



CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

# Accelerating employee learning and development through mentorship



[togetherplatform.com](https://togetherplatform.com)

# The Challenge

Cruise Automation is building the world's most advanced self-driving vehicles. Their mission is to safely connect people with the places, things and experiences they care about. Needless to say, they're at the cutting edge of the future and they need the best and brightest engineers to bring their mission to life.

Additionally, Cruise's culture cares a lot about internal career development. They don't just look for top talent but they nurture team members to open up opportunities for Cruisers to grow within the company.

They do this through training programs and mentorship.

## The challenge of manually running a mentoring program

In 2019, Cruise had started a pilot mentorship program for their 1000+ engineering department. Their program managers quickly realized that coordinating hundreds of pairings between senior and junior engineers was an administrative burden.

Not only was it challenging to assign pairings and let each participant know who they were with, but it was also impossible to consider the quality of each pairing.



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How would they know if a particular senior engineer was the right person for a particular junior engineer? Did they have similar communication styles? Did the mentee want to follow a similar career path as them?

These questions were impossible to consider for each pairing when there were thousands of possible combinations. Because of this, their pilot program was challenging to get off the ground.

## Needing to build a mentoring program that runs itself

What Cruise needed was a way to quickly pair mentors and mentees and communicate that match with each participant. Additionally, Cruise needed a way to monitor the mentoring relationships and how they were developing.

Essentially, Cruise needed a platform to manage and provide insight into their mentorship program. When searching for solutions they learned about Together.



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# The Solution

Cruise wanted a way to train their engineers and open up doors for them internally. To do this they decided to run a mentorship program because there's no better way to accelerate employee development than connecting experienced employees with more junior ones.

That's why 71% of Fortune 500 companies have workplace mentoring programs. Companies with formal mentorship programs find that they experience less turnover, attract more top candidates, improve their team morale, and build stronger teams.

To build teams that would design the future of transportation, Cruise wanted the benefits of mentoring programs. They decided to leverage Together's software to revamp the mentorship program for their engineering department.



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Together's platform was an easy choice because it gave them a scalable way to pair senior and junior engineers and provide them with resources that supported a strong mentoring relationship.

## Quickly registering engineers for their mentorship program

The beginning of any workplace mentoring program is the registration process. This is where employees sign up as mentors or mentees. They provide basic information like their job title, tenure, and what department they're in. A really good registration process will also collect information like the skills mentors can offer their mentees and the goals of mentees.

Using Together's platform, Cruise was able to quickly send out registration emails to their engineers prompting them to sign up for the mentoring program. Without having to worry about stragglers, automated emails would follow up with them. Once all employees were in, they filled out a registration questionnaire. This information would then be used to pair engineers.







Cruise's registration process was much more streamlined using Together's platform. It took a task that would take days down to minutes.

Cruise's registration process was much more streamlined using Together's platform instead of manually inviting employees to join a program. It took a task that would take days down to minutes.

## Pairing mentors and mentees in an instant

Matching mentors and mentees is the most important part of the mentoring program. A great match can lead to career-changing opportunities for the mentee. But how can program managers make sure each match is the right one—especially if there are hundreds of pairings to be made?

For Cruise, they used Together's pairing algorithm to quickly match mentors and mentees without having to spend hours sifting through registration questionnaires and manually matching participants. Just like registration, Together's platform made the pairing process effortless.



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## Pairing mentors and mentees in an instant

After Cruise successfully matched engineers, they needed to support their relationship. To do this, they used Together's templated mentoring agendas to guide their conversations. Each agenda would have guiding questions, links to articles, Ted Talks, or other resources that encouraged meaningful conversations around their skills and goals. For example, pairings could discuss:

- Setting career goals;
- How to develop certain skillsets;
- Working through a particular challenge the mentee is facing;
- How to grow within Cruise.

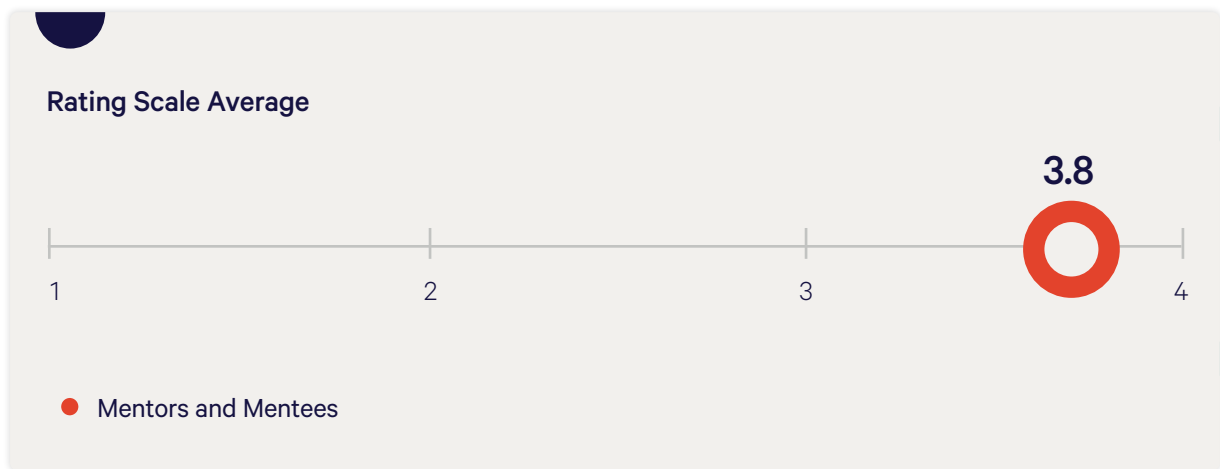
Cruise could leverage Together's agendas as they were or customize them to suit their particular needs. Having them available, however, made it much easier for Cruise to launch their program without having to plan out each mentoring session in advance. It was all ready for them when they adopted Together's software.



# The Results

Using Together's mentoring platform, Cruise ran a mentoring program with a goal of 200 engineers to start. Due to the high demand for the program, they surpassed their initial goal and recruited closer to 300 engineers for their program.

On a scale out of 4, the average rating mentors and mentees gave was 3.8. Objectively, the program was a success.



But behind the numbers, there are real mentors and mentees that have grown their careers and skills by connecting with other engineers.



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Here are a few examples of what mentors and mentees had to say:

- “Our session was very productive and we were able to hone in on a particular topic that will likely span multiple sessions. As a mentee, **I feel like we’re already making a lot of progress** in just the second session and I’m optimistic that by the end of the mentorship, I will either have deep insight into this topic or know exactly what my next career step should be.”
- “**The program is very valuable.** It gets both parties to learn from each other.
- The session was great. We were able to **talk about a specific problem and come up with some actionable solutions.**”
- “The session was great. After a brief catch-up, we dove deep into [my mentee’s] top three priorities, and how to convert them to actions...**I feel very positively about the future of mentorship sessions with [my mentee].** He is very aware of his gaps and able to articulate ways to improve. Looking forward to diving deeper and nailing down some concrete action items with him.”



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Cruise continues to run mentoring programs using Together’s software. As they continue to build the future self-driving vehicles, Cruise is making sure they’re attracting top talent and providing them with everything they need to grow within their company.

Using mentorship, Cruise is supporting a strong culture of internal mobility.



**Matthew Sicolu**  
Director of Customer Success



Cruise Automation is a great example of how a growing, fast-paced company can quickly start a mentoring program that has impact. Rather than spending tons of time and resources building and planning a mentorship program, Cruise quickly got their program up and running. In doing so they were able to deliver impact immediately.”

# 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