

**DOD Mentoring Resource Portal**

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# **STAGES OF MENTORING**

Mentor/Mentee Relationship Management

## STAGES OF MENTORING

### Purpose:

This resource will assist Mentors and Mentees to determine at which stage of mentoring start the relationship.

### Audience:

Mentors and Mentees

### Context:

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

### How to Use:

- **Step 1:** Add additional information specific to your DOD Component/Agency.
- **Step 2:** Share this information with newly selected Mentors and Mentees.

### 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.

*Mentee*, also known as Protégé or Mentee, 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.

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Prescriptive

Persuasive

Collaborative

Confirmative

In order to determine at which stage to begin the relationship, the Mentor and the Mentee must consider:

What are the Mentee's attributes, skills, and competencies?

What is the Mentee's level of experience?

What type and amount of guidance and support does the Mentee need?

### 1.0 PRESCRIPTIVE STAGE

In the first stage of mentoring, the prescriptive stage, the Mentee usually has little or no experience at the job or in the [insert DOD Component/Agency name]. This stage is most comfortable for the novice, who depends heavily on the Mentor for support and instruction. This is where the Mentor is providing stronger, more direct, more specific, more detailed guidance and advice. During this stage, the Mentor primarily assumes the roles of:

Coach

Motivator

Teacher

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

The Mentor thinks of the Mentee as a "sponge" soaking up every new piece of information provided. The Mentor 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 Mentor to actually persuade the Mentee to find answers and seek challenges, rather than getting them from the Mentor. The Mentee usually has some experience, but needs firm direction. The Mentee needs to be prodded into taking risks. The Mentor suggests new strategies, questions, challenges, and pushes the Mentee into discoveries. Generally, the additional roles the Mentor assumes during this stage are:

Counselor

Guide

## **3.0 COLLABORATIVE STAGE**

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

Career Advisor

Role Model

## **4.0 CONFIRMATIVE STAGE**

This is the stage in which the Mentee has a lot of experience and has mastered the job requirements, but requires the Mentor’s wisdom and professional insight into policies and people. In this stage, the Mentor may perform many of the previously practiced roles. Most importantly the Mentor is a sounding board and empathetic listener. The Mentor gives advice and encouragement in a non-judgmental manner about career and personal decisions. Questions can be answered through discussions with the Mentee, by observing the individual or by consulting with others who know the Mentee 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 Mentor needs to continually evaluate the mentoring relationship as it evolves, and determine when it is time to alter the mentoring roles. The Mentor must keep in mind that the relationship will stagnate if the mentoring style remains in a stage that the Mentee has outgrown.