

DOD Mentoring Resource Portal

**TIPS FOR BUILDING A
MENTORING RELATIONSHIP**

Information for Supervisors Portfolio

TIPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Purpose:

To offer a set of standards that assist Experienced Supervisors and New Supervisors to achieve successful mentoring relationship.

Audience:

Experienced and New Supervisors

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.

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

1.0 TIPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

There are five essentials for a successful mentoring relationship. Both the Experienced Supervisor and the New Supervisor must want the relationship to work. Watch for signs of “lopsided” mentoring: both the Experienced Supervisor and the New Supervisor should be committing appropriate time and energy to the process. Five things are essential:

1. **Respect** - established when a New Supervisor recognizes attributes, skills, and competencies in the Experienced Supervisor that he or she would like to possess; and when the Experienced Supervisor appreciates the success of the New Supervisor to date and the New Supervisor’s desire to develop his or her attributes, skills, competencies, capabilities, experiences, and value to the organization.
2. **Trust** - is a two-way street. Experienced Supervisors and New Supervisors should work together to build trust, through communicating, and by being available, predictable, and loyal.
3. **Partnership Building** - The Experienced Supervisor and New Supervisor are professional partners. Natural barriers that all partnerships face may include miscommunication or an uncertainty of each other’s expectations. Activities that can help you overcome these barriers include:
 - Maintaining communication
 - Fixing “obvious” problems
 - Forecasting how decisions could affect goals
 - Frequent discussion of progress
 - Monitoring changes
 - Successful partnerships develop through:
 - The expression of enthusiasm each has for their relationship.
 - Activities of idea exploration and successful problem solving which create an atmosphere of emotional acceptance of each other.
 - Strategies and tactics of change that move slowly enough to be monitored and adjusted to assure optimum growth and success of the New Supervisor.
4. **Realistic Expectations and Self Perception** - An Experienced Supervisor should encourage the New Supervisor to have realistic expectations of:
 - Their own capabilities
 - Opportunities in terms of present and potential positions
 - The energies and actions the Experienced Supervisor will commit to the mentoring relationship
 - What the New Supervisor must demonstrate to earn the Experienced Supervisor’s support in his or her personal/professional/career development
 - An Experienced Supervisor may help define the New Supervisor’s self-perception by discussing social traits, intellectual abilities, talents, and roles. It is important for the Experienced Supervisor to always provide honest feedback.
5. **Time** - Set aside specific time to meet; do not change times unless absolutely necessary. Meet periodically, and at mutually convenient times when you can control interruptions. Frequently “check in” with each other via informal phone calls or e-mail (it’s a good idea to schedule even informal activities to assure regular contact).