

Sponsoring is different from coaching and mentoring

While there might be overlaps in roles of a coach, mentor, and sponsor, there are differences in the responsibilities and objectives of the role.

Sponsorship in the workplace is a measurable dynamic between an advocate in the workplace who is an established leader and an employee who is seeking support, career guidance and an overall experience that will transform her career.

Point of differences



Coaches take the time to discuss with employees what they want to achieve in their career.

Who drives the relationship

Both the employee and the coach drives the relationship.

Objective

Provide development feedback outside the formal performance evaluation process



Mentoring occurs when an experienced employee provides guidance to an individual with less experience to raise the potential for their future career goals and success.

The employee drives the relationship and the mentor is reactive and responsive to the needs.

Helps the employee determine possible career paths to meet specific career goals



A **sponsor** is a senior leader or other person who uses strong influence to help a team member obtain high-visibility assignments, promotions, or jobs.

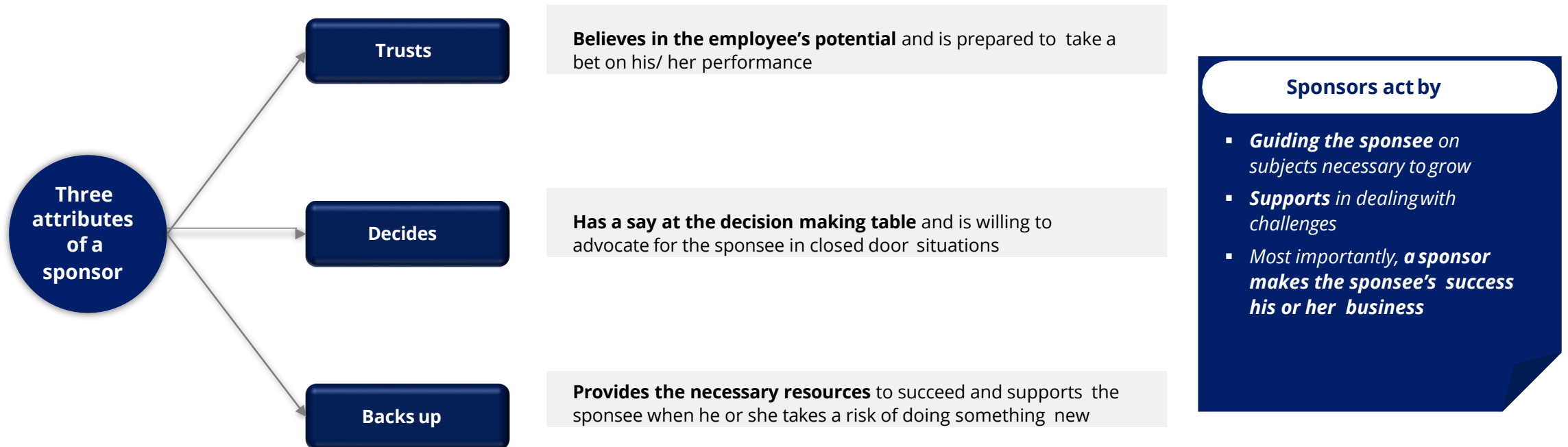
The sponsor drives the relationship, advocating for the employee in many settings, including behind closed doors.

Advocate for advancement and championing work and potential with other senior leaders

Role of a sponsor

One of the primary roles of a sponsor is that he/ she will use his/ her internal political and social capital to move an employee's career forward within an organization.

Sponsorship and not mentorship is the way in which power is transferred in an organization. When it comes to getting ahead in the organization **it is the sponsor who helps the sponsee by advocating about him or her.**



Role of a sponsee

Sponsorship is a two-way street, protégés will have to deliver through high performance, loyalty to the sponsor and the organization, and a value-added skill that improves the brand value of the sponsor.

Sponsorship is not a gift to an employee, it is earned. Like the sponsor, the sponsee also has certain set of roles and responsibilities



Perform

The employee who is looking for a sponsor, should meet the minimum condition of being an outstanding performer.

- Achieve the targets
- Meet the deadlines
- **It is important to keep the sponsor looped in, so that he or she knows about the success of the sponsee**
 - Knowing about the historical track record of the sponsee helps the sponsor to push for a bigger assignment or promotion



Make the sponsor look good

The sponsee should identify and develop a skill and deploy it to make complement the skills of the sponsor.

- It is best, if the unique skill that the sponsee is developing complements the skills of the sponsor

"Whenever I start a new job and there is a senior leader whom I want by my side, I figure out what they need to accomplish most urgently and then deliver it to them. Who would not be pleased?" – Patt Fili-Krushel, Former Chairman of NBC Universal News group



Be trustworthy

By sponsoring, sponsors necessarily put their own reputation on the line. It is therefore a responsibility of a sponsee to help the sponsor succeed as well.

- Sponsors would prefer somebody who is loyal, over someone who is collaborative, visionary, and highly productive.
- Sponsees should demonstrate that even they back up their sponsor when they need it, by:
 - Sharing valuable information
 - Giving honest feedback in private
 - Aligning with sponsors and their viewpoints in public

Critical success factors of a sponsorship program

In addition to the responsibilities of the sponsor and the sponsee, the organization plays a critical role in making a sponsorship program successful by devising a structured approach to sponsorship, involving senior leaders, and introducing sponsorship at all levels.

To build a sustainable approach to nurturing sponsorship relationships, company programs should include the following four elements



Make sponsorship robust

Organizations must devise a comprehensive approach to building and leveraging the sponsorship relationship which includes factors like:

- Incorporating senior leader support
- Enrichment and education for women and people of color
- A structured approach to ensure that sponsorship grows as a function of proactive talent management



Lead from the top

It is important to engage the C-suite to realize a successful sponsorship program.

- Visible and active support from a company's most senior leaders (both women and men) makes the difference between a good and successful sponsorship program.



Pay attention to the pipeline

Sponsorship programs can be implemented at all career levels.

- Companies with successful sponsorship programs should understand the realize that women and people from minority groups require sponsorship at every transition point in their career, starting from very early stages in their careers.



Make sponsorship safe

Organizations should make it a point to make seeking advice and counsel from someone of a different gender or ethnicity comfortable.

- Programs that make it safe and simple for new relationships to form help to bridge a gap.