



CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

Strengthening diversity and inclusion by connecting ERG members with relevant mentors

The Challenge

Putting their people first and investing in diversity

[Avison Young](#) has always been a people-first organization. As a commercial real estate firm in a competitive market, their people set them apart.

And they value diversity. They're in diverse markets, and their workforce should reflect that. In 2020 they launched several initiatives to support diversity, equity and inclusion, including a mentorship program.

Their mentorship program would support their [Employee Resource Groups](#)—Black professionals, Women's Network and LGBTQ+—and their [Emerging Leaders program](#).

They had big plans. But this wasn't their first mentorship program. They had already launched a mentorship within their [Women's Network](#) in the past.

Managing their mentorship program more efficiently

Before learning about Together, Avison Young's mentorship program was cumbersome to manage.

The program manager would send out surveys to employees, print out their responses, and manually match them.

[Joan Skelton](#), Avison Young's Global Director of Diversity and Inclusion, reflected on the process saying,

“ We'd spread [responses] out all over the floor and try to match people. And we're a big company with a couple thousand people [in our women's group]. It's hard to tell if this person is right for that one... [the previous program manager] literally said she was losing her mind.

They decided that if they were ever to launch another mentorship program, they needed a solution to make registering, pairing, and managing the mentorship program easier. No one wanted to spend weeks manually matching over 2000 employees.



The Solution

Avison Young adopted [Together's Mentoring Software](#) to make their pairing process more efficient. Instead of manually comparing employee profiles, [Together's pairing algorithm](#) would instantly recommend 3-5 of the most relevant mentors across the organization for each employee.

The algorithm considered each employee's experience, career goals, and preferences to make a meaningful and relevant match.

Intelligently pairing participants

Skelton shared that,



Creating meaningful pairings was essential to the success of our program. Together's platform does all the work in matching people based upon what they want and need in a mentoring relationship allowing for a truly customized experience for each mentee.

Providing mentor and mentee training resources

In addition to pairing, Together's platform included resources to guide employees along their mentoring journey. They'd have [discussion agendas](#) and [mentoring handbooks](#) full of tips and pointers for building strong mentoring relationships.

"One of the keys to our success was how easy it was to use the Together Software... the tool did all of the heavy lifting... It was really all outlined and developed for us. Which made it very easy."

Avison Young built out their mentorship program quickly using our templated programs. Everything was fully customizable, so they had something to get started, and could change it as needed to make it their own.

Automating friendly reminders, so meetings aren't missed

To ensure no missed meetings, Together would automate email reminders. Together would remind employees to register for the program and ping them when they had upcoming sessions with their mentors.

Additionally, Together integrated with employee calendars which made scheduling sessions easy. Employees didn't have to learn an entirely new system, and booking time didn't require any tedious back-and-forth.



The Results

Noticeable improvements in retention

When looking at the impact across the organization, they saw a tangible improvement in retention rates in the year following their mentoring programs.



We saw a decrease in turnover and an increase in retention in 2021, which is almost unheard of. That's attributable, at least in part, to the implementation of the Together Platform.

Recognized as leaders within the real estate industry

Within their wider DEI goals, their women's mentorship program garnered the attention of GlobeSt. Real Estate Forum who applauded them as [“active supporters of women in the field.”](#)

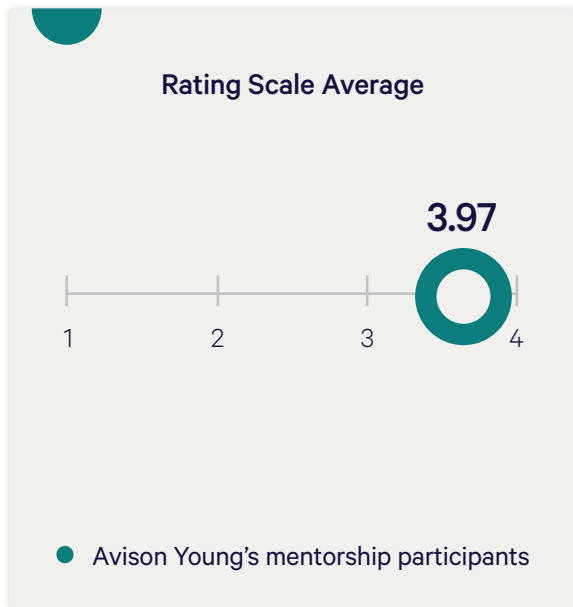
Skelton shared, *“The Together Platform enabled us to maintain connections with our employees that otherwise would have been impossible to do.”*

There's a reason why [Forbes recognized Avison Young](#) as one of America's best employers.



Employees loved the program

Avison Young's mentorship program was a huge success. They paired over 550 participants, and the **average rating for their mentoring pair was 3.97/4**. Likewise, 98% of participants rated the program as satisfactory or very satisfactory.



When discussing the impact the program had, participants shared feedback such as:

- “This program was better than I thought it was going to be. It will help the whole company grow as one.”
- “I’m thrilled that Avison Young created this, and I look forward to growing here with the help of this mentoring program.”
- “The range of paired matches was fantastic. It helped me focus on my immediate goals and align them with the best match. My mentor was exactly what I was hoping for!”

Building on their success, they have more mentoring programs in the works

Going forward, Avison Young has plans to launch a global mentoring program to connect all their employees.



Our staff can have mentors locally in their office or 1000 miles away in another country. This will give them the experience and exposure to others within Avison Young.

Using [mentorship software](#) empowered them to scale their program, allowing every employee to receive career-changing mentorship.

In a global organization with over 5000 employees, there's no better way to connect them than through a global mentorship program.



Joan Skelton

**Avison Young's Global Director
of Diversity and Inclusion**



The Together Platform enabled us to maintain connections with our employees that otherwise would have been impossible to do.



About Together

Together empowers organizations to accelerate their employee learning and development through mentoring programs. With 1-on-1, peer, and group mentoring, we enable organizations to level up their employee development initiatives.

Organizations leverage mentorship programs to:

- Support [diversity, equity, inclusivity, and belonging initiatives](#)
- Prepare [high potential employees](#) to take on leadership roles
- Build communities of well-trained and [experienced managers](#)
- Set up new hires for success with [buddy programs](#)
- Build meaningful connections between your [remote employees](#)

HR and L&D teams love Together because our platform offers the best user experience for employees. They don't need to learn or download a new tool because our web-based platform integrates with existing email and calendar systems to make it as easy as possible to build meaningful mentoring relationships.

Each program is fully customizable, allowing administrators to white label their program with a custom URL and branding. Together's platform includes session agendas and resources that provide employees with cues and steps to support mentors and mentees at each stage of their development. In addition, Together's dedicated Support Team provides guidance every step of the way.

Some of our customers include



Want to see how we can help you
bring your mentorship program to life?

Book Demo