

DOD Mentoring Resource Portal

STAGES OF MENTORING

Information for Supervisors Portfolio

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Purpose:

This resource will assist New and Experienced Supervisors to determine at which stage of mentoring start the relationship.

Audience:

New and Experienced Supervisors

Common Terms

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

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

New Supervisor, also known as Protégé or New Supervisor, 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 the following sources: [Army Mentorship Handbook, Headquarters, Department of Army, DCS, G-1](#). All content is provided for informational purposes only.

STAGES OF MENTORING

Mentoring consists of different stages reflecting the New Supervisor's learning and growth needs. Each stage may require the Experienced Supervisor to assume different mentoring roles. The stages may blend into each other. The roles listed under a stage are not exclusive to that stage, but indicate when Experienced Supervisors are most likely to begin performing that role. With this in mind, the Experienced Supervisor can brush up on the necessary skills to perform the role effectively. The four main stages of mentoring are:

Prescriptive

Persuasive

Collaborative

Confirmative

In order to determine at which stage to begin the relationship, the Experienced Supervisor and the New Supervisor must consider:

What are the New Supervisor's attributes, skills, and competencies?

What is the New Supervisor's level of experience?

What type and amount of guidance and support does the New Supervisor need?

1.0 PRESCRIPTIVE STAGE

In the first stage of mentoring, the prescriptive stage, the New Supervisor usually has little or no experience at the job. This stage is where the Experienced Supervisor is providing stronger, more direct, more specific, more detailed guidance and advice. During this stage, the Experienced Supervisor primarily assumes the roles of:

Coach

Motivator

Teacher

During this stage, the Experienced Supervisor gives a lot of praise and attention to build the New Supervisor's self-confidence. The Experienced Supervisor devotes more time to the New Supervisor in this stage than in any of the other stages. The Experienced Supervisor focuses on providing detailed information to the New Supervisor on many, if not all, workplace issues and procedures.

The Experienced Supervisor thinks of the New Supervisor as a "sponge" soaking up every new piece of information provided. The Experienced Supervisor shares many of his or her own experiences, "trials" and "anecdotes" during this stage, giving examples of how he or she or others handled similar tasks or situations and with what consequences.

2.0 PERSUASIVE STAGE

The second stage requires the Experienced Supervisor to actually persuade the New Supervisor to find answers and seek challenges, rather than getting them from the Experienced Supervisor. The Experienced Supervisor suggests new strategies, questions, challenges, and pushes the New Supervisor into discoveries. Generally, the additional roles the Experienced Supervisor assumes during this stage are:

Counselor

Guide

3.0 COLLABORATIVE STAGE

In this stage, the New Supervisor has enough experience and ability to work together with the Experienced Supervisor to jointly solve problems and participate in “more equal” communication. In this stage, the New Supervisor actively cooperates with the Experienced Supervisor in his/her professional development plans. The Experienced Supervisor lets the New Supervisor to take control and work independently. For instance, the Experienced Supervisor gives him/her a piece of an important project to do independently, with little or no guidance. In this stage, the Experienced Supervisor is likely to pick up the following roles:

Career Advisor

Role Model

4.0 CONFIRMATIVE STAGE

This is the stage in which the New Supervisor has a lot of experience and has mastered the job requirements, but requires the Experienced Supervisor’s wisdom and professional insight into policies and people. In this stage, the Experienced Supervisor may perform many of the previously practiced roles. Most importantly the Experienced Supervisor is a sounding board and empathetic listener. The Experienced Supervisor gives advice and encouragement in a non-judgmental manner about career and personal decisions. Questions can be answered through discussions with the New Supervisor, by observing the individual or by consulting with others who know the New Supervisor such as his or her supervisor.

Mentoring relationships may follow all four stages or only a few of these stages. In fact, there is such a fine line between each stage that frequently it is difficult to tell when one stage ends and another begins. The Experienced Supervisor needs to continually evaluate the mentoring relationship as it evolves, and determine when it is time to alter the mentoring roles. The Experienced Supervisor must keep in mind that the relationship will stagnate if the mentoring style remains in a stage that the New Supervisor has outgrown.