

Most Remarkable Mentor award 2020

Jury report

In 2018 Talent to the Top introduced a new prize: a mentoring award for the Most Remarkable Mentor. The aim is to shine a spotlight on senior managers who act as mentors for talented women and men in the Cross-Mentoring programme, and to encourage them and others to continue their commitment to talent development, diversity, and inclusive leadership.

The jury was impressed by the nominations received for the award 2020. The entrants wrote with great enthusiasm about their mentors: managers from other organizations, with whom they had a number of mentoring discussions this year, as part of the Cross Mentoring program for Talent to the Top. The mentoring conversations have been insightful, stimulating and inspirational. Cross Mentoring is about mutual learning, the mentors also benefit from their participation.

Deliberation of the jury

We received 9 nominations this year. The jury eagerly read and discussed the submitted nominations. The emphasis is not on being the "best mentor ever", but about a mentor who has distinguished him or herself through a number of different criteria. In particular, someone who has demonstrated a combination of having an impact on the mentee and having an effective style of mentoring that is in line with the objectives of the Cross Mentoring program. One of the objectives is to (further) clarify the mentee's ambition and to contribute to making a next career step. A prerequisite for this is the development and reinforcement of inclusion and inclusive leadership, so that all talent is recognized and can flourish. All nominated mentors appear to apply good mentoring techniques: posing questions, mirroring, confronting, broadening perspectives, presenting alternative scenarios. Elements with which the mentees can get to work themselves, to further develop themselves and to take or prepare for the next career step. The jury then looked for special "pluses" in style and impact and selected a top 4. From which, after careful consideration, a winner was ultimately chosen. The Most Remarkable Mentor of this year works for an organization that recently joined the Cross Mentoring program, as did the organization for which the mentee works. This in contrast to last year when the winning mentor was from IBM and the nominating mentee from Shell, both companies that have been participating with the program from its start.

The winner and the award

The nomination sent by the mentee speaks of immense enthusiasm and gratitude for her mentor, who went beyond the call of duty when it came to her mentoring role. When the mentee started the Cross Mentoring program, she was in China, and as a result of Covid-19, has not been back since and never had the opportunity to meet her mentor in person. This in no way negatively impacted their mentoring relationship however, as the mentee writes *"this did not cause any block/barrier for the coaching sessions – I am so glad to know her and her supervision during this challenging period."* The mentor and mentee come from different cultural backgrounds, of which the mentee indicated *".....completely different*

cultures; she pays attention to this and is very flexible.” Of her mentor in general, the mentee writes:

“She is very open, kind and honest. She shared a lot of her experiences at work with me. She encourages me to think big and do small. With her support, I started to recognize my other potential values and possibilities at work.”

“Characteristic of her is that everything starts from the ‘heart’. She not only cares for the growth of my career but also for my happiness.”

“The coaching sessions not only added significant value to my career development but also to my personal development.”

The jury was ultimately most impressed by this nomination - the mentor scores high on all criteria for good mentorship for example the mentee’s enthusiasm, the impact on the mentee’s ambition and career, the creativity or style of mentoring and the mentor’s ability to listen and empathise. During the mentoring event of Talent to the Top on December 11th, 2020, the prize for the Most Remarkable Mentor 2020 will be awarded to:

Sandra Hacklaender, Director Human Resources at LeasePlan

She has been nominated by her mentee, Weiwei Wang, Senior Data Scientist at APG.

The jury



Gert Kroon



Jennifer Ferrier



Miguette Jadoul



Maikel Rekelhof

- Gert Kroon, CEO Arcadis (Chairman of jury)
- Jennifer Ferrier, Agile Coach Rabobank
- Miguette Jadoul, Sr. Strateeg, Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken
- Maikel Rekelhof, Partner / Head of Diversity BDO NL

Cross Mentoring and diversity

Mentoring is an effective tool for talent and leadership development. In 2008, Opportunity in Bedrijf (now Talent to the Top), started a mentoring program, set up in such a way that it

also contributes to diversity and inclusion. The Cross Mentoring program, each round lasting a year, has since further developed and has been expanded with Mixed Mentoring, Boardroom Coaching and Cross Cultural Mentoring and has had over 2000 participants. The program combines the individual benefits of mentoring and sponsorship with the strategic benefits of diversity and inclusion.

A new award: Most Remarkable Mentor

In the context of the ten-year anniversary of Cross Mentoring in 2018, Talent to the Top created a new award: the Most Remarkable Mentor. We want to put senior managers who act as mentors for talented women and men in the spotlights. And stimulate them and others to continue their commitment to talent development, diversity and inclusive leadership. Mentees nominated their own mentors for this prize.

For further information on Cross Mentoring and the Most Remarkable Mentor award:
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