

YOUNGER GENERATION TEACHING SUPERVISORS



Rachel Kuenzler was a four-year student at the Missouri State University, in which she worked on transitioning from being a student to an employee, working a full-time job. Finding a job would show the Kuenzler was now an adult, ready and prepared for the real world. After working hard as a student for those four years, in hopes of finding employed upon graduation, Kuenzler managed to find work, just one week after her graduation took place. Kuenzler found herself working in an environment in which more than half of her colleagues were much older than her, practically the age of her parents. Kuenzler had found herself fearing that her colleagues would not take her seriously because of the age difference. Kuenzler is 25 years old and works an associate software engineer for MasterCard International, an operations center in Missouri. When speaking of her colleagues, Kuenzler says, "I thought they wouldn't take me seriously." MasterCard addressed the issue at hands and made good use of the situation, creating a reversed mentoring program in which the younger generation of employees actually helps the older workers, taking them under their wings and teaching them a thing or two. It is quite normal for peer to peer coaching to take place in a corporate environment. However, in a lot of different workplaces, it is the older workers who tend to teach the younger workers. MasterCard, on the other hand, wanted to maintain a way to help promote the younger generation of works, allowing them to have an opportunity to share their own opinions and observations with other people in the workplace. The adjunct instructor for Washington University, Rik Nemanick, says that the coaching program for MasterCard is different than other corporations because it is reversed. He also says that while it is different, the strategy is still the same because it is a way for employees to coach one another. Mentoring programs are beneficial in the workplace, allowing individuals to expose their true talents and grow professionally. Nemanick says, "When talented individuals reach the juncture when they might leave, it's good that they have someone they can go to - someone they trust to discuss the situation." With reverse mentoring, Kuenzler ended up being matched with Keith Martin, a 46 year old man who actually joined MasterCard two decades ago. And, the matchup was quite successful. Kuenzler was able to explain her preferred work space, working with other people and encourage a collaboration of other employees, while Martin openly admitted that he is used to working on his own, sitting by himself in a cubicle. Martin said, through working with Kuenzler, "They like to move at a quick pace and effect change." He also says, "They basically want to jump right into the fire. They don't want to hold back or want to hear, 'Why don't you wait three months to find your way around.'"

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