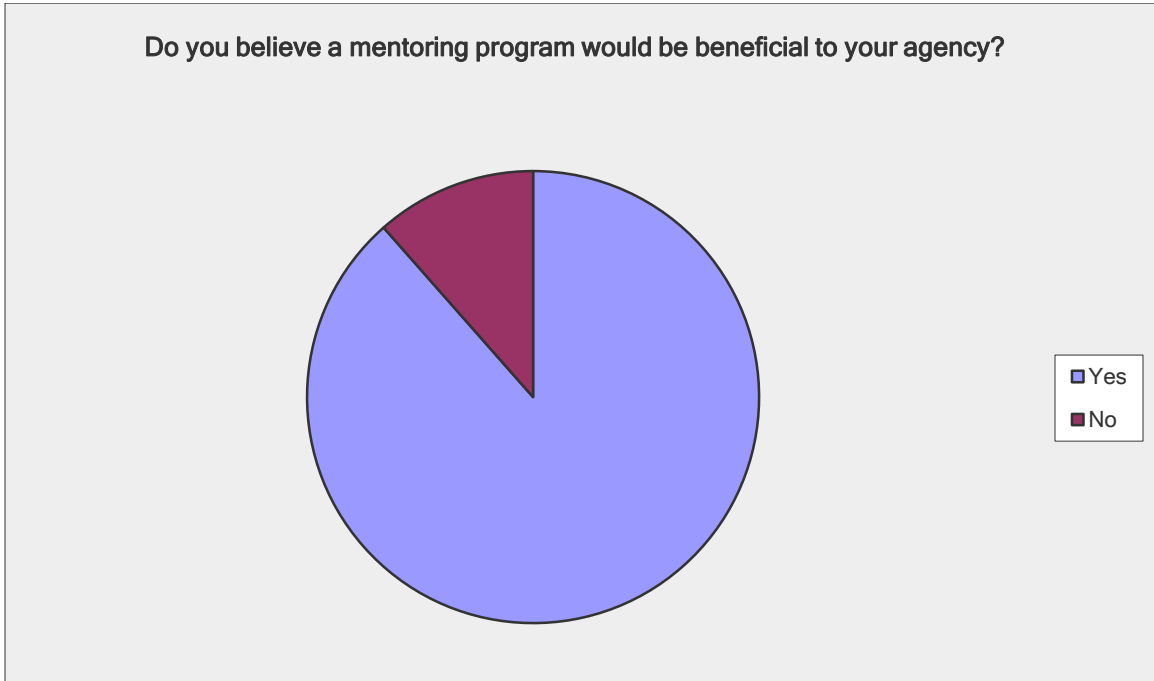
Does your agency plan on implementing a mentoring program?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	26.9%	14
No	73.1%	38
<i>answered question</i>		52
<i>skipped question</i>		39

Survey Question #20:



Do you believe a mentoring program would be beneficial to your employees?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	86.5%	45
No	13.5%	7
<i>answered question</i>		52
<i>skipped question</i>		39

Survey Question #21:



Do you believe a mentoring program would be beneficial to your agency?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	88.5%	46
No	11.5%	6
<i>answered question</i>		52
<i>skipped question</i>		39