

# CASE STUDY

## DAIMLER TRUCKS REINVENTS CORPORATE MENTORING PROGRAM

OFFERS CAREER DEVELOPMENT FOR IMPROVED EMPLOYEE LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT

### BUSINESS CHALLENGE

**D**aimler Trucks North America, LLC, a Daimler company, is the largest heavy-duty truck manufacturer in North America and a leading producer of medium-duty trucks and specialized commercial vehicles. Headquartered in Portland, Oregon, Daimler Trucks North America manufactures, sells, and services several renowned commercial vehicle brands including Freightliner Trucks, Western Star Trucks, and Thomas Built Buses.

With many offices spread across North America, Daimler implemented a mentoring program for employee career development. Offered to all office-based employees, their original implementation was based on social learning software and was struggling due to a lack of mentoring program structure, low adoption rates, and high administrative effort. Additionally, there were no tools for mentors or mentees to assist with the program. Although the mentoring program was strong at headquarters, it was very limited everywhere else.

“We went back to the drawing board after our first experience. There was no strategic partnering in our program. It was based on spreadsheets, which limited the program to people you knew to ask for mentors. The software we had simply wasn’t working for us the way we needed it to,” explained Brian Stowe, Manager, Learning and Development at Daimler Trucks North America. “We wanted to come up with a scalable, extensive program that we could grow to support our blending learning solutions, leadership initiatives, and corporate culture initiatives. To us, mentoring is the glue that holds these together. We want employees to make meaningful, impactful connections for their career development. That’s what we were looking for with Chronus—something to make all of that happen,” Stowe summarized.



## THE CHRONUS SOLUTION

After researching the mentoring software options, Daimler switched from their previous vendor to Chronus. Suz Hahn, Learning Architect for Daimler's Learning and Development, was tasked to implement and roll out the new program. "We were attracted to the resources available—handbooks, tasks, and milestones. We liked that we could offer it to all employees and they could find their own mentors. It was not a hand-match for us," she said.

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Daimler is now offering the mentoring program to all 4,000 office-based employees throughout the U.S. and Mexico. "Our aim is multi-purpose mentoring. We're providing career development and self-development of mentors and mentees. We're also using Chronus to cultivate future leaders and talent within Daimler," elaborated Hahn.

**A smooth implementation.** After making the decision to subscribe to Chronus software, the Chronus implementation team went to work. Chronus implemented the software including a custom-branded home page, single sign-on feature, a secure FTP site, and other customizations. "I really liked the Chronus implementation team in the project. Simple, straightforward, very responsive, everything you'd want from a team who is implementing a high-profile project on your behalf. It was on time, on budget, and they made it look easy," Stowe said.

**Enrollment and executive sponsorship.** Daimler implemented the self-enrolling model of mentoring, where employees can simply sign up and start their mentoring partnerships immediately. "Our employees love that they can register so quickly and use their LinkedIn profile," said Hahn. Additionally, Daimler has worked hard to involve executive-level team members in the mentoring program, achieving strong executive sponsorship. "There are active participants at the top level, and I've definitely had people asking for reports so that they can continue to promote this program from the top down. With this great executive sponsorship, mentoring is now coming up through the organization at every level," Hahn explained.

**A planned, strategic kickoff.** After a previous negative experience, Daimler was determined to kick the program off right for the best chance at success. First, they invited higher management for a demonstration and asked them to enroll as mentors. This was followed up by a learning lunch demo for potential mentees, inviting employees who were new graduates to enroll first. Following this success, Daimler opened the program up to all office-based employees across North America. After more learning lunches and webinars, the program was off to a solid start.

## SOLUTIONS PROVIDED

- ✓ **Software:** Chronus, Enterprise Edition
- ✓ **Use Case:** Employee Career Development
- ✓ **Mentoring Model:** Mentor driven, self-matching
- ✓ **Services:** Implementation and configuration services including:
  - ✓ Branded user interface (UI) consistent with Daimler Trucks North America
  - ✓ Import of existing data from previous vendor
  - ✓ Single sign-on (SSO)
  - ✓ Secure file transfer protocol (FTP) feed
  - ✓ Custom email mapping
- ✓ **Features Most Appreciated:**
  - ✓ Self-matching capability
  - ✓ Program health reports
  - ✓ Workflow and program milestones



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Unleash the Power of Mentoring

## THE CHRONUS SOLUTION

**On track for more productive mentoring.** With excellent enrollment and sponsorship in hand, the mentoring program at Daimler is up and running. Daimler embraced the tools and mentoring program structure provided by Chronus. According to Hahn, one favorite tool for administrators is the program health report. "I really appreciate that I can keep tabs on the health of relationships and requests. In monitoring the pending requests, I can go in there and nudge the mentor to make their decision and contact the requestor."

Mentoring participants appreciate the goal-oriented structure of the program.

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"One question we get is that people aren't sure what they're supposed to be doing. With Chronus now in place, some folks have shared that they appreciate the nudges in the milestone tasks. It keeps the mentoring connection top of mind and what they're supposed to do next," Hahn said.

**A cloud-based software advantage.** Daimler appreciates the cloud-based mentoring model

because of the easy update capability of the software. "We're looking forward to the new engagement plan feature. When you buy a piece of enterprise software, you want it to be updated on occasion. It's so great, and they just turn it on. There's no downtime," Stowe said.

## THE DTNA MENTORSHIP PROGRAM.

CONNECT. SHIFT. DRIVE.

