

# International Cross-Mentoring Program for Women in Leading Positions

Leadership  
Development  
through  
Mentoring



International  
Cross-Mentoring Program

[www.cross-mentoring.net](http://www.cross-mentoring.net)

The word Mentor comes from Homer's novel, the Odyssey. While Odysseus was away on the road to the Trojan War, the education of his son Telemachus was entrusted to Mentor, a friend of Odysseus'. The old man acted as a reliable tutor and advisor for the young Telemachus.

Nowadays, the word "Mentoring" refers to a relationship of support, discussion, exchange and learning in which an experienced individual invests his/her wisdom and expertise in the development of another individual who is expected to gain competences and achieve professional objectives. Mentoring is thus a real crucible that fosters personal development. The aim is not to provide Mentees with ready-made solutions, but to help them develop their own resources and solutions in order to tackle the problems they may be faced with, and to help them become the persons they wish to be.



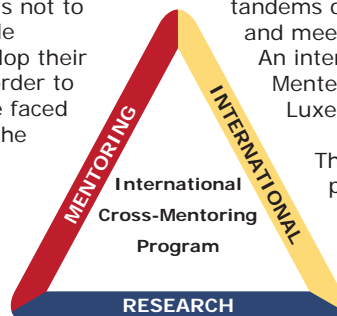
Cross-Mentoring Conference in Luxembourg 2008  
Rita Knott, left, Marie-Josée Jacobs, Minister for Equal opportunities, Luxembourg, middle and Hana Pri-zan, Member of the Board of Management, Bank Hapoalim Tel Aviv, right

## The Program has gone global...

The Cross-Mentoring Program is now set up in 6 European countries: Germany, Denmark, Luxembourg, Portugal, Sweden, and Switzerland. Mentee and Mentor tandems originate from the same country and meet in the country itself.

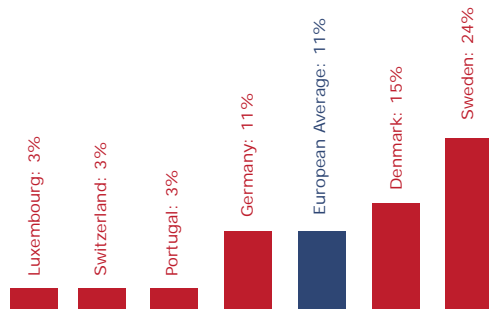
An international conference gathers Mentees and Mentors of all countries in Luxembourg once a year.

The goal of Rita Knott and her partners is to include 15 countries within the program and thus extend it beyond Europe's boundaries.



## Why a Cross-Mentoring Program?

"Companies with a higher proportion of women in top management may perform better". This is the result of a study carried out by the McKinsey&Company in 2007, which also shows that executive women account for only 11% of top management teams in European companies.



Source: European Commission 2007

As early as 2005, Rita Knott, then a member of the executive team at Banque Hapoalim Luxembourg, launched the first Cross-Mentoring Program in Luxembourg. She formed a network where Mentees and Mentors from diverse size and sectors could interact; in ideal environment for women who wished to move towards decision-making positions.

In fact, the aim was to set up a cross-company, cross-sector, cross-culture and cross-gender mentoring program in Luxembourg that would last long enough to create real relationships and generate measurable results. As soon as this program was incepted, it was granted the personal support from Luxembourg's Minister for Equal Opportunities Marie-Josée Jacobs.

## ... and is now focused on research

In close collaboration with the University of Luxembourg (MA in multi-LEARN), the Copenhagen Business School, the Stockholm School of Economics, the European Academy for Women in Politics and Economy, Berlin, and the Migal-Galilee Technology Center, Kiryat-Shmona, Israel the Program objectives are:

- Building up of a mentoring expertise knowledge center
- Appraisal of experience gained within the Program

## Who joined already?

### Participating Organizations in the Cross-Mentoring Program Luxembourg in 2006, 2007, 2008

Alter Domus, Anglo-American, ArcelorMittal, Bank Hapoalim, BDO-Compagnie Fiduciaire, Compass, Crédit Agricole, Deloitte, Deutsche Bank, DuPont, European Investment Bank, Fortis Insurance, Goodyear, IEE, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken, Villeroy & Boch and VOXmobile

## How is the Program organized?

The Program is developed over one year with about 10 companies and about 25 participating tandems per country.

