

DOD Mentoring Resource Portal

MENTORING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Information for Supervisors Portfolio

MENTORING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Purpose:

To provide mentoring roles and responsibilities for New and Experienced Supervisors

Audience:

New and Experienced 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 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 [WHS Director of Administration and Management Enterprise Mentoring, Mentoring Program Guide](#). All content is provided for informational purposes only.

1.0 MENTORING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR NEW AND EXPERIENCED SUPERVISORS

A mentoring relationship success is driven by participation and commitment from both the Mentor and Mentee.

Experienced Supervisors serving as Mentors

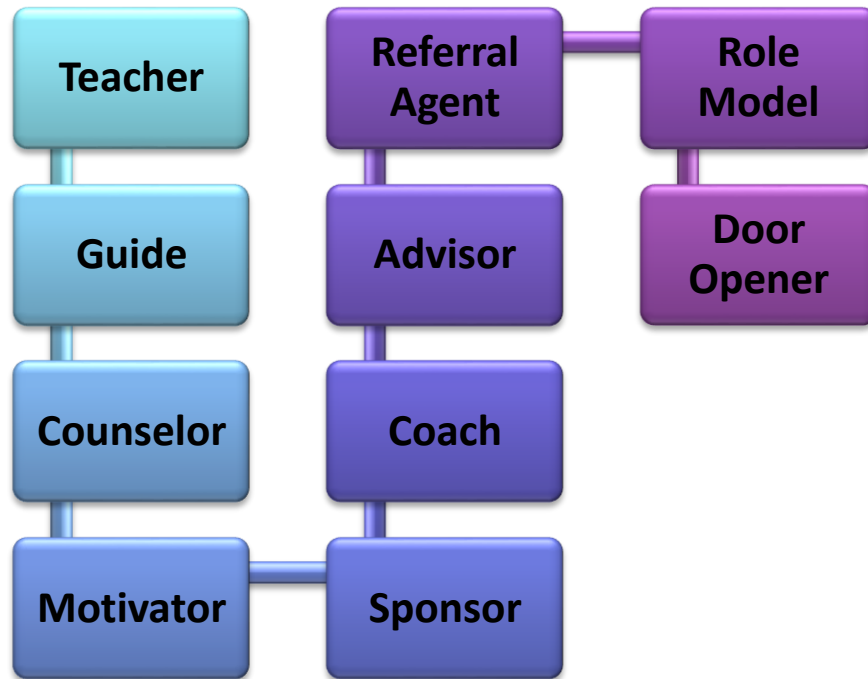
- Share their professional experiences and knowledge with the New Supervisor.
- Assist the New Supervisor in developing current job skills, interests, and to set realistic career goals.
- Provide information that will assist the New Supervisor in learning about the culture and values of your organization.
- Offer positive feedback and constructive feedback.
- Help New Supervisor expand his or her personal network and help arrange special assignments, job rotations, shadowing experiences, etc.
- Coach/counsel the New Supervisor on effective problem-solving techniques and leadership skills.
- Teach by example and serve as an unbiased coach, confidant, and advisor.

New Supervisors

- Actively demonstrate initiative and desire to learn.
- Establish clear developmental goals and communicate openly about them.
- Take responsibility for personal growth and development.
- Be receptive to feedback.
- Possess a positive and constructive attitude.
- Develop an Individual Development Plan.
- Utilize resources available through the mentoring connection and from the program coordinator to engage in relationship enhancing activities.

2.0 EXPERIENCED SUPERVISOR SERVING AS A MENTOR ROLES

The roles assumed by an Experienced Supervisor depend on the needs of the New Supervisor and on the relationship established between the two. There are at least ten roles an Experienced Supervisor entering in a mentoring relationship can assume:



- **Teacher.** As a teacher, the Experienced Supervisor teaches the New Supervisor the skills and knowledge required to perform the job successfully.
- **Guide.** As a guide, the Experienced Supervisor helps the New Supervisor to understand how to "navigate" and understand the inner workings of an organization. Sometimes this includes passing on information about the unwritten "rules" for success.
- **Counselor.** Requires establishment of trust in the mentoring relationship. A counselor listens to possible ethics situations and provides guidance to help the New Supervisor find his or her own solutions and improve his/her own problem solving skills.
- **Motivator.** An Experienced Supervisor shows support to help a New Supervisor through the tough times, keeping the New Supervisor focused on developing job skills to improve performance, self-respect, and a sense of self-worth.
- **Sponsor.** The Experienced Supervisor helps to create possibilities for the New Supervisor that may otherwise not be available. Opportunities should be challenging and instructive, without being overwhelming. Do not set the New Supervisor up for failure.
- **Coach.** A coach observes performance, assesses capabilities, provides feedback to the New Supervisor, and instructs with a view to improve performance. Then the loop repeats.
- **Advisor.** An Experienced Supervisor helps the New Supervisor develop professional interests and set realistic career goals. Goals should be specific, have a time-frame and set deadlines, be results oriented, relevant, and reachable.

- **Referral Agent.** Once a career plan is developed, the Experienced Supervisor assists the New Supervisor in approaching persons who can provide training, information, and assistance. The Experienced Supervisor also points the New Supervisor to relevant career enhancing schools, correspondence courses, books, reading, professional organizations, and self-improvement activities.
- **Role Model.** The Experienced Supervisor is a living example for the New Supervisor to emulate. An Experienced Supervisor serving as a Mentor must lead and teach by example.
- **Door Opener.** The Experienced Supervisor opens doors of opportunity by helping the New Supervisor establish a network of professional contacts both within and outside of your organization. He/she helps the New Supervisor understand the importance of staying in touch with seniors, peers, and juniors to exchange information, ideas, and concerns.

3.0 NEW SUPERVISOR ROLES IN A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP



- **Willing.** The New Supervisor must want to improve performance, contribute to the organization, and be willing to work to reach his/her goals.
- **Active.** A New Supervisor takes action based on career goals, suggestions of a Experienced Supervisor, job requirements, and educational opportunities.
- **Accepting.** A New Supervisor is willing to accept responsibility for his/her actions, accept meaningful feedback and criticism, and accept guidance and counseling from his/her Experienced Supervisor Mentor.
- **Respectful.** The New Supervisor shows consideration and respect for the Experienced Supervisor's willingness to help and seriously considers all advice and suggestions from the Experienced Supervisor. He/she is open-minded; progress takes time and effort.

- **Professional.** The mentoring relationship is professional at all times. Both parties should be respectful of privacy and each other's personal lives.
- **Prepared.** The New Supervisor is ready to move beyond the mentoring relationship, once the relationship has served its purpose.