The DTNA Mentorship Program connects mentees to experienced mentors who can contribute to their professional and personal development. Mentees shift their potential by growing personal and professional relationships with mentors who act as role models and provide guidance. The program drives opportunities to develop business contacts, access industry information, and gain valuable insights from experienced and successful professionals. The DTNA Mentoring Program is designed to attract, motivate, develop, and retain talent while increasing productivity and growing a culture of sharing. Other benefits include sourcing new employees, familiarizing them with the organization, and acclimating employees to their jobs. Additionally, the program trains and develops performance for existing employees, encourages personal and professional growth, increases job satisfaction, identifies and develops employee potential to fill key leadership roles, and responds to the diverse needs of the workforce.



Daimler's mentoring program is customized and easily accessed online.



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## BENEFITS REALIZED

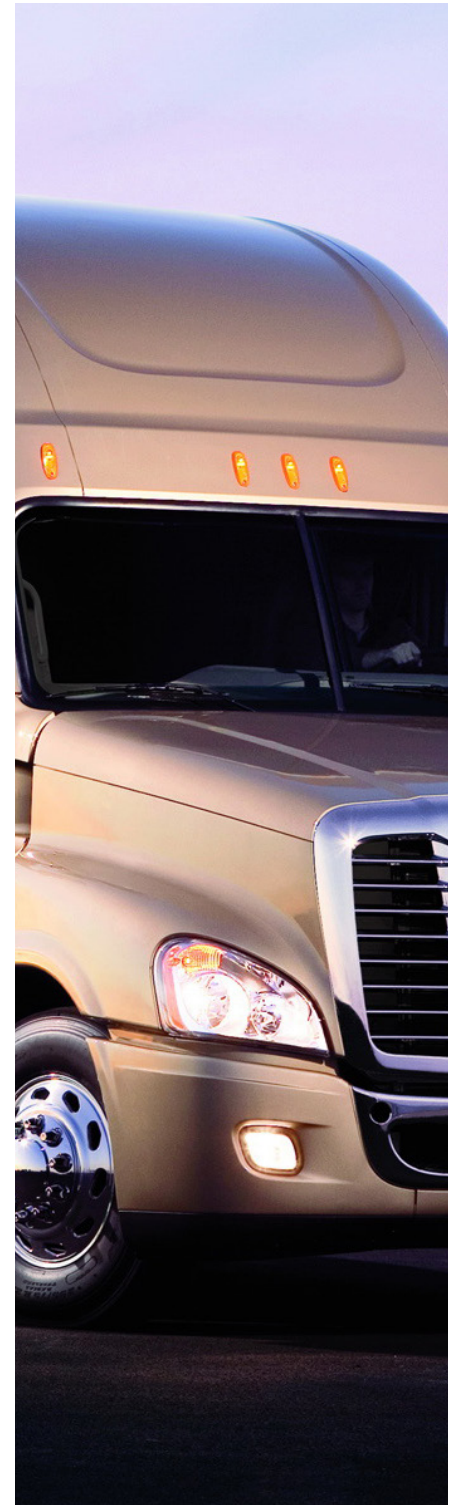
**A corporate culture change.** The new mentoring program at Daimler has been extremely well received, as evidenced through escalating program participation rates. According to Stowe, “We’ve definitely seen an increase in the number of participants while we’ve also seen a massive decrease in the negative comments about the program.” Added Hahn: “Today there is mentoring buzz at all levels, and Daimler realizes mentoring is key to the health of our organization.”

**True scalability for worldwide participation.** Participation rates in the mentoring program are rising across all offices. “With Chronus, we’ve been able to scale it better. In a company like ours, sometimes it’s nice to network with someone outside your geographic region who is in a similar role. Chronus helps us break down the silos that geography presents—it’s able to be more personal. The social aspects of user profiles detailing interests really helps with interregional connectivity,” said Stowe.

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**Time, money, and headaches saved on program administration.** For Daimler, the administrative time and effort is now greatly streamlined. “What really changed for us was the number of hours in the launch phase and matching phase. The number of hours to implement the whole new program with Chronus was equivalent to the time we spent

before just on matching. Before, we only had time to launch and forget it. We didn’t have the manpower to support the less-structured program. Now there are no more big piles of paper and it is super easy to use. We have an automated system that functions very well while providing an excellent user experience,” Hahn summarized.



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## NEW MENTORING DIRECTIONS

Chronus offers the ability to run multiple tracks of mentoring from a single software platform. Daimler is taking advantage of this by adding two new programs — one for corporate responsibility and one for new-hire onboarding. For corporate responsibility, Daimler provides volunteers who offer career advice and guidance to local high school students. “As part of our community outreach, we’re creating a public mentoring connection so that our employees can connect with students and college students interested in technical trades,” Stowe detailed. Daimler’s new-hire onboarding plans include a blended learning approach, where they’ll pair up new employees with “buddies” to assist with corporate integration after the initial new hire training.

In conclusion, Daimler feels their new program is improving employee engagement, learning, and satisfaction. “Our goal was to have it be more successful than the previous method. It certainly has proved that,” concluded Stowe.

As the hands-on administrator of Chronus, Hahn closed by saying “It’s been a pleasure. I’ve really enjoyed this project. It was just so easy with Chronus in terms of the level of customer service and the maturity of the platform.”



## PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

“I liked seeing the milestones and the documents included that explain everything I’m supposed to do. I like the single sign-on experience so there is no special password to memorize. That’s a huge pain point for our employees.”

– Molly, Mentor and IT Liaison,  
Daimler



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## ABOUT CHRONUS

Chronus is the leader in mentoring software. Our configurable platform is powering hundreds of successful mentoring programs for some of the world's largest companies, educational institutions, and professional associations. With unique MatchIQ™ technology, a guided experience for participants, and the most configurable platform in the industry, Chronus enables mentoring programs to efficiently scale and drive more strategic value for organizations worldwide.



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