

DOD Mentoring Resource Portal

MENTEE GUIDELINES

Mentor/Mentee Relationship Management

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Purpose:

To offer a set of standards that assist Mentees to achieve a successful mentoring relationship.

Audience:

Mentees

Context:

After matching selected Mentors to Mentees, the Mentoring Program Coordinator should provide general guidelines to the Mentees on how to build a successful mentoring relationship. This guide should be complemented by mentoring training.

How to Use:

- **Step 1:** Customize the guide and make any adjustments to fit specific DOD Component/Agency mentoring needs.
- **Step 2:** Add additional information specific to your DOD Component/Agency, such as additional guidelines for successful mentoring relationships.
- **Step 3:** Share the guide with the mentees.

Common Terms

The following are common terms associated with the DOD Mentoring Resource Portal:

Mentor, also known as Advisor, is a trusted counselor or guide who is involved in the development and support of one who is less experienced.

Mentee, also known as Protégé or Learner, is the more junior person being mentored.

Mentoring Program Coordinator, also known as Mentoring Program Manager, is responsible for the overall management of the mentoring program.

Information Source Disclaimer

Most of the information on this mentoring resource was obtained and adapted from [WHS Director of Administration and Management Enterprise Mentoring, Tools for Learners](#). All content is provided for informational purposes only.

1.0 TIPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Mentee Responsibilities

Your development depends on exploring career aspirations, strengths and weaknesses, collaborating on means to “get there,” implementing strategies, and evaluating along the way. Your advisor will provide the “light” for you to follow. Learning from the wisdom and past experiences of your Mentor will serve you well and produce great benefits.

Here are a few roles and responsibilities to help you in the process:

Commit to your development

- Ideally, your mentoring journey will need to include: 1-4 hours a month, to include face to face meetings every 1-2 months, and periods of reflection.
- Assume responsibility for acquiring or improving skills and knowledge
- Discuss your Action Plan with your Mentor
- Be open and honest on your goals, expectations, challenges and concerns
- Actively listen and question
- Build a supportive and trusting environment
- Seek advice, opinion, feedback, and direction from your Mentor
- Be open to constructive criticism/feedback and ask for it
- Come to your meetings prepared with a clear idea of what topics or issues you want to address
- Respect your Mentor’s time and resources
- Apply what you learn from your meetings back on the job
- Keep your supervisor informed of the process and your progress
- Give feedback to your advisor on what is working or not working in the mentoring relationship
- Participate in the scheduled activities

2.0 RECEIVING FEEDBACK – CHECKLIST FOR MENTEES

Think of feedback as a learning opportunity. Exhibit positive or neutral body language.

Do use:

- Good Eye contact – no scary stares
- Interested/neutral facial expression
- Nodding of head to show understanding or agreement
- Calm tone of voice
- Even voice volume
- Sitting slightly forward
- Relaxed arm and hand placement

Do not use:

- Reduced eye contact, scowling, or narrowing of eyes
- Tense or aggressive posture
- Rocking, pen bouncing, hand wringing, or your specific version of nervousness/defensiveness
- Hands on hips or tightly clenched
- Arms tightly crossed across chest

- A blank expression

Don't interrupt when the other person is explaining. If you need more information ask for clarification or specific examples. Paraphrase and repeat back to make sure you understood what was said. Keep doing this until you are clear on the feedback. Say things like...

- What I understood you just told me was.....
- When I _____ you think I.....
- What I hear you say is if I _____ I will.....

Provide relevant background information and explanations– not excuses. In your last meeting with your Mentor you may not have given enough background and there may have been a misunderstanding – elaborate if necessary.

Listen carefully and don't become defensive. Do not “think ahead” preparing a rebuttal to a comment, you may miss a very important piece of information. Compare this feedback with others you've received. Discuss strategies and next steps. Provide possible solutions – you are the captain of your ship. Seek follow-up to your feedback session and share your progress with your Mentor.