

Compass Group UK & Ireland introduces Reverse Mentoring Programme

3 years ago



[Compass Group UK & Ireland](#) has launched a 'Mentor Up' programme to help create a shared understanding of the barriers, challenges and opportunities for colleagues from ethnic minority groups.

The programme partners senior leaders (mentees) with individuals from ethnic minority groups (mentors). Participants share their experiences, perspectives and knowledge to broaden and deepen their awareness of themselves and others.

This helps to inform actions to support the further enhancement of diversity and inclusion in Compass, to create an environment where everyone can thrive.

The main aims of the six-month programme are:

- To enhance the personal and professional development of mentors and mentees.
- To provide those from under-represented groups with greater access to senior leaders, wider professional networks and visibility of different career paths.
- To develop enhanced ED&I strategies, based on mentoring feedback to further improve culture and working environment.

The programme provides a safe space for open conversations between participants focused on mutual learning, respect and creating a way forward together. The initial cohort included 13 people and a second group from across the business is now taking part.

Some of the participants have commented on their experience:

Mentor – Samuel Nyarko, Sector Lead – Time 2 Eat: “Mentor Up was a great programme to take part in, it

really put me out of my comfort zone. My mentee and I both came into the programme with an open mind and were keen to learn. Opinions and conversation points were taken away and implemented into projects, demonstrating Compass' commitment to further enhancing diversity and inclusion."

Mentor – Sawmia Iqbal, Location Accountant – Sports: "I found the programme very useful and loved engaging with my mentee. We discussed our current roles and career pathways, and I was able to talk openly about the future. It was helpful for us both to get a different perspective and great to be part of something that will shape the future of the business."

Mentee – Ronnie Kelman, Managing Director – ESS Energy, Government & Infrastructure: "My mentor and I have been able to build a relationship based on trust and have had many in depth conversations in a safe space. This has given me a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by ethnic minority colleagues and an insight into the steps we must take to continue our momentum in building an organisation that provides an environment where everyone can thrive."

Mentee – Russell Blake, Managing Director – Healthcare and Lead Sponsor for Compass' inclusion network 'Within': "I participated in the programme to gain a greater understanding of the barriers faced by colleagues from different cultural backgrounds, in achieving their career aspirations. My mentor was open, balanced and pragmatic which helped build a relationship based on trust, allowing us to be comfortable in having the discussions. As Lead Sponsor for the Within Network, I am absolutely committed to being an active ally and creating a more inclusive organisation for now and the future."

Earlier this year, Compass Group UK & Ireland launched its Social Promise which commits to bolstering opportunities for one million people by 2030. It includes gender, ethnic minority and the industry's first socio-economic representation targets across its executive team, middle management, junior management and frontline roles.