Each company participates with an equal number of Mentees and Mentors. Mentees are only women, while Mentors can be either male or female. The Human Resources Managers of participating organizations identify women with management potential. Human Resources Managers meet and select appropriate Mentors for their Mentees based on a questionnaire completed by the Mentees where they identify the areas they would like to further develop.

### Program Setting - Time Investment

#### Level 1:

Mentees schedule monthly meetings with Mentors throughout one year, 10 to 12 individual sessions of 2 to 3 hours.

#### Level 2:

Four to five reflection workshops, quarterly. Kick-off of the Program is done during the 1st Reflection Workshop.

#### Level 3:

Mentees and/or Mentors receive 4 1/2 hours of professional coaching sessions to support the mentoring process, or to deal more in-depth with particular issues.



Kristin Lang,  
European Investment Bank

#### **"Women, market yourselves!"**

"My advice to women who want to move ahead is not to mistakenly think that they are going to be judged for the work they do. They will be judged on their networking capabilities, on how they advance their careers and are able to promote what they've done.

They will have to work twice as hard and put more efforts into their ability to sell themselves, rather than sit in their office and just do the work."

## Advantages of the Program

At the end of each Program, a survey is carried out with the Mentees and Mentors by the universities in order to assess the results of the steps undertaken and the progress achieved. A center of knowledge is thus built up and made available to the participating companies.

Judging from the main accomplishments of past experiences, there are large numbers of benefits for all participants.

### Benefits for Participating Companies

- Increasing the percentage of women in leading positions
- Establishing benchmarking between the participating companies
- Creating networking opportunities
- Boosting the cultural understanding and communication of participants
- Enhancing participants' leadership skills

### Benefits for Mentees

- Fostering professional and personal development
- Building a career plan
- Improving leadership capacities
- Exchanging knowledge and experience
- Extending networks
- Creating benchmarking
- Getting to know other corporate cultures and structures

### Benefits for Mentors

- Achieving new experiences in different sectors and cultures
- Gaining additional professional knowledge
- Confirming existing skills and developing new skills
- Acquiring new networking opportunities
- Gaining insight into ambitions, talents and perceptions of women in leadership

The Cross-Mentoring Program is very successful within companies and public administrations of many countries, as it is easy to set up and it allows a well-structured long term follow-up. Ministries of Equal Opportunities and Public Education support the Program because of its structured approach and the quality of its results.

# Key Points of the International Cross-Mentoring Program

## Goal

- Focus on leadership development
- Better balance between women and men in executive positions, improves financial performance for organizations

(see McKinsey & Company Study "WOMEN MATTER" of 2007)

[www.mckinsey.com/careers/women/makingadifference/socialsectorimpact/womenmatter/mckinsey\\_women\\_matter.pdf](http://www.mckinsey.com/careers/women/makingadifference/socialsectorimpact/womenmatter/mckinsey_women_matter.pdf)

## Benefits for the organizations

- Creates outstanding network and benchmarking opportunities
- Implements/increases a mentoring culture within the organizations as a cost efficient development tool
- Develops incentive for high potentials and top performers

## Structure

- Mentee-Mentor tandems of different organizations, sectors, cultures and gender
- One-year Program with monthly mentoring meetings, supported by four to five reflection workshops and by 4 ½ hours of professional coaching sessions for the tandems
- Master class for Mentors
- Program organized individually in six countries at the same time
- Annual International Conference in Luxembourg for Mentees and Mentors of all countries
- Research and development assured by five universities and business schools

## International Cross-Mentoring Business Partners

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## In cooperation with



International  